

LLD:Endeavor | Group Communications

Session Length: 30 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the differing dynamics of small and large groups
- Acquire insight into digital communications
- Create a SMART vision for communications in their chapter or lodge

Required Materials:

- Zoom Pro account with breakout rooms
- Whiteboard area on Zoom

Outline of the Session:

- Basis of Communication
 - Every form of communication contains a message, sender, and receiver.
 - Noise and interference can interfere with communication.
- Digital Communications
 - Basis of Digital Communications
 - Web, mobile, and electronic communication is common and critical.
 - Social media, e-mail, and other mass communication tools are the response to this.
- E-mail
 - Staple in digital communications and offers a variety of options.
 - Every officer/adviser in the Order of the Arrow should have an e-mail account they actively use/check.
 - Style and how to address your recipient are all factors when sending an e-mail.
- Mass Texts
 - Mass texts are an effective tool for both Arrowmen and their parents.
 - Push information into the hands of the receiver.
 - Easy to administrate, have users sign-up, and use once setup.
- Social Media/Website
 - Every lodge should have some form of social media presence. Constantly evolving and needs to be treated as such.

Trainer Preparation:

This session requires proficiency in Zoom as you won't always be using a defined background. Someone with previous communication experience, such as a Lodge Secretary, would be a great trainer. Additionally, use of the Zoom whiteboard feature and potential screensharing of examples will be necessary.

Session Narrative:

Introduction: 7 minutes

The trainer should introduce themselves to the audience and give a brief introduction of themselves, especially as it relates to communications, marketing/public relations, and training. The trainer should give an overview of the session's objectives and explain that this training will also try to answer as many as possible questions that were written before the start of the session.

The trainer should ask: "what is communication?" and allow for several responses. Then, the trainers should ask if there are any NYLT, NLS, NAYLE, or Wood Badge alumni in the room. He should then ask them, "What are the three parts of communication"?

The correct responses to the second question should consist of "message", "sender", and "receiver". A concise definition of each part should be given. Just like Aristotle said 3,000 years ago, communication consists of a message, a sender, and receiver. If we understand that all communication is based on this model, then communicating in front of both small and large groups and on social media becomes much more understandable.

Trainer Tip: The purpose of this statement is to emphasize that communication is not a new challenge or obstacle. It is meant to illustrate that even though the methods of communication may have changed we still use the same format. This is especially critical in lodges, chapters, and units that may be stand-offish or unreceptive to new communication techniques.

The trainer should then ask: "What are some barriers to effective communication?". Responses could include disruptive environment, differing languages, lack of visual aids, and other appropriate answers. The trainer should explain that all these and other barriers are known as "noise" and can disrupt communication. Effective communication considers noise that can affect the message, sender, and receiver. When communicating, in any form, it is important that we all consider these barriers and how we can overcome them.

Trainer Tip: This explanation of effective communication and potential barriers to achieving this is to get participants to think of communication challenges and how to overcome them. It is appropriate for the trainer to add one or several of his own barriers they've encountered. To incorporate a visual component to this explanation, consider incorporating a video clip that highlights effective or poor communications. For inspiration or ideas for video clips, trainers should reference the Appendix and be aware of any relevant copyright and intellectual property laws.

Electronic Communication: 6 Minutes

Ever since the introduction of the computer into public life, electronic communication has become more prevalent. First email was the fastest way to reach a crowd, then came social media and apps, and, now, new communication methods are constantly being developed.

It is important that every lodge, chapter, and unit consider how they are utilizing these methods and how effective is their current communication.

In this session, we will go over three of the most common electronic communication methods: **e-mail, mass texts, and social media and websites.**

In the Order of the Arrow, we have three main audiences: Arrowmen, their families, and their units. For younger Arrowmen, they are often dependent on their family or adults for transportation to and from Order of the Arrow activities. For older youth Arrowmen, they often have responsibilities in the unit. It is important to remember that your communication must consider both the Arrowman and their family and unit.

Creating content for communication can be difficult. Encourage participants to use the READY checklist by having each participant look at "Handout 3". Briefly, explain each aspect of the READY checklist:

Rewarding: Every piece of communication should have a reason for the receiver to respond. This could be encouraging "early-bird" registration for an event, or inviting Scouts/Scouters to join Scouting's National Honor Society.

Engaging: Additionally, a call to action is a must. Simply put, a call to action is any directive or instruction for the receiver to do, e.g. asking Arrowmen to pay their lodge dues, recruiting Arrowmen for a ceremony team, or visiting the Lodge's Facebook page. The call to action is reaching out and engaging.

Attractive: The Order of the Arrow is volunteer-led, but lodges have a wide array of resources at their disposal to produce attractive, quality communication pieces. Unprofessional-looking publications are an immediate turn-off for receivers.

Dynamic: At all times, be looking how to personalize and make communications relevant. If you can change e-mail headers to reflect each receiver's name, use this chance to connect with your audience. Additionally, consider giving your communications a holiday or seasonal flair.

You: Every communication piece should emphasize the sender's interest or passion. If the sender is disinterested in the message, this can easily be injected into the message. Also, show the personal side of your lodge. Your audience wants to see the humans sending the message and involved in your lodge.

Now, let's consider e-mail communications. E-mail is often the staple in unit's and lodge's communication strategy. Whether it's a Scoutmaster e-mailing transportation plans or a Lodge advertising its spring event, e-mail is a cheap and effective way of broadcasting your message to a large audience.

Mass texts are becoming more common in schools, community groups, and conferences. With millions of cellphone users in the United States, the ability to push information into their palms is an exciting prospect. This system can be effective to send short, brief, and text-only messages to receivers and can be especially effective in reminding Arrowmen of upcoming meetings, registration deadlines, and updates during an event. Finally, social media and websites are an integral part of a lodge's communication. If you are not utilizing either social media or a website, you severely limit your lodge's capabilities. Both social media and websites provide nearly 24/7 access to information you share, and social media can push that information into your audience's palms similar to mass texting. Over half of all American adults use social media according to the Pew Research Center, and one can ask any teenager to find similar high usage rate as well.

The trainer should emphasize that no matter which methods are used a consistent message must be conveyed. The team of Arrowmen supporting a lodge's communication must be constantly working and communicating with each other. The trainer should close the session by



explaining with emphasis, the value of electronic communication in developing an effective communication strategy.

Takeaway Challenge 15 minutes

As Arrowmen, we have a responsibility to share the mission and purpose of the Order of the Arrow with its members and our communities. Effective communication can increase awareness of the Order of the Arrow in councils and units.

The trainer should ask every participant to look at "Handout 3" and give a brief challenge for each participant to look at how their unit, chapter, or lodge is communicating. The trainer should tie in any relevant council, district, or lodge goals for membership, retention, or marketing to give emphasis to the challenge.

Then, give 5-10 for them to set their own communication goals and help support them individually if they need it. Allow the group to come back together and have some of the participants share their personal goals with the whole group.

The trainer should then thank participants for attending Sharing the OA Message.

Appendix: Resources and Source Material

Trainer's EDGE Syllabus, available online at

<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/26-242.pdf>

TED Talks, available online at

<https://www.ted.com/talks>

NYLT "Communicating Well" Part 1 Presentation Aids, available online at

http://www.scouting.org/filestore/NYLT2016/Day_One/Communicating_Well.pdf

NYLT "Communicating Well" Part 2 Presentation Aids, available online at

[http://www.scouting.org/filestore/NYLT2016/Day_Six/02-](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/NYLT2016/Day_Six/02-Communicating_Well_Pt2.pdf)

[Communicating_Well_Pt2.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/NYLT2016/Day_Six/02-Communicating_Well_Pt2.pdf)

Dead Poet's Society "Seize the Day Scene", available online at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xv9JOVkr5PQ>

Animal House "All is Well Scene", available online at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDAmPlq29ro>

Independence Day "President's Speech Scene", available online at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oj16vfbsM9A>

Parks and Recreation "March 31st Meetings", available online at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwFIUy5CKeM>

Are you READY?

Handout 1

When designing and creating content to be distributed by your lodge, chapter or unit, have you asked if you are READY? This acronym is a five-step checklist to better ensure your message will more effectively reach your receiver(s).

R

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E

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10 Strategies for Effective Communication

Handout 2



Always respond or acknowledge an e-mail within 24 hours of receiving, or use the "sun-down rule" and respond to an e-mail by sunset.

Understand the demographics of your audience, e.g. language, age, Scouting position, etc.

Be constantly reviewing what communication methods are effective in your lodge, chapter, and unit.

Communications is a multi-person responsibility. Consider forming a committee or task force to better tackle the responsibility.

Always offer a paper or physical copy of your communications, and never discount the value of mailing information.

When creating content, never stop the process. Always have editors editing, designers designing, and writers writing.

Never read verbatim from your presentation. Your audience can read a slide, so it's up to trainer to expand on your slide's main points.

Always offer handouts, copies of presentation slides, or speaker's notes to your audience. They will be grateful for the resources.

E-mails can be efficient and cost-effective tool to enhance your communication strategy, but remember youth are less apt to use e-mails.

Always interact with your audience, make eye contact, and make each participant feel valued for being there that day.

My SMART Vision

Handout 3

You have now completed Sharing the OA Message. It is important to remember this title now that you have the knowledge of how to more effectively share our message. Use this worksheet as a way to create your own SMART vision for communication in your lodge, chapter, or unit.

My Vision of Future Success

My Goals for Attaining my Vision

My Plans to Reach my Goals