



The Second Best Job in the Order

*A Coaching Guide for District Deputies
and District Wardens seeking
to become District Deputies*



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Knights of Columbus*

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The Second Best Job in the Order

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I offer my special thanks to Leo Gendron for his review of the book and suggested changes to increase its impact while making it more digestible to its intended audience. And least I not forget, my wonderfully artistic sister Revelle Taillon who is responsible for the delightful illustrations throughout the book.

Dedication

To my wife, my lover and best friend Sue,

For her unending love, support and understanding
For the joy, peace and fulfillment she has always brought to my life.

To my parent, Frank and Claire (LaPierre) Taillon

For providing me a true model of love
in their 62 year love affair with each other.

To my Mom,

Who taught me to be strong in my convictions,
Proud of my heritage and focused on the care of others.

To my Dad,

Who taught me that wisdom comes from doing,
That success comes not in always knowing how to do
something, but being willing to always try,
That joy in life comes in touching others' lives
and being open to letting them touch yours.

Publisher's Note to the First Edition

As I finished my first book “*Toward a More Active Council*”, I knew that I had opened Pandora’s Box. How could I only address council leadership without a corresponding work on district leadership? I realized that one was inadequate without the other. While complimentary they approach the topic of leadership training from a very different viewpoint. So when I decided to start this book I again asked myself what I expected it to accomplish.

The key reason for this work is that I want to document my beliefs about the role and purpose of the District Deputy’s position and to change the way the role of District Deputy has been followed within New Hampshire.

Secondly I want to open for discussion new and creative ways to motivate and mentor our Grand Knights.

Personally I plan to use this book as a training tool to develop district leadership and a progression path for aspiring District Wardens and experienced, successful council leaders within the NH State Council when I serve as its State Deputy

I also want other people’s ideas and suggestions to make this message stronger, easier to understand and able to be adopted by others. If you have ideas or just comments about the book please forward them to me at G.Taillon@Comcast.net or send them in care of Dragon Press, 111 Willard Way, Plaistow, NH 03865.

— Greg Taillon
May 2007

Foreword

Having been a Knight of Columbus for over 23 years, I have seen and worked with many different leadership styles from both Grand Knights and District Deputies. Some of these were very effective and while others could be viewed as anything short of successful. When asked to be a District Deputy, I asked the State Deputy what specifically he wanted me to accomplish in the role. I'll always remember his answer: *"If you do something wrong, I'll let you know!"*

In my communications with other District Deputies both former and present, I often get similar remarks. They are told that they will pick it up, or to read the literature from Supreme or to just go to the meetings and encourage the Membership Blitz.

District Deputy seminars that I've attended attempted to present many messages and were often not formatted to cover leadership development and training. Many of the District Deputies I've asked relate no clear message being communicated on how to lead in this role.

Part of the reason may be in part due to the fact that their State Deputy traveled the same path with a lack of guidance from the State Deputies they served under.

I've always believed that there was a way to document and make clear that some leadership styles work better than others in this role.

Thus the major message of this book is: ***"Change the way you lead your Grand Knights and they will change the way they lead their councils. In so doing they will be able to increase Activity and Involvement within their Councils and it will grow in membership, retention and service."***

What I relate to you in these chapters represents experiences, observations, learnings and proven practices collected from brother Grand Knights, District Deputies and Membership Directors at both the local and state level as well as my own learnings as a Council Membership Director, Grand Knight, District Deputy, State Membership Director and State Officer.

I encourage you to make what you read your own, by modifying or enhancing these techniques and ideas to the specific & unique needs of your own District. Please drop me a line or email (G.Taillon@Comcast.net) about your own experiences and ideas on the topic.

God Bless

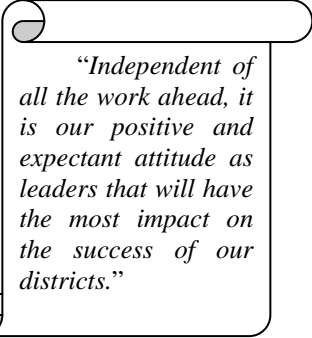
Greg

Section One: Introduction

“Attitudes are Catchy, but is mine worth catching?”

We begin by relating the importance of our attitude, because it sets the boundaries of our potential accomplishments. What I believe I can not accomplish is nearly always NOT accomplished. And so the opposite can be stated that what I believe and expect I can accomplish is most always accomplished. The old adage “*Success comes in CANs and not in CANNOTs*” relates this truth much more concisely. Independent of all the work ahead, it is our positive and expectant attitude as leaders that will have the most impact on the success of our districts.

If you give your Grand Knights challenging goals to improve their leadership abilities and deliver the message with a positive and expectant attitude,



“Independent of all the work ahead, it is our positive and expectant attitude as leaders that will have the most impact on the success of our districts.”

you’ll see results. If you are skeptical and unconvinced that positive change is possible so too will be the mindset of your Grand Knights. And no words of advice, no matter how sound will secure positive results. So let’s start off by checking our attitudes to ensure we can deliver the message of positive change.

God has endowed us all with powerful and creative minds. Being expectant of your Grand Knights’ progress and success challenges them to creatively deliver on the guidance that you will provide.

History has shown us that Attitude does make a difference. It is the quintessential characteristic of a successful leader of any organization. So with the ideas, you can expect to gain from this book, I believe that if you'll add a positive and expectant attitude that not only you, but your District and its Grand Knights, will be extremely successful in meeting the needs of our Church and Communities.

"Any fact facing us is not as important as our attitude toward it, for that determines our success or failure." -Norman Vincent Peale

The Second Best Job in the Order

If you've served as a Grand Knight of your local council you hopefully experienced what I consider the "*Best Job in the Order*". Being able to help guide Catholic gentlemen in the Service of others has got to be one of the most rewarding experiences that a man can be lucky enough to be chosen for. This is not to say that it doesn't require time, energy and hard work. It can be very demanding and can require a significant sacrifice from the man himself and from his family. All too often it is a job that there are few takers for within the Council. It may even be a job that one was cajoled and talked into by Past Grand Knights of their council. There is a great diversity in the talents, experience and learned leadership skills of the men who become Grand Knights. Due to this, some are well prepared for the duties and challenges they'll face and some are not. And this is where the second best job in the Order comes in!

The role of the District Deputy gives a man a unique opportunity to motivate, mentor and assist four, five or six local leaders in their assigned efforts to provide Service to our Church and their local communities.

In this book we will explore the challenges of this leadership position and ideas and strategies that will hopefully help both the newly assigned and existing District Deputy. These are related from my own experience as a Past Grand Knight, Former District Deputy and from my roles within my State Council as a Chairman, Director and State Officer. Also shared are experiences related to me by current and past Grand Knights and District Deputies that I have had the great honor and pleasure to know and work with.

My first detail experience with the position of District Deputy came about 15 years ago when my best friend was appointed a District Deputy and he asked me to be his District Warden. Attending the council meetings within his district was

my first exposure to how other councils planned for activity and growth. It also showed me how different Grand Knights conducted the everyday business of a working council. After being appointed a District Deputy myself, I was exposed to more councils and more leadership styles. Some of the councils I observed were active and constantly planning for the future, while others appeared to be dying on the vine due to lack of activity and involvement.

One key observation that I made was that all too often the force of the Grand Knight's leadership style or lack thereof had the biggest impact on the Council's short term growth or decline. Only in the most successful of councils did there exist a striking uniqueness, that being a set of Council owned and repeatable practices that would continue from one Grand Knight to another. In each case this led to a steady long term growth of both membership and delivered service. As in my book "*Toward a More Active Council*", we will again visit this strategy and suggest ideas that will help assist your councils in striving to adopt this approach to running their local organizations. So without further ado let's get started!

The Role of the District Deputy

When I first went into training as a Computer Products Instructor, I based my approach and delivery in the classroom to what I had observed from my college instructors and professors. So behind the podium with my notes in hand I lectured my students. And just as I had dozed off during some of my college lectures, so to did my students. I discovered that the standard role model that I had perceived was "*The way you do it*" just didn't hold up. Subsequently, I discovered theories on how adults learn, all of which were based on the concept of involvement. The more one is involved in their learning the better they learn and retain what is being presented to them. The lesson I learned from this experience was not to

always assume that the way something has always been done doesn't mean that it's necessary the only or best way of doing it.

When I took on the role of being a District Deputy, it might have been easier to just imitate District Deputies before me. But from the lessons I've learned as previously related, I decided to acquire more input from brother knights¹ and to better understand the challenges and goals of Grand Knights and Councils.

If you ask a large number of knights what the role of a District Deputy is, you are likely to get as many opinions to the description of this leadership position. Some of these opinions are based on the observed behaviors of the District Deputies known by the knights you are asking. Some will be canned descriptions from Supreme literature and still others will describe what the knight you are asking would have wanted their District Deputy to do or act like. It is from this later feedback that I learned the most of what the role should accomplish and how to have the largest positive impact on the Councils assigned to our care.

Using this feedback I developed specific methods, practices and strategies to follow for my own use. The positive results I obtained putting these techniques into practice exceeded all my expectations.

But will these ideas work in your District? Even though every district and every Grand Knight is unique and each can present different challenges and opportunities for success, I am confident that you can pick-up this approach and tailor it to your personality, leadership style and the unique needs of your Councils.

¹ Also included in this feedback are the results of my continued discussions with Grand Knights from when I was a District Deputy to present time.

My use of these methods led to increased Activity within the councils of my district, stronger and more capable Grand Knights, the formation and certification of 2 new First Degree and a new Second Degree Team, the exceeding of my district's Supreme Membership goal and myself being honored as a *District Deputy of the Year* by my State Council.

My intent here is not to blow my own horn, but instead to assure you that these practices which we'll be discussing really do work and can give you positive results in the guidance of your own district. While your mileage may vary, I am confident you will see positive results.

What the Role of a District Deputy is NOT!

This may be a negative way of starting our discussion, but when asked about the role of the District Deputy, I did receive many remarks that were slanted in this light. Here is some of the feedback I received.

- *“He seems to be only marking time and does not appear to care what happens in my council.”*
- *“He’s not my boss!”*
- *“He shouldn’t be trying to run my Business Meeting!”*
- *“He shouldn’t be correcting me in front of my Council!”*
- *“He shouldn’t be telling me what to do!”*
- *“He shouldn’t be always finding things that we do wrong!”*
- *“Just because he was once a Grand Knight doesn’t mean that what he did in his Council is going to work in mine.”*

- *“Coming to our Council only every other month and leaving immediately after the Business Meeting is not the way to connect to the Council or to me as it’s Grand Knight.”*

While these remarks were collected from a number of Grand Knight experiences, they do have a general theme and pattern. They describe a fairly autocratic, self-confident and independent leadership style. Obviously it is not what these Grand Knights were expecting. To move the discussion back into the realm of the positive, I thanked these Grand Knights for their offered negative criticism and then posed the following questions to them. ***“What would you have had your District Deputy do or act like instead of the behaviors you have described?”*** and ***“What could he have done to not only satisfy you but to delight you?”***

The responses not only surprised me but made me re-think my entire opinion of what one should do to be perceived as a successful District Deputy. Here are some of the more constructive feedbacks I received.

- *“He needs to be not just a good listener, but a Great listener.”*
- *“He needs to focus on the positive things my Council is doing and motivate us to continue these actions.”*
- *“My District Deputy should be soft spoken, cordial and upbeat.”*
- *“He should act like an honored guest and be appreciative of that respect.”*
- *“My District Deputy should be one of my strongest supporters and focused on my success as a Grand Knight.”*

The Second Best Job in the Order

- *“I expect to see my District Deputy at all my Business Meetings, at all our 1st degrees and at least at a few of our major council events.”*
- *“I expect him to stay and socialize with the members of the Council after our Business Meetings.”*
- *“I expect him to call me a couple of times a month just to touch base with me. Just a 5 minute call would do.”*
- *“I expect him to be quiet during discussions of motions during our business meeting unless asked by me for his input.”*
- *“I expect him to help me plan for what I want to accomplish in my Council during my term of office.”*
- *“I expect him to secure State Council support from State Officers, Directors and Chairmen for whatever assistance is needed by my Council.”*
- *“I expect him to wait until after our Business Meeting for him to discuss with me what I did well and where I can use some improvement. I expect this to be a private meeting just between the two of us. I’d expect the tone of this discussion to be mentoring and not critical.”*
- *“I expect my District Deputy to be patient with me, to be slow to judge me and always available to listen to me when I need his advise.”*
- *“When things get hot and emotions are running high, I expect my District Deputy to be calm, cool and collected. I expect him to be the person who can get people from both sides of an issue to sit down and work things to a mutual resolution.”*

- *“I expect my District Deputy to be extremely positive, an optimist’s optimist, someone who can always see the good side of things.”*
- *“I expect him to act as though his success was dependent on my success.”*

Obviously these remarks speak clearly to the perceived needs and expectations of a District Deputy’s prime customer, the Grand Knight. A very different theme and leadership style seems to be called for. From these remarks we can see that they expect the role of the District Deputy to be one of a good listener, with an extremely positive outlook and a mentoring and supportive demeanor.

And to provide the final balance to the range of feedback I have received, here are some remarks that relate very positive experiences with current or former District Deputies.

- *“He’s a great guy, very supportive and encouraging to myself and my Council.”*
- *“He’s always very positive. He challenges and motivates us to continue the good things we are already doing as well as find creative ways to do more.”*
- *“He’s very informative with regards to State and Supreme programs. He always lets me decide the best way to introduce or implement these initiatives. If I miss something, he’ll remind me in the form of a question, such as “Did you consider. . . ? or How do you plan to handle this aspect of the program?” I like his approach as it’s not confrontive or authoritative. He helps improve my ability to make good decisions as a Grand Knight.”*

- *“He always finds time to listen whether after a meeting or on one of our monthly phone calls.”*
- *“He always seems to have one or more nice things to say about the Council or myself as their Grand Knight. These are always sincere and don’t come across as flattery. He always sees something positive in just about any situation. This comes thru in his attitude and how he greets and talks to members in the Council.”*
- *“He motivated our Council to build its own 1st Degree Team. It’s one of the best things we have done as a Council. While we were initially skeptical that we could pull it together, our District Deputy worked closely with us to recruit team members, plan practices and dinners that raised the funds for our robes. He also got us to view this as a total Council project instead of a small group of team members. This led to 2 or 3 Council brothers learning each part. At our degrees we get 25-30 members to attend as spectators and after the degree we hold a social with our wives to allow the new members to get to know their new Council family. Our District Deputy was absolutely great through the entire formation process and the whole fraternal year. We were not only proud to make Star Council this year but very happy that he was recognized at the State Convention. He deserved it!”*

Notice the tone in many of these remarks. These Grand Knights were not only satisfied with the performance of their District Deputies, they were delighted! If you read further into some of these remarks you’ll discover not only praise but specific actions, leadership approaches and the way that successful District Deputies communicate and work with their Grand Knights.

The Second Best Job in the Order

In the chapters to follow, we'll explore these techniques and provide you with ideas and suggested practices that I and the District Deputies I have known found useful in succeeding in

“The Second Best Job in the Order!”



**Notes Area for Your ideas on
Introductory Remarks**

Section Two: The Role of the District Deputy

What is the role of the District Deputy? Hopefully some of the feedback for the Grand Knight Survey that has been shared with you has given you some food for thought as you embark either on your first year as a new District Deputy or your 2nd, 3rd or 4th as an existing District Deputy.

In either case this feedback can get you to view the position in your main customer's eyes, that of course being the Grand Knight. Even though each Grand Knight has their own views of your role and for that matter their own role as Grand Knight, it is the composite of all these viewpoints that can lead us to an overall better perspective of the District Deputy role. So let's try to glean from their feedback specific actions and leadership styles.

In the pages that follow, we will view the District Deputy position as a

1. Active Listener
2. Mentor/Coach
3. Communicator
4. Planner
5. Optimist
6. Problem Solver
7. Guest
8. Grand Knight Supporter
9. And a Positive Force within the Order

Someone once said that the best way to change something or someone is to change yourself first. I believe

the same is true in attempting to change and improve your Grand Knights and their Councils. Changing the way you think about your role as a District Deputy is your first step to changing how your Grand Knights think about their role as a Council leader. Change the way you think about what is possible within your district and your Grand Knights will start to think differently about what is possible within their councils, parishes and communities.

Throw Away the Past

To make this change in yourself and your thinking, start by throwing away all past ways of doing this job. Maybe your own council has had District Deputies with authoritative styles or maybe they were very critical and outspoken as to how your Grand Knight or Council should do things. And maybe as a District Deputy yourself, you've seen some of these behaviors being exhibited. While the past can't be changed, it can be put aside as a learning experience and not repeated.

If on the other hand you recognize some of the good leadership styles we will explore either in yourself or from Former District Deputies you have known, the process will act as a confirmation and endorsement to behaviors you should repeat or continue to use. It is our hope in either case that you'll be exposed and influenced to positive changes in your future leadership style and further that the Grand Knights under your guidance will become better leaders, more apt to assist their councils in Activity, Involvement and Service growth.

Leadership Styles

1.0) District Deputy as an Active Listener

Case 1: The Baseball Game

Participants: Sam and his wife

It is the bottom of the 9th inning, the score is tied, the bases are loaded and the count is 3 Balls, 2 Strikes to David Ortiz of the Red Sox. Intently Sam waits for the next pitch, when his wife, who has been talking about her sister and brother-in-law for the last 3 minutes asks “*Are you listening to me?!?*” He diverts his eyes to his wife and quickly responds “*Sure, you were saying something about your Sister.*” Just then Sam hears the crack of the bat and knows he better not turn away to see whether the Red Sox have won the game.

Was Sam listening to his wife? Well on the positive side he did pick up that she was talking about her sister, and this might save him from his wife’s ire! But on the negative side, he didn’t pick up that his wife has planned to schedule them to play cards with his in-laws on the same day he had plan to watch the Yankees/Red Sox double header.

So it’s probably safe to say that Sam heard part of what his wife said but wasn’t really listening.

Case 2: The Parliamentary Expert

Participants: Harry, the DD and Carlos, one of his GKs

Harry takes great pride in his knowledge of Robert’s Rules of Order and just about anything parliamentary. Since becoming a District Deputy, he believes he has put this to good use by interrupting all of his 5 Grand Knights’ Business Meetings at every parliamentary infraction, no matter how small or minor.

Tonight at one of his Councils, he is doing the same thing, despite the fact that while not perfect, Carlos, the Grand Knight, is running a pretty orderly meeting. The Grand Knight's real challenge is balancing the outspoken opinions of 4 Past Grand Knights who were monopolizing the discussion on the floor with that of three 1st Degree members who want to run more family and youth related programs. Carlos sees this as a no win situation. He can either support the new members and lose some of the support of the PGKs or he can side with them and limit the involvement of these new members. He wonders "*Why isn't my District Deputy advising me?*"

At the end of the meeting, Harry takes Carlos aside and tells him "*Worthy Grand Knight, I was listening intently during your Business Meeting and recorded 13 parliamentary mistakes that you made. I think you need to focus on learning Robert's Rules of Order.*" Carlos responds "*Oh really! May I respectfully request you open your ears to what was really important to listen to!*"

Do you agree with the Grand Knight or the District Deputy? Was Harry listening? And if so was he tuned into the right sounds?

Case 3: Council Politics

Participants: Mike, the DD and Paul, his District Warden

Mike, a new District Deputy, has two councils that meet on the same night each month. Not being able to be in two places at the same time, he asked Paul, his District Warden, to attend one meeting while he attends the other.

Mike has asked Paul to take minutes of all the motions and project reports that are discussed. Instead Paul has focused his attention on a subtle rivalry between Fred and Jake, two members of the Council. Jake is the brand new Grand Knight and Fred is a very angry, outspoken, long

time member. After the meeting, Paul sticks around and talks with some of the council members. He learns that Fred and Jake had both run for the position of Grand Knight and that Jake won by only 1 vote. Since his defeat, Fred has played the role of a devil's advocate to anything that Jake tries to implement in the Council. Fred is extremely negative and the dispute has caused some members to stop coming to business meetings. Paul can see that this is going to split the Council into two fractions, those supporting Jake and those supporting Fred. When he reports this to Mike, Paul is quite surprised that the new District Deputy is not interested in what he calls internal council politics and is upset that Paul has not recorded the motions of the meeting.

Who was listening and who should have been? Or is it time that Mike just get a new District Warden?

The purpose of these 3 short stories is to describe some of the aspects of Active Listening. Let's expand on what we can learn from them.

1.1) Listening versus Hearing

Hearing is purely an audio related sense. Our ears pick up sound waves and our brains attempt to identify and interpret the sounds meaning. This rudimentary sense often gives us only a basic understanding and we must rely on our other senses for better comprehension. This is where listening comes in. When you are truly listening to someone, you employ far more than just your ears. You look at the person who is talking and pick up many non-verbal clues to what is being said. In a few seconds you can pick up the mood of the person, their expression, priority, if there is humor, seriousness, scorn, defensiveness, hurt, love, kindness, joy, flattery, etc.

Listening requires all of our senses, our attention and our past experiences and knowledge to correctly interpret another's message. This is because the speaker is also using much more than the raw sounds of their voice to create that message.

In our first story, Sam was hearing but not listening to his wife. He missed important information and most likely missed the opportunity to participate in the decision of when to play cards with his in-laws.

LESSON: As a District Deputy it is extremely important that you develop active listening skills. Especially when listening to your Grand Knights.

HOW TO:

- 1) **Look at the person you are listening to.** If he is talking only to you, maintain eye contact with him. You don't have to stare him down, but comfortably maintain eye contact, looking at his eyes, his mouth, the expression on his face, his body language, his hands and his posture. These all give important clues to the real meaning of what is being communicated.
- 2) **Ask questions about what is being said.** One type of question you should ask is what I call an "*I want to know more*" question. Ask questions that make who you are listening to, talk more. Examples "*Can you give me another example of what you are talking about?*"; "*Tell me more.*"; "*Is there any more that you know about this?*" or "*How do you think you should proceed?*" This type of question keeps the speaker talking and you listening. More information will now be available for you to learn about what is really being said. This makes you more likely to be able to answer or offer something pertinent and intelligent.

The second type of question you want to be asking are confirming questions. These make sure that what you have heard is what the speaker meant to get across. For example: “*Just to be sure I’m understanding you, are you saying that <in your own words explain what you think he is saying>?*” or “*What I’m hearing you say is <explain in your own words>. Is that what you are trying to get across?*” When you ask confirming questions, you not only ensure your own correct understanding, but you also provide the speaker with the opportunity to understand how his words are being interpreted. And believe me, we are all susceptible to saying one thing and meaning another!

- 3) **Take notes when possible.** If it is convenient, jot down summary points from the person you are listening to. Many speakers are not concise with their words especially when speaking “*off the cuff*” without any preparation. By goaling yourself to write down the speaker’s key points, you automatically engage yourself to listen more intently. This allows your brain to filter out the chaff from the grain. This also provides you a basis for posing questions to the speaker that either confirm what you thought you heard or requests additional information.

1.2) Listening for the Main Topic

When you listen through the filter of your own belief, opinions and personal agendas, you are less likely to correctly identify the principal topic of discussion. The reason for this is that you are not always aware of what the main topic will be. You can come to a discussion with the expectation of one topic being discussed and find it is

far more important to pay attention and really listen to another.

As in the case of our second story, Harry definitely came to the meeting with a personal agenda. His expectation was to find parliamentary mistakes and thus blinded himself to the really important discussion on the floor between the Past Grand Knights and the new members. He further missed the fact that the Grand Knight needed and wanted his advice on addressing the opinions and need for involvement from two sides of his Council's membership. Harry makes the situation worst by being the first to speak after the meeting. Being so focused on his own agenda made him oblivious to what was important to Carlos. He thus missed the opportunity to recover by simply asking the Grand Knight an open ended question such as *"What were your thoughts on the meeting tonight?"* or *"What challenges did you feel you faced tonight and how do you feel you handled them?"* This would have minimally helped the District Deputy to realize what he had missed during the meeting and what the Grand Knight perceived as most important. This could have then been followed up by a probing question such as *"How else do you feel you could have handled the discussion and what different results would have likely occurred?"* This recovery should probably not ever include a discussion about the 13 parliamentary mistakes unless they had direct bearing on how the Grand Knight could have better handled the discussion on the floor.

LESSON: Before you commit your attention and interest, make sure you have chosen the most important topic that is being discussed.

HOW TO:

- 1) **Leave your agendas home!** You are coming to listen and not to talk, so come with an open mind to

whatever might be discussed. If you are coming to talk directly with your Grand Knight on a one to one basis, find out what **his** agenda is. Do this by asking open ended questions. If you are attending a meeting with more than the two of you, try to refrain from speaking and let the topic of most importance come to the surface. Then latch on to it with both ears and all your consciousness.

- 2) **Take notes and write out the questions** you'll need to ask the Grand Knight after the meeting is over. Again these should not be part of your agenda or information you wanted to pass onto the Grand Knight, but instead questions directly related to the issues the Grand Knight is facing.
- 3) **Confirm with the Grand Knight** that you have the most important topic. To do this, simply ask a confirming question, such as: *"It sounds like <name the topic> was the key issue discussed this evening. Do you agree?"* This allows the Grand Knight to be in sync with you before your discussion with him begins. And it allows you the opportunity to recover if you didn't get the most important topic correct. Either way you'll be on the same page even if a correction is necessary. If multiple topics of similar importance are discussed, ask the Grand Knight to tell you what he thinks their ranked importance is. Ask him something like *"Worthy Grand Knight, I heard the Council discuss multiple issues tonight <optionally list them> that appear to all be important to your Council. How would you rank them from most to least importance."*

1.3) Who to Listen to

Our last story about Paul the District Warden is an attempt to get you to see important information can come from different and sometimes unlikely sources. While Mike the District Deputy has asked Paul to take notes at the meeting, something far more important happens and Paul correctly identifies it and actively listens to the issue develop between Jake the Grand Knight and the angry Fred. To find out more Paul talks with members of the Council after the Business Meeting, then delivers this important intelligence to Mike, the District Deputy, who quickly devalues and ignores it.

While you might not find yourself in this exact same position, it does have some important learnings.

LESSON: Becoming an active listener requires you to become open and interested to ALL who speak to you. For you never know when something important will be presented to you.

HOW TO:

- 1) **No matter whom you talk with, continue to practice the skills we have discussed.** Not only will it make you a better listener, but it will also open alternate sources of information to you.
- 2) **Plan on staying after a Business Meeting to actively listen to Council members.** If you pose the right open-ended questions you will likely receive information about what is going on behind the scenes in the Council. You can use this to assist the Grand Knight to address and resolve any items that need his attention. Sometimes you'll hear positive or negative feedback, and other times critical issues regarding Retention, Council Activity, New Member Involvement or

The Second Best Job in the Order relationships with the Pastor, the Parish Community, PGKs, etc. Members are often very forth coming with opinions as to what is ailing their Council to an outsider and yet reluctant to complain directly to the Grand Knight. Thus it is easy for a Grand Knight to be unaware of some of this information. You can become his second set of ears and allow the Grand Knight to become knowledgeable to hidden problems within his Council. When you relate this information to the Grand Knight, keep your sources confidential. Identify it as feedback from his Council Membership and not from a specific person. If you listen to many different members' feedback, it will be easier to frame the input as coming from the membership at large versus one possibly disgruntled member with an axe to grind. Be prepared and open to hear two sides to each issue or a whole spectrum of opinions. Be sure to ask these members for constructive ideas how to rectify the problems they relate, so that their feedback doesn't come across only as complaining.

Present the feedback you receive to the Grand Knight in the same form it was offered. Don't draw conclusions or attempt to interpret what you have heard. Your job is to accurately as possible repeat what was said. It is the Grand Knight's responsibility to analyze and act upon this feedback. Remember you are relating opinions, feelings and different people's perspective on the doings of the Council. So be careful not to preach or lecture the Grand Knight as though what you heard were proven facts.

Ask the Grand Knight what meaning he sees in the feedback and how he feels he should address it. Be supportive; ask a lot of questions and **LISTEN!**

Hopefully, you have picked up a few ideas on becoming an active listener. If you were already a great listener, thanks for listening and I hope what was said has confirmed the skills you have employed over the years. If a lot of the ideas were new to you, we encourage you to give them a try and practice them until they become a habit with you.

2.0) District Deputy as a Mentor and Coach

From my own experience I've found the leadership styles of successful District Deputies differs greatly from that of successful Grand Knights. This may be a contributing reason why many Past Grand Knights often struggle during their 1st year as a District Deputy. The directive style that worked moving a Council forward is often resisted and bucked by other Grand Knights when used in the role of a new District Deputy. The role of a Grand Knight is to set goals and direct his Council to them. He is where the buck stops, where responsibility is assigned and delegated. He is the prime decision maker of the Council. He maintains order and harmony among the many personalities of the membership. The Grand Knight is also the person responsible for setting and promoting a vision or long term goal for the Council. If successful, he has been the catalyst to increased or continued activity and involvement within his Council. If he has been a good planner and has been concerned for the future and continued growth of his Council, it is likely that he has established structures, procedures and repeatable practices for the Council to follow after he passes the gavel to his successor. A key point to make here is that the Grand Knight has a one-to-many relationship with his council brothers. Because of this we bestow on our Grand Knights a special respect, loyalty and obedience. As we are a volunteer organization, without this fealty, the management of the Council membership would be an extremely difficult task to successfully accomplish.

Now let's take a look at the District Deputy role. It is not the responsibility of a District Deputy to manage the councils in his district that duty belongs to the Grand Knights. The buck does NOT stop at the District Deputy,

but instead at the Grand Knight's door. Responsibility for the operation and activity of a council is not the bailiwick of the District Deputy but instead that of the Grand Knight. The District Deputy should not be the prime decision maker of the Council, nor even directly involved. This is the duty of the Grand Knight. While the District Deputy is obviously concerned about the harmony and order maintained among the membership of the councils within his district, this again is not his direct responsibility. Maintaining protocol, order and the spirit d'corp of a Council's membership is the direct responsibility of its elected Grand Knight and no one else. And while a good District Deputy should be motivating and inspiring, it is not his responsibility or his place to set a Council vision or long term goal. It is the Grand Knight who should be dreaming of what his Council can become or accomplish. It is his position to share and communicate that dream to the members and hopefully to make their own. Finally, while a Grand Knight might learn from his District Deputy how to setup repeatable practices for future Grand Knights to follow, it remains his (the GK) responsibility to introduce and install within his Council's way of doing things. This is not a task for a District Deputy even if we are talking about his own home Council.

So what is the role that a District Deputy should play? The function of the District Deputy was always designed as a one-to-one relationship versus the one to many perspective of a Grand Knight. It is in this private relationship that the District Deputy can determine what leadership development is needed. Hopefully he has been assigned to this position because of his knowledge and experience in dealing with others. Using these assets, he is able to tailor his mentoring and coaching style to best

address each unique relationship he has established with the Grand Knights in his district. It is normal for all of us to recommend to others what has worked for us, but a good coach knows better. Each player on a team has a unique personality and a good coach knows this and changes their approach to what will work best with each player. In a similar way a good District Deputy tailors the way he mentors each Grand Knight. Some will need more support and some less. Some Grand Knights will be extremely receptive to the wisdom you have to offer while other Grand Knights will be far more independent and sometimes almost resistive to any advice or feedback. Due to the diversity of leadership styles you can expect to find in your district, it would be futile to try to teach you how to mentor each. So instead I offer for your consideration some general guidelines that you should be able to utilize with nearly any mentoring approach you'll choose to use with your District Deputy to Grand Knight relationships.

2.1) You are coming to the Business Meeting to support the Grand Knight not to deal with his Council

Consider the real purpose of a District Deputy attending a Council Business Meeting? Many District Deputies I've talked with believe they are there to observe the Council itself.

First, it is not the Council that you should be visiting; it is the Grand Knight. The primary reason to attend a Council Business Meeting is to see the Grand Knight in action as a Council Leader. You could also do this at a Council Planning Meeting or a committee meeting of a major Council event that the Grand Knight is sitting in on. You need to see him lead, make decisions and guide his Council to make their own decisions. Hopefully you can see how coming to observe your Grand Knights versus their Councils can completely change what you will pay attention to. Doing this will put you into a

The Second Best Job in the Order mentoring/coaching mindset, and focus your attention to prepare for your post-meeting one-on-one with the Grand Knight.

Secondly, while Supreme provides a guideline that District Deputies should visit their Councils at least every other month, I would encourage you to commit to your Grand Knights that you'll be present EVERY month. What can be missed in 60 days can be critical to the success of the Grand Knight. If you are there EVERY month you make a silent statement that you really do care about his success, and that it is important to you. Not only is it recommended to commit to visits EVERY month but it is also recommended to call your Grand Knight on the phone at least once and preferably twice a month just to check in on him and make yourself available to his needs. Some monthly visits are not possible, I understand this, but let them be the exception and not the rule. Sending your District Warden or another District Deputy can be alternatives when it is impossible for you to make it. This again sends a clear message that you believe your physical or virtual presence is important and that support of your Grand Knight is imperative to you.

Finally if you are coming to observe the Grand Knight, be prepared to measure his leadership behavior both by what he does and how well he does it. I've often seen District Deputies with checklists designed to evaluate a Council's health. So when these District Deputies go to a Council Business Meeting guess what they evaluate and pay attention to? What they may not realize is that they are doing the job of the Grand Knight. If you want an evaluation of your district's councils, then ask their leaders for it. And once completed use the results as an opportunity to do more coaching/mentoring with your Grand Knights. Giving your Grand Knights the opportunity to objectively evaluate their Council's health with criteria you provide and then to formulate and implement their own improvement plan is exactly the leadership activity we should want demonstrated by our Grand Knights.

The Second Best Job in the Order

Getting back to what you, as a District Deputy, should be evaluating at your Council visits, please consider the following form as a starting point for initial measuring. Modify these criteria with your own ideas and tailor it to your needs. The only base assumption made for criteria on the form was “Does it evaluate the Grand Knight’s ability to lead his Council?” For example, you’ll notice there are no form completion questions such as “Have you submitted your Form-185 or 365?” That question should instead appear on a Council Evaluation Form. It remains the Grand Knight’s responsibility but doesn’t give a leadership style measurement that you and he can work to improve.

Grand Knight Leadership Evaluation Form

(To be used by District Deputy at meetings where the Grand Knight is demonstrating his ability to lead his Council)

Grand Knight Name: _____

Council: _____ **Location:** _____ **Date:** _____

Type of Meeting: Business Planning Committee Other

Preparation: (From your impression how prepared did the Grand Knight appear to be for this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average Not Prepared

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Listening: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to listen to others during the meeting?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average

Not Listening

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Openness to New Ideas: (From your impression how open to new ideas did the Grand Knight appear to be during this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average Not Open

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

The Second Best Job in the Order

Involving Members: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight involve others during this event?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not Involve Others

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Projecting a Positive, Can Do Attitude: (From your impression did the Grand Knight appear to project a positive, can do attitude?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not Project a Positive Attitude

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Maintaining Order: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to maintain order during this event?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not Maintain Order

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Motivating Members: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to motivate members during this event?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not Motivate or De-motivated

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Vision (Ability to see the Big Picture & communicating it to others): (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to see the *Big Picture* and communicate a clear vision as to the direction the Council should go?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not See the Big Picture or Failed to communicate a Clear Vision

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Appreciation of Others: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to express his appreciation of others during this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average

Did Not Express Appreciation

Give one observation in support of your rating_____

Accepting the Will of the Council: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to accept the Will of the Council during this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average

Did Not Accept or Did Not appear to understand the Council's desire

Give one observation in support of your rating_____

Increasing the Activity of the Council: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to increase the activity of the Council during this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average

Did Not Increase or Decreased Council Activity

Give one observation in support of your rating_____

Setting up Repeatable Practices: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to set up repeatable practices during this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average

Did Not Setup any repeatable practices

Give one observation in support of your rating_____

Ability to Learn from Past Successes and Failures: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to learn from past successes and failures during this event?)

Excellent Above Average Average Below Average

Did Not Learn or repeated past mistakes

Give one observation in support of your rating_____

The Second Best Job in the Order

Accepting Risk: (From your impression how willing did the Grand Knight appear to be in accepting risk or unknowns during this event?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not Accept Any Risk

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Enabling Others to Act and Work to their own Potential: (From your impression how well did the Grand Knight appear to enable others to act and work to their own potential during this event?)

- Excellent Above Average Average Below Average
Did Not Enable others

Give one observation in support of your rating _____

Overall Leadership Rating:

- Needs No Improvement Needs Minor Refinements
Needs Some Improvements Needs Much Improvement

What Needs Most Improvement: _____

In your opinion what skill needs the most Work and Improvement?
(Ask the Grand Knight how he might improve this skill)

Strongest Leadership Skill: _____

In your opinion what was the Grand Knight's strongest demonstrated leadership skill or action during this event?

(Compliment him on your observation)

Grand Knight's Observations and Perceptions: _____

Ask the Grand Knight for his comments or questions

Note: Only discuss with the Grand Knight those areas where there was a clear demonstration of the skill being evaluated. If the example you documented was an indication of his strength in that skill, compliment him lavishly. If it shows a need for improvement, ask him questions to get him to that conclusion and then ask him how he might have handled it differently. Your personal opinion of your Grand Knight's leadership skills while important is only one man's perspective. Most important is the Grand Knight's perspective. You are the catalyst for his awareness of his own leadership performance. Do not attempt to teach or instruct him on his weaknesses, but instead act as a supportive facilitator to his own self learning. Adults learn best when there is choice and most often when they are doing the choosing of what they wish to learn. By facilitating this self-discovery of areas in their leadership abilities that need improvement, your Grand Knights are more likely to be receptive to their own self directed improvements.

2.2) Listen, listen, listen, question and only then talk

A good mentor listens and then finds a way to listen more. A great mentor will listen with his eyes, his mind, his past experiences, his heart and his ears. Once you have heard what has been said, it is normal to want to offer your advice and wisdom, but try generating a question instead. The purpose of this question is to confirm that what you heard agrees with the message the speaker was trying to get across. If you are in sync, you are then ready to talk.

You now have another choice to either show how smart you are or show the Grand Knight how smart he is. Great mentors bring the person they are assisting to their train of thought by a gentle pull versus a forceful push. Try this little experiment: Ask someone you know to hold out their open hand palm facing out away from their body (like they were signaling someone to STOP). Now without saying anything put your open palm against theirs and push with a modest amount of effort. What is the reaction? _____

Now thank them and shake their hand but don't let go. Slowly begin to gently pull them toward you while you slowly backup. (Be very gradual starting with hardly any pull and very slowly increase the pull toward you.) What was the reaction this time? _____

Hopefully your results were typical. People resist when they are pushed either physically or mentally, but when gently and gradually pulled they will normally allow themselves to be led either physically to a new location or mentally to a new viewpoint. So instead of telling the Grand Knight what he should do, ask him to tell you what he needs to improve and how he plans to get there. By simply recognizing his own areas of improvement, the Grand Knight can develop a stronger commitment to future positive change. If he is given the opportunity to determine himself what that self-improvement plan should be, it will become more personal and more likely

to be seen through to fruition. If he struggles in either the identification of areas to improve or in coming up with plans to solve them, he will also be far more likely to ask your advice and more receptive to accept it. So remember Listen, Listen More, and then Question your Grand Knights to gently lead them to positive self-discovery and improvement.

Below are some examples of questions that can be used in practicing non-directive coaching:

“What do you think the problem is?”

“How often does this happen?”

“If you tried this again, what would you do differently?”

“What matters most to you or your Council?”

“What would you or your Council like to achieve?”

“What have you tried so far?”

“How do you know that this is true?”

“Who might be able to help?”

“What support do you need?”

“What options do you think are best?”

“What might get in the way?”

“How can you succeed at this?”

2.3) Provide data for the Grand Knight to make decisions.

Successful leaders are good decision makers. So each decision you make for one of your Grand Knights is actually depriving him of the opportunity for leadership development. Focus your attention on providing data for your Grand Knights to make their own decisions. This data can come from your present and past observation of their leadership style and skills, from listening to Council Members and from your own past experiences as a Grand Knight. Take extra effort in not drawing conclusions to the data you provide, for in a way this is making a decision. Instead deliver the facts and observations

The Second Best Job in the Order

as data points and let the Grand Knight draw the lines that connect this information and point to possible conclusions. Help the process by always asking your Grand Knight to evaluate and analyze what you have told him. Simply ask *“What do you think this information means?”* or *“How does this impact your Council’s development?”* or *“What conclusions would be reasonable to draw from these facts?”*

We have previously discussed how to deliver the feedback you might receive from listening to Council members, so there’s no need to repeat it here. But the principle of recording and reporting without commentary or attached opinions applies to other information you collect and deliver to your Grand Knights. Even something, as simple as reporting the date, location and registration details of the next 3rd degree exemplification, can be used in a mentoring way. If well before the business meeting you provide your Grand Knight with these facts and ask him how his council could make the maximum use of the event you might be surprised how differently the Grand Knight will view the event. However he answers, ask him to present the event to his Council and explain to them the benefits he just discussed with you. Here’s one scenario of how this might happen.

(Before the Business Meeting during a one-on-one Phone call or visit)

District Deputy: *“Worthy Grand Knight, there is a 3rd Degree scheduled to take place on February 11th at Noon, Candidates need to be there no later than 11:30AM. How might your Council take advantage of this opportunity?”*

Grand Knight: *“Well we do have a couple of knights that have been waiting for a 3rd Degree. I suppose our Membership Director and I could bring them.”*

District Deputy: *“Good! Is there any other way you might use this event to assist your Council?”*

Grand Knight: *“Well we have been talking about getting more of our inactive members back into the activity of our Council. There are a number of them who are 2nd degrees and*

The Second Best Job in the Order almost an equal number of 1st degrees that have not gone any further. If you could hold a 2nd degree for us this month or next month, we could probably get many of them to come. We could make some personal invitations to come back to the Council and then set the expectations that they could take their 3rd degree in February. And in the meantime we could contact all the existing inactive 2nd degrees with a similar invitation.”

District Deputy: “I’ll start pulling that second degree together tonight. Those are great ideas! And now that you are on a roll, is there any way you might use this event to increase involvement within your Council?”

Grand Knight: “I’m not sure! What do you mean; wouldn’t we be increasing the involvement of those inactive members?”

District Deputy: “Well, yes you would be, but I was thinking about your existing 3rd degree brothers. Can you think of anyway to involve them using the February Third Degree?”

Grand Knight: “Well I guess we could encourage a bunch of our existing members to attend as spectators especially the sponsors of the 2nd degree members. And if we had some kind of Council Social that night, we could use it to welcome those new 3rd degrees back into their Council Family. We might even ask our Chaplain to put on a prayer service or Rosary for the whole Council right before the Social. I’m thinking we could do a pot luck supper and get my Deputy Grand Knight’s son, who is a DJ, to bring some music that we could dance to. Is that what you mean?”

District Deputy: “I think you really hit the nail on the head! It sounds like an awesome Council Event! Tell you what, instead of me reporting on this 3rd Degree during my District Deputy Report, why don’t you present the February Degree exemplification and share these ideas with your Council. I think you have what it takes to get your whole Council behind this. I’d only suggest that you might want to talk this up with your DKG, Chancellor, Membership & Council Directors and

The Second Best Job in the Order
your Retention Committee before the Business Meeting. That will get you some initial support and some people to start working some of the details.”

I know this example is made up, but it does follow the general rule that people who are expected and encouraged to think and be creative most always develop creative ideas and solutions. The second point to learn from this example is how even a simple piece of data, i.e. a 3rd Degree date, presented as a seed for ideas to increase Activity and Involvement can develop into great Council events and activities. Finally, presenting information to your Grand Knights in this manner provides opportunities for them to develop and practice leadership skills that involve and activates members as well as bringing new activity to their councils.

2.4) Help your Grand Knight to learn how to research an issue

We have previously discussed how important it is for a District Deputy to learn how to gather and analyze the facts concerning an issue before jumping to a conclusion or forming an opinion. This skill is equally important to good council leaders, in particular, your Grand Knights. It is normal for all of us to want to express an immediate opinion of whatever the topic is that is being discussed. Or when a problem or issue is presented to us, we will want to express our first reaction and give advice. Despite this being a normal human response, good leaders develop and use the skills of reflection and analysis in the process of making decisions. In other words they “*get the facts*” before drawing conclusions. You can help your Grand Knights develop these skills of Reflection and Analysis. To accomplish this, first set the example by practicing the skills yourself and secondly gently lead them with thought provoking questions that will provide opportunities for them to research and study the facts surrounding their own decision making.

Start by first guiding them to identify the issues and decisions they are or may need to tackle in the neat future. During your one on ones with your Grand Knights simply ask “*What issues or decisions are you currently dealing with or will have to deal with in the upcoming months?*” While their answers may vary, here are some possible follow-up questions you might want to consider using.

- **“*What facts have you already collected?*”**

If the Grand Knight responds with “He said/She said or so and so feels that... or I feel that Ask him whether these are hard facts or possibly gossip, hear say or opinions. Ask him what risks he’ll be assuming if he treats them as hard evidence. While some second hand information can be both reliable and sufficient for some decisions, it should whenever possible be verified by speaking directly with the true source of the information. If someone told you that

they heard that someone said that the pastor said such and such, wouldn't it be very dangerous to assume that you have reliable information? Wouldn't it be better to just pick up the phone and call the pastor to find out what he actually said and the context he said it in? The same is true for other information your Grand Knights hear about people and organizations within their parish, council or community. So encourage them to make that call and get the facts they need from the proverbial "horse's mouth".

- ***"How will you be gathering the facts behind the decisions you need to make?"***

This question will focus the Grand Knight away from debating whether or not he needs to gather facts for the decisions he needs to make and onto the "how" he will collect them. Listen carefully how he answers this question. The more direct to the source of the issue the better the information or more likely the information he receives will be relevant to the decision he needs to make. For example, let's say there is an issue with a Past Grand Knight of the Council. When asked how he will collect information about the issue, the Grand Knight's answers can represent different levels of directness. Such as:

Very Direct – *"I'll personally visit and talk with the PGK."*

Direct – *"I'll make a phone call to the PGK and chat with him"*

Less Direct – *"I'll send the PGK an email message."*

Indirect – *"I'll have my DGK or another member of the Council talk with the PGK."*

Very Indirect – *"I'll chat with members or the Council (or with the Officers of the Council) and ask them how they feel about the issue."*

Indifferent – *"If the PGK has an issue, he can come to me to discuss it!"*

Your job as a mentor is to encourage your Grand Knights to be as direct as the situation will allow. Do this by gently leading him to the benefits we have previously alluded to.

- ***“Before reaching a decision, how will you analyze or determine what the facts you have collected mean?”***

Collecting information, while an extremely important first step, is only a starting point to making good decisions. Properly analyzing the facts that we have received will lead us to proper conclusions. When asking your Grand Knights questions similar to this one, you are looking for responses that include consultations with others. We all have a tendency to view facts only within our own perspective or experiences. Asking others for their opinions and viewpoints on the facts we have collected allow our own conclusions to be either endorsed or re-examined in the light of another’s experience and judgment. Even if you can only suggest to your Grand Knights to minimally explain their own conclusions to others on their staff or within the Council, you will help them to derive a consensus. You will also make it more likely that your Grand Knights will receive advice, guidance and support from Officers and Members they trust. Sometimes decisions have a time urgency that may need to preclude this collaboration, but hopeful these will be in the minority.

2.5) Help your Grand Knight to consider the consequences of a decision

Good leaders take into consideration the likely consequences of decisions they plan to make. Not only should these likely consequences be weighed in the making of those decisions, but fall back plans should be formulated or minimally considered to deal with both likely and less-likely consequences. For example, consider the decision to turn down a request for a large donation. Financially this might be an extremely sound and prudent decision for a less than affluent council, but a likely consequence of the decision could be a perception that the Council or even the Order is not sympathetic to the charitable cause or need. Taking this possible consequence into the process of decision making, a

good leader might plan one or more of the following backup actions:

- Suggest the Council consider a more modest donation that is more in line with the financial condition of the Council.
- Communicate either personally or in writing the reasons why the Council has rejected the request and offer other non-financial support or assistance.

As a District Deputy your role is to train your Grand Knights to consider the consequences of the decisions they have to make. Telling them the consequences of a particular decision should not be your first approach, instead try to get each Grand Knight to come up with his own conclusions. Use open ended questions to accomplish this and then ask them how the possible results they came up with will effect their pending decision.

2.6) Make your Grand Knights good listeners by being one yourself

As a general rule we all attempt to imitate good role models or people we perceive as successful. While the ratio of current District Deputies to Grand Knights is something like 1 to 5, due to their potential 4 year term, the ratio of men chosen to serve as District Deputies represents a much smaller percentage to that of Past Grand Knights. Thus the red ribbon around your neck identifies you as one from a small and select group of successful leaders. My point here is not flattery but to drive home the fact that not only does your State Deputy believe you to be a successful leader, but your Grand Knights have the same perceptions. Whether you realize it or not they are observing your leadership style and behavior. If you demonstrate good listening skills in all your dealings with your Grand Knights and their councils, then they will be far more likely to imitate those skills themselves. As we have previously discussed some of the techniques one can employ to become an active and effective listener, let us focus on the benefits of both you and your Grand Knights becoming better listeners.

- **Respect** – Respect is a shared thing. When a leader really listens with his senses and attention, he is respecting the person he is talking with. This received courtesy is most always returned with a reciprocal level of respect. Needless to say, respected leaders are listened to.
- **Better Decisions** – Since active listening implies asking questions for more information from the speaker, leaders who actively listen learn more of the facts around an issue to be resolved. The resulting decision tends to be more solid and encompassing. It provides a better solution than one made with fewer facts.
- **Open Mind** – An active listener waits before they speak or come to a conclusion. This is because they are focused on what is being said and how it is being said. Since they are probing the speaker's intent with confirming and exploring questions, they realize that they are not ready to give their opinion or decision. This keeps them open minded to other possible solutions to the issue at hand and responsive to the opinions and viewpoints of others.

2.7) Teach how to set goals not what goals to set

In every way that two councils can be the same, they can also be different. Even the same Council, under one Grand Knight, can have a very different personality and image than it had under a past Grand Knight. Part of the reason for this is that the goals that different people set for themselves and the organizations they are called upon to lead can vary greatly. Some new Grand Knights will just continue with the status quo without a specific direction in mind to aim their Council to. While others will have a clear vision, long term objectives and a set of both long term goals and short term tactics to accomplish them.

While some of your Grand Knights will only need your encouragement, others will need you to mentor them through the entire process of setting a direction for their council to head to. If you had set goals for your own council when you were a Grand Knight, it will be tempting to communicate these to the Grand Knights of your District. **DON'T!** Instead, talk to them about the way you developed these goals. How you communicated them and then managed their execution. In other words teach them how to set goals and not how to repeat yours. This is not implying that your goals were not of value but instead possibly inappropriate to be subjected to a different Council and or a different leader. It is also not your role to be directing the efforts of a local council. You will be far more successful staying in the role of a mentor, teaching generic leadership skills and developing your Grand Knights to take responsibility, plan and make good decisions themselves.

To accomplish this, you'll need to plant a few seeds, then water, fertilize and nurture whatever sprouts.

Here's how:

① **Explain Why?** Once a person knows the reason behind a request, they are far more likely to be receptive to changing their past behavior.

Explain to your Grand Knights that setting goals . . .

- Sets a sense of purpose for the Council
- Provides a basis for the type of Activity a Council should plan for.
- Provides accountability and measurement for both the Grand Knight and the Council from the perspective of their pastor and community.
- Is easy to do!

② **Explain how to make Goal Setting an exercise for the entire Council.** This will bring both the Grand Knight's staff and the Council membership together as a united team. When people have a say and input into the direction their Grand Knight wants to lead them, they tend to be much more committed to getting there.

It also . . .

- Connects each member involved more strongly with their council. To the degree that members feel connected to their council, will directly impact their long term involvement and retention with their Council and the Order.

③ **Explain how to pass on the process of setting goals to the next Grand Knight.** This might involve how to schedule the event, how to communicate the goals set and how to tie Council activity plans to them.

The result of this can be . . .

- A continuity between Grand Knights and their administrations. (It's not important that individual goals get transferred, but instead that each subsequent Grand Knight does have goals.)
- That councils experience long term, continued growth and development.
- That new future leaders of the Council will be more likely to set goals to accomplish and provide a direction for their Council to follow as there will be an expectation from the Council for the new Grand Knight to do this. This is because the practice will have become a normal mode of operation for the Council to follow.

2.8) Describe and give examples of good leadership

I've been known to hit a few golf balls, every now and again, but I'm not very good at it. As a matter of fact, I need all the instruction I can afford. I've taken a few lessons from an elderly gentleman who owns a small Par 3 nine hole course in Haverhill, Mass. His name is Ted Murphy and he's a delightful character and a natural teacher. During one lesson to improve my putting, he didn't tell me either what I was doing wrong or what to change in my putting stroke. Instead Ted said something like "*Putting has to be a smooth, comfortable and*

The Second Best Job in the Order
natural process. That's why you see so many different techniques and unique putters employed by the Pros. But here's some of the things that the very best Professional golfers do to get great results." He then proceeded to show me a simple general setup routine and how to follow through after stroking the ball. He then suggested that I consider working these 2 things into my own putting routine using my current putter.

I did as Ted suggested and every time I start self analyzing what I was doing as I'm ready to putt, I think "*If golf Pros are getting great results doing this why should I question it.*" I kept going back to the setup and follow through and before too long I started noticing my putts were ending up much closer to the cup and often going in.

I tell you this story because I see parallels between putting and the art of leadership. While each of your Grand Knights may have a different style of leadership, their practice of it has to be smooth, comfortable and a natural process. They may not be very successful as leaders if they are trying to act like someone else. How one leads needs to be matched to one's personality, skills, experience and how they interact with people. Just like putting there are some common things that successful leaders employ to get great results. These are the things you need to suggest to your Grand Knights versus how "you" lead.

Great leaders get Great Results because they . . .

- Plan ahead
- Get consensus
- Lead by example
- Teach and develop others
- Motivate
- Are lavish with their praise and appreciation
- Are optimistic, positive and expectant
- Are great problem solvers

Find examples of successful leaders within your District and State Council. Explain to your Grand Knights why these

The Second Best Job in the Order

model leaders are successful and what leadership practices they employ. Suggest that what your role models do might work for your Grand Knights. Ask them to consider employing these practices within their own leadership styles and to look at the results. While not every leadership practice can be absorbed into every leadership style or personality, many can. But to make this work you need to allow each Grand Knight the latitude in how they choose to employ or try out each leadership practice you explain to them.

The following table will provide you with a few examples that you can copy and modify. Use the two blank sections to develop your own.

Leadership Practices

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Practice: Lead by Example</u></p> <p><i>Successful Grand Knights lead by example.</i></p> <p>Why: It sets an important role model for new and existing members to follow.</p> <p>How to employ this practice: Be a big brother to one new member, co-chair an event with him, meet with him before and after your business meeting to answer his questions and help plan out his future involvement in the Council.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Practice: Planning</u></p> <p><i>Successful Grand Knights are good planners.</i></p> <p>Why: It helps provide direction and expectations for their Council.</p> <p>How to employ this practice: Create and maintain an 18 month Council Event Calendar. Communicate it to your Council every month with changes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Practice: Staff Development</u></p> <p><i>Successful Grand Knights teach and develop others.</i></p> <p>Why: Because it provides the Council with Officer progression and a development/involvement path for new members.</p> <p>How to employ this practice: Involve your Officers and Directors in Council planning and decision making. Create a development plan for both new and existing members. One of the objectives of this plan might be for the member to become a future Grand Knight.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Practice: Consensus</u></p> <p><i>Successful Grand Knights get consensus.</i></p> <p>Why: It increases involvement in Council decision making and development. It tends to develop decisions that are broadly supported by the Council membership.</p> <p>How to employ this practice: Pick a different Past Grand Knight, current Council Officer and one of the newest members of your Council, each time you have an important decision to make. Get their feedback without attempting to sway them with which way you are leaning. Ask them to explain their opinions and thank them.</p>
<p>Practice: _____</p> <p><i>Successful Grand Knights _____.</i></p> <p>Why:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>How to employ this practice:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Practice: _____</p> <p><i>Successful Grand Knights _____.</i></p> <p>Why:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>How to employ this practice:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

2.9) Praise your Grand Knights openly, but teach them privately

It's a very, very rare case where there is nothing good to say about a Grand Knight's display of leadership style and practices. Even if he has done everything wrong during his business meeting, a loving eye can still find and relate some good or benefit of the Grand Knight's performance. Just showing up can speak to the Grand Knight's dedication.

I know someone might say that a Grand Knight with very poor leadership skills might benefit his Council more by not showing up! But even in that situation, a good District Deputy can view this as a great opportunity to exercise his mentoring and coaching skills.

Hopefully all or most of your Grand Knights will be average to strong leaders, so it will not be hard to find something nice and sincere to say. Praise publicly and often. It builds your Grand Knights up, motivates them, encourages a repeat of the behavior you are complimenting and is exactly what good coaches do with their players. It also frames you as a positive, encouraging and supportive leader.

But doesn't the District Deputy need to deal with the bad stuff as well? Surprisingly, in this light the answer is NO! If you accept the fact that it is the Grand Knight's responsibility to address the things that are not working within his Council, you don't need to play the bad guy. Instead you need only pose any problem you see as a question to your Grand Knight. Ask them whether they observed the same difficulty. Then ask how they might have dealt with the problem differently. Next discuss with your Grand Knight what the results might have been for the alternate approach he identified. Encouraging him to think of his own alternative approaches should be your primary focus. Remember you are teaching him to become a good decision maker. Only if necessary should you explore with him ways you might solve the problem. Do this by proposing a few different ways one might solve the issue and ask him to evaluate the pros and cons of each. Then ask for him

to select an approach that he thinks he'll be successful with. Compliment him on his analysis and then say to him. *“Worthy Grand Knight, I'll leave the final decision to you; let me know how it works out.”*

Consider how your Grand Knights will feel after you treat them this way. They will likely feel empowered, respected, supported and encouraged to improve their leadership skills. Compare this to a more critical and autocratic approach where you as the District Deputy tell the Grand Knight what he's doing wrong and how you want him to fix it. This demonstrates a greatly reduced level of respect for the Grand Knight's ability to self improve. It also will likely be resisted as it is a *“Push”* versus a *“Gentle Pull”* type of instruction. If you choose to be directive in your role as a District Deputy, your Grand Knights will always need you every time they have a problem to solve. It's like giving them fish instead of teaching them to fish themselves!

There's also another reason you might want to consider this mentoring approach. As a District Deputy you will need to split your time between 4 or 5 Grand Knights, New Council development, Ceremonials and special requests from your State Deputy. If all your Grand Knights are unloading their responsibilities on you, or you are assuming them, you will quickly find there are not enough hours in the day to address them all. But if you instead make sure that each difficulty remains a Grand Knight's responsibility and you focus your time mentoring leadership skills in your Grand Knights, the more time you'll free up in your schedule to do more of the creative and development tasks that will not only support your district but grow it.

Each time you observe a difficulty in one of your Grand Knight's leadership style recognize it as an opportunity for his growth and skill development and not yours! The stronger a leader he becomes, the more likely he will be able to solve future difficulties himself and from your example be able to mentor future leaders in his own Council.

Always mentor your Grand Knights privately. Despite the fact that none of us are perfect many leaders will always assume they have made the right decision. As men we all have a male ego to attend to, and it often gets in the way of us seeing and accepting the need for improvement. Correcting someone or just identifying area for potential improvement in a public forum can further the resistance they may have to being open to the guidance and mentoring you offer.

So in summary

- 1.) Always and often find good things to say about your Grand Knights
- 2.) Keep the responsibility of Council improvement that of the Grand Knight's and not yours.
- 3.) Never mentor in public. Help the Grand Knight solve his own problems before offering your own solutions.

2.10) Teach Grand Knights to be improve their leadership behaviors.

I'm convinced I could become a better golfer if I could observe myself when I swing my golf club. Sometimes I use the same stance, the same grip and the same posture and instead of the golf ball going straight, I might slice or hook it. After repeating this for 2 or 3 holes, I ask my golfing partner "*What the heck am I doing wrong?*" The flaw he observes is normally a small problem that I can quickly fix once I'm told about it.

I believe the same is true about our performance as leaders. It's often difficult to observe how we are coming across to the people we are trying to give direction to. Without feedback we can easily repeat the same behavior that we would gladly curtail if we were aware of it. Please note here that we are not talking about major changes in our Grand Knights' leadership styles, but instead the little things that make a good leader better and a very good leader great!

In Golf, it could be opening one's stance a few inches, closing your club face a few degrees or simply changing how one of our fingers wraps around the golf club handle. Anyone of these, while a very small change, can make a dramatic improvement in your game. Likewise, small changes in our leadership style can deliver major improvements in the effectiveness of our leadership.

Sometime a word or sentence spoken or omitted is all it might take, or the Grand Knight's posture behind the podium. How he maintains eye contact with all the members of his audience or how he gets less talkative members of our Council to offer their viewpoint into the current discussion, can all make significant improvements in his Council's perspective of him as their leader. The key point here is not what the Grand Knight changes but that he is actively open to change. It requires him to observe the effect of his leadership (just like observing what happens to the golf ball after we hit it with an improved grip.)

As District Deputy you need to provide the encouragement and support to your Grand Knights so they will feel comfortable soliciting feedback from others to determine what they might change in their leadership behavior to make these small improvements (just like me asking my golf partner what I'm doing wrong in my golf swing). As a District Deputy, you would have an endless task to correct every minor flaw in your Grand Knights leadership styles, but if you can help your Grand Knights focus on this technique of self improvement, they'll be able to take on the responsibility themselves and benefit from it whether or not you're in the room.

To utilize this technique a leader needs to be observant, to always request feedback and to be open.

Being Observant means to purposefully record within your mind's eye how people react to you. To do this, Grand Knights need to watch the facial reaction of their audience, their body language, how attentive they act and any changes in their demeanor and attitude. These will provide non-verbal

clues as to how, what the Grand Knight says is being absorbed and reacted to.

While being observant helps us to focus on the nonverbal clues people use to communicate how they feel about something, it needs to be coupled with solicited feedback to give us the whole picture. In my golf game where I might notice that each time I hit the ball, it goes right of my target, without asking for input from my partner I might never know why or how to fix it.

So as in leadership development a Grand Knight needs to ask his Council members for their feedback if he expects to understand why and how the members react to his leadership behavior.

Teach your Grand Knights that when asking for feedback it's important to **L.E.A.D.** (**L**isten, **A**cept, **E**xpand and **D**emonstrate appreciation)

Listen – Stop talking and really listen to the feedback. Actively listen using as many of your senses as possible. While you're listening, look at the person's face and their body language. Hear the tone, inflection and emphasis the speaker places on some of his words.

Expand – the feedback by asking for examples and confirming you understand what the speaker is trying to get across. Most important of these is to be open to feedback whether indirect or solicited. If we are not open we are wasting our time to expect improvements to happen. Let us remember that there has only been one perfect leader and He died for our sins! We can all benefit from a little self improvement and if we truly believe this, we can begin by being open to the feedback that is available all around us. So in summary, coach your Grand Knights to be observant, to always ask for feedback and most importantly to be open to the opportunity for self improvement.

Accept – When we ask for feedback we are requesting a person's reaction and perceptions and not proven facts. And it's very important that we **accept** what is said in that light. It is the personal perceptions of the person we are

asking the feedback from. If we keep in this mindset we are less apt to become defensive and try to explain away the speaker's comments. It's also important that our posture, eye contact and the mood displayed on our face show we are being receptive to and appreciative of the feedback being provided.

This personal input can be very revealing. It can clue your Grand Knight into things that are happening within his Council that he was not privy to. And can also give him clues to behaviors he might want to change or remove from his repertoire.

Demonstrate appreciation - to those who have given you feedback. Let your Grand Knights know that there's a difference between being appreciative and demonstrating your appreciation. Without ever saying a word you can feel appreciative of feedback you receive, but to demonstrate that appreciation you have to add actions.

For example, if my golf partner tells me he thinks I'm opening my club face when I swing or I'm gripping my club too tight, I might even say thank you to him for the advice, but it's not until I actually put his advice into action by closing my club face or loosening my grip am I demonstrating the value I place on his input and a level of appreciation that is obvious and visible for him to receive. By adding action we are in fact saying "*I value and trust your advice and will give it a try.*" Will this advice always succeed? Of course not, this will be dependent on the skills, experience and intuition of the people we ask for feedback. In some cases due to prior knowledge we might even find that the feedback should not be followed. When this happens don't reject the feedback, but instead find out why the speaker said what he did. You may want to gently reveal your facts and ask them if their opinion or feedback has changed. One way or another thank them and leave the door open for future advice from them.

After you have explained this technique to your Grand Knights, give them one of your K of C business cards with the

four L.E.A.D steps printed on the back. This can act as a reminder for them to use feedback to improve their leadership behaviors.



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L. E. A. D.

- L**isten – Stop talking and really listen
- E**xpand – Ask questions to confirm understanding
- A**ccept – Be receptive to what is said
- D**emonstrate appreciation – Add action to feedback

2.11) Train your Grand Knights to be future District Deputies.

Hopefully you will enjoy the role of District Deputy to want to serve four complete years. But just as they added the word “Past” to a Grand Knight’s title so will come the time when they’ll be adding the word “Former” to your current title. While it remains the responsibility of the State Deputy to select and appoint your successor, you can and should influence his decision by training your Grand Knights to become future District Deputies. Here for your consideration are a dozen ideas that can help you accomplish this task.

1. **Be Selective** – As mentioned in this book, the leadership role of a District Deputy is quite different from that of a Grand Knight. It is one of a coach and mentor far more than is the directive style of the Grand Knight’s role. So during your possible four year term you may come in contact with 10-15 different Grand Knights. Consider which would have the temperament and motivation to adapt to this mentoring role. Recognize that some successful Grand Knights can make excellent District Deputies and some just as successful in the Grand Knight role can make poor choice as a prospective district leader.
2. **Be a great model** – Probably the best example of what a District Deputy’s role should be, needs to come from your own actions and leadership behaviors. Your Grand Knights will not only be constantly observing how you perform as a District Deputy but will also imitate you if they are asked

to serve in the role. Because of this, it's imperative that you practice what you preach. Strive to be the best District Deputy you can as the effectiveness of your successor can be greatly influenced by the role model you set.

3. **Share the operation of your district** with your Grand Knights. Include them in the running of their district to expose them to some of the responsibility and duties of a District Deputy. Sometimes a Past Grand Knight can be reluctant to the invitation to be a District Deputy simply because they are not aware of what it entails. Getting them involved while they are Grand Knights is an excellent cure for this. Here's a few ideas how you might do this:
 - Assign one of your Grand Knights as the captain of your district degree team. Don't have a district team? Get one or more of your Grand Knights to work with you to form and run one!
 - Assign one of your Grand Knights to host your Fall organization meeting and another to host your Spring meeting. This doesn't mean to just provide the meeting location, but instead to work with you on all aspects of the meeting such as:
 - Polling other Grand Knights for their needs, input and involvement
 - Defining the purpose and outcomes of the meeting
 - Securing State Speakers and or messages to be communicated
 - Sending out communication about the meeting to Councils and State guests
 - Collecting feedback from attendees for suggested improvements that can be applied to the next meeting
 - Planning a simple social for Grand Knights and wives to attend after the meeting.
 - Schedule this Grand Knight to come with you to the other Grand Knights' Business Meetings to introduce and promote the Organizational Meeting.

4. **Assign a District Warden each year** – Ask a Past Grand Knight to assist you as your District Warden and then use his talents, experiences and ideas. Meet with him each month and have him attend some of the Business Meetings in your district. At the end of each meeting ask him for his observations on what was done right and what he'd suggest for improvements. During your subsequent years be open to selecting new District Wardens from different Past Grand Knights. This gives you exposure to other men in your district and their unique talents. Just a footnote here, you can continue to challenge the first District Warden you choose by assigning him to a new position within your district. This might be a District Membership or a District Retention Coordinator or whatever needs to be done in your district.
5. **Ask for District Involvement** – Most Grand Knights are focused on the operations of their local councils and rightfully so. But you can ask your Grand Knights to get their Council involved in both District and State Events. This will give your Grand Knights exposure to the larger organization that their Councils are a part of. At the same time members of the Grand Knights' councils will also get the same exposure.
6. **Use your senior Grand Knights as mentors** to your less experienced Grand Knights. While this is mainly your responsibility, having some of your Grand Knights involved in mentoring will give a taste of what a District Deputy does. You might consider doing this on a one on one basis. For example you may have a 2 or 3 year Grand Knight located in the next town to a new Grand Knight in your district. While the new Grand Knight should feel comfortable calling you when he needs help, you might want to involve your experienced Grand Knight as another source of assistance. Bring the senior Grand Knight to a business meeting of the new Grand Knight and introduce the two and let the new Grand Knight know that the experienced Grand Knight will be more than happy to

answer questions he might have. Footnote: previously solicit the experienced Grand Knight's help and explain to him the mentoring role you wish him to play.

7. **Use your experienced Grand Knights as speakers** for your District Organization Meeting. Ask a couple of your experienced Grand Knights to speak at your District get togethers. Ask them to relate the challenges of being a new Grand Knight and how they succeeded in that challenge. Request they aim their remarks for the benefit of the new Grand Knights in the district. Ask them to minimize remarks about specific projects within their own Council as they may not relate to the other Councils within the district and it can come across as preaching. Suggest they attempt to answer some of the questions that follow or make up your own to the needs of your district.
 - What was your biggest challenge in assuming the role of Grand Knight in your Council?
 - How do you use your Past Grand Knights to assist the Council?
 - How do you involve your staff (Council Officers and Directors) in the planning and running of your Council?
 - What challenges did you face in working with your pastor or parish? How did you succeed?
 - How do you increase Activity within your Council?
 - How do you deal with the documentation of the Council projects your members complete?
 - What challenges have you faced in just running your business meetings? Ex. Long discussions and contentious issues.
 - How are you preparing your successor and future Grand Knights within your Council?

Note: In preparing their speeches with these questions you may find it will give food for thought to the speakers in development of their own Councils.

8. **Ask your most senior Financial Secretary** to do a similar talk for the more junior Financial Secretaries in the district. Senior Financial Secretaries often have great potential as future Grand Knights. Ask them to cover some of the following topics:
 - Submitting forms and orders to Supreme
 - Correct procedure for handling transfers, renewals, withdrawals and suspensions.
 - Record Keeping
 - Working with the Council Treasurer and Trustees
 - State and Supreme Per Capita and Catholic Advertising bills
 - Other Questions the Financial Secretaries might have.
9. **State Quarterly Car Pools** – Assuming your State Council holds quarterly meetings, seminars or workshops, ask one of your Grand Knights to organize a car pool for all the Grand Knights in the district. Minimally he can plan a meeting place where all can meet at and then drive to the Quarterly together. The goal here is to get the Grand Knight to promote attendance of the State event among his brother Grand Knights. His organizational task is also a responsibility of a District Deputy to promote attendance at State Council events. The added benefit while exposing this Grand Knight to a District Deputy's duty is the possible increased attendance of your Grand Knights to the event. If you do this for other State events you'll also develop unity among your district's Grand Knights. This is of course crucial to the success of district events you might want to plan.
10. **Council Status Reports** - Many State Deputies ask their District Deputies for status reports on the health of Councils within their districts. Ask you Grand Knights to be involved in this duty. Ask each Grand Knight to fill out a report on their own Council that you will collect, comment on and forward to your State Deputy. Explain to them the purpose of this exercise is to identify

opportunities for growth and development within the State Council. This follows the suggestion made previously in the book that Council Evaluations and Plans for Improvement are a Grand Knight's responsibility. Ask your Grand Knights to also include an improvement plan for all areas that need development in their Council. You can devise your own Council Evaluation Form or use one provided by your State Council. Alternately have your Grand Knights come up with one they'd like to use.

11. **New Council Development** - The goal of Fr. McGivney was a Council in every parish. And as a District Deputy you may be asked to develop a new Council in your district. If this opportunity occurs, involve one or two of your Grand Knights. This is excellent exposure to the role of a District Deputy and an excellent opportunity to be involved in the growth of our Order. One suggestion I would make is to pick a Grand Knight that is supportive of the new growth. Two Councils within the same town or general area often draw on the same pool of Catholic men. While they should be focusing on the parishioners of their founding Church, some overlap is to be expected. The Grand Knight of this type of Council will often view the new Council development as a threat to his Council. To eliminate this possibility, pick a Grand Knight from a non-adjacent town or area, as his Council will likely not be effected by the new Council's emergence. You may still need to address the situation with the multi Church Grand Knight and win him over with the fact that the council development is for the betterment of the Order, the Parish and his own Council.
12. **District Service Project** - A final idea on involving your Grand Knights in the running of your district is to ask them to help organize a district service project. This might be a fund raiser, a social activity, a religious or devotional service or maybe a Pro Life, Family or Youth focused project. Ask them (the Grand Knights) to come up with a project that will unify all the Councils within the district to

The Second Best Job in the Order
a common cause or need. Maybe it might be supporting a Birth Right or Care Net establishments located in the vicinity of your Councils or maybe a Church without a Knight's Council to support it or a fund raiser to support a State wide community charity. The important thing here is that they come up with the idea themselves and schedule a date for it. Ask them to come up with a list of tasks that will need to be accomplished and then to all take back to their own Councils part of the project workload. This can be a great learning experience for these Grand Knights and the skills acquired can be directly employed should they become District Deputies themselves or to put the idea to use within their own Councils.

2.12) What will You be Leaving as Your legacy as a District Deputy?

This is a similar question that I ask new Grand Knights. *"How do you want your Council to remember you when you become a Past Grand Knight?"* This helps them to consider and hopefully to formulate what long term goals they'll want their Council to accomplish.

I pose the same question to you. *"How do you want the Grand Knights that you served to remember you when you become a Former District Deputy?"* If you can answer this question with some clarity and thought, it can give you a vision or direction that can be used to shape the accomplishments of your term. This goal or goals should be long term. Six months as a minimum, and two years as a maximum. If your goal is shorter than six months it tends to become more of a task, event or activity than a long range accomplishment. If it will take longer than two years, you maybe out of office due to a change in State Deputies, a restructuring of districts due to growth within your State Council or possibly a change in your employment or family responsibilities requiring you to step down from your role as District Deputy.

The Second Best Job in the Order

I have provided a few ideas you may want to consider adopting. You can also change, expand or modify them and come up with your own.

- Develop five or more of your Grand Knights to become future State Leaders (i.e. District Deputies, State Chairmen, Directors or Officers)
- Assist your Grand Knights to achieve Star Council. Your goal might be set at 80% or 4 of 5 of your councils.
- 100% of your Councils earning the Columbian Award each year.
- Develop a new district wide Degree Team with backup positions
- Increase the number of First Degree Teams in your district with the ultimate goal being a team in each Council
- Grow strong leaders with good planning skills. You might goal yourself to get all your Grand Knights to implement and maintain an 18 month Council Event Calendar.
- Get your Grand Knights to double the number of activities they plan for and accomplish each year
- Guide your Grand Knights to double the number of repeatable practices that they put in place within their Councils.
- Help develop a new Council within your district
- Help revitalize an inactive Council within your district
- Become a role model that your Grand Knights will be proud to emulate
- Build a strong sense of unity among the Grand Knights and members within your district, connecting brothers from different towns and cities into a single District Family.

When all is said and done, it is really your Grand Knights' leadership skills and the state of their Councils' development that will be your true legacy. The goals we listed above represent concrete and measurable accomplishments that

support either leadership or Council development within your district.

By picking one or more of these as your long term district goal(s), your efforts can be focused on their accomplishment which will not only grow your Councils and District but our Order as well.

2.13) Be Expectant, be Positive and be Supportive

We end this section by again relating the importance of our attitude. You've learned that it sets the boundaries of your potential accomplishments. What you and your Grand Knights believe you cannot accomplish is nearly always NOT accomplished. And what you both believe and expect you can accomplish is most always accomplished. "*Success comes in CANs and not CANNOTs.*" By now you must realize that it is your positive and expectant attitude that will have the most impact on the success of your Grand Knights' leadership growth.

Believe that you can develop great leaders within your district because **YOU CAN!** Believe that you can deliver this message with a supportive, positive and expectant attitude because **YOU CAN!** No longer should you be skeptical and unconvinced that positive change is possible, for **YOU CAN** secure positive development of your Council leaders. Coach the ideas previously presented with a supportive and mentoring approach and I promise you'll see results!

3.0) District Deputy as a Communicator

The pen is mightier than the sword, but the spoken word is mightier still! Things we read provide information that will likely only be stored for possible future use. But ideas communicated face to face with expression, body language and the enthusiasm and motivation of a positive personality can have an immediate and lasting impact on the listener.

It can excite the listener, inspiring and challenging him. It can move him to action and positive change. And best of all it can assist him in becoming a better communicator himself, by providing a great role model to emulate.

But how does a District Deputy become a “great” communicator or even a better one than he presently is? One way to accomplish this goal is to improve the effect of your communication. It’s the impact your communications has on your audience and not the words you chose to use. Thus to use a worn out cliché “*the proof is in the pudding!*”.

Most of us find it easy to rate another person’s effectiveness as a communicator. We do this not by judging one good attribute of their presentation nor even a few good attributes, but instead we judge how we feel about their talk or the results of it. And the same thing could be said about someone we feel is a poor communicator. It’s not what they do but instead the negative effect of their entire presentation on the audience.

If we come away inspired and motivated in a positive way, we’ll not really care about the words they used, their diction, grammar, or the structure of their ideas and concepts. Our critique and feedback, if requested, may point to the things that the speaker did well and those things they might try to improve, but it is the overall effect the presenter had on us that speaks most to their effectiveness as a communicator.

When I listen to another’s speech or presentation I have found that effective presentations are delivered with one or more of the following:

- They are delivered with a positive attitude or demeanor
- They have a motivating theme
- They have a key message that is easy to identify and remember
- They identify a need of the listening audience
- They address that need
- And they do not build up the ego of the speaker nor address his personal agenda.

3.1) How to become a better communicator

So now having identified the characteristics of an effective presentation, we'll move on to some of the things that effective presenters do to reach and motivate their audiences.

1. **SMILE** - When a speaker smiles it is natural for his audience to smile back or minimally to lighten their mood or disposition. If you smile before you start your District Deputy report or before you speak to Grand Knights or members, it will start both you as the speaker and the people you are communicating with in a more positive and receptive mood. This will allow effective communications to occur. While it's a small gesture, a warm smile can have an immediate impact on your audience. It connects you to them on a very human and personal way. It will also lighten your disposition, making you feel less serious and stoic. It helps you begin your talk, conversation or presentation happier, more relaxed and more likely to convey a pleasant and positive delivery. So SMILE! Smile before, during and after you communicate. Smile when you are talking one on one or to a group. Smile even when you talk on the phone, since people hear your smile in your voice.
2. **Be Light and Humorous but not comedic** – Victor Borg once said that "*Laughter is the shortest distance between two people*". So shorten the distance between yourself and your audiences by sharing smiles and a little laughter. When people laugh their brains initiates the release of endorphins, a natural occurring opiate that causes a euphoric sensation. It puts people in a good mood and opens them to the acceptance of new ideas and perspectives.

We might not think of ourselves as funny, but if we don't take ourselves too seriously we will realize that we are all funny people. I once was in a department store with my wife Sue. She was at the register and the amount came out to something like \$20.02. She asked me if I had a couple of pennies. I put my hand in my pocket and realized

I had no coins at all. So I answered “*No*”, which she replied “*Not even one?*” To which I replied “*Honey, I have no cents at all!*” Of course she started to laugh and not understanding why I repeated my declaration with “*I’m serious! I have no cents at all!*” Now even the cashier started to laugh. Finally in a flash of delayed clarity I understood why they were laughing. What could I do but join them in their glee!

I tell you this self deprecating story to hopefully bring a smile to your face. Observe how that smile made you feel. Hopefully the effect caused was a sudden release of tension and stress. It is also likely that you felt a sense of joy or light heartedness. This is the same unique humanness that you can make your audience experience. I’m no comic, and most of my humor my family and friends would call corny, but they must still love me as they laugh anyways. My point here is that being funny is not the same thing as being comedic. We all can act in a light hearted manner, not taking ourselves so seriously. We all can make fun of ourselves, or life in general, without having a prepared script of carefully crafted jokes or making fun of others. Just observe yourself in your interaction with your family, friends and neighbors. These experiences can provide you with a countless number of humorous observations and short stories. Observe the children in your life, as they are a great source of joy, happiness and humor that can be shared with others.

Unless you have great recall you’ll need some help remembering these observations to be able to share them with your audiences. One suggestion is to always have a pen and paper in your pocket. It doesn’t need to be anything fancy. Even one of those pencils, that golfers use to keep score, and a folded sheet of white paper will work nicely. Both will fit in your pocket or wallet. You will now be ready to record your observations as they happen. You’ll also be more apt to identify these humorous events when they occur because your sub conscience mind will be

focused to filter them out of all the myriad of sensory input we receive each day. It's like coming home after shopping for a new car. You'll see that particular make and model all over the highway. It's not that they weren't there before; you just weren't looking for them. Identifying humorous observations in your life works the same way. Now that you are looking for them, you'll be surprised at how many you'll find. Jot them down as they reveal themselves and then when you have the time record them into a notebook for later use.

When you talk with your Grand Knights or their Councils start out with one of these humorous observations. It will put your audience and yourself in the right mindset. And remember SMILE!☺

3. **Pick Interesting Topics** that relate to your audience. If you speak about mundane things or topics that don't directly relate to your audience you'll need to be a lot more than funny to keep their attention. Consider what is of interest to your prospective audience before jumping in with what you want to talk about. And if what they have a passion for doesn't agree with your planned topic consider one of the following actions.

- Put off your topic and talk about what they are interested in instead.
- Change your topic to make it relate more to your audience's needs
- Develop a need for them to be interested in your topic

In each of these three approaches you will be focusing on the needs and interest of your audience instead of your own agenda. This will make you a more effective communicator. This insight will also teach you to become more flexible and better prepared to deliver information that is more readily received by your future audiences.

Here are some ideas on how to do this.

- **Talk on their topic instead of yours**
 - You might save your topic for another time

The Second Best Job in the Order

- Cover their topic first and yours last
- Bring printed copies of your topic and just pass them out for later review by your audience. This frees you the time to focus on their issues.
- **Change your topic to have it relate to your audience's needs**
 - State their need or interest then ask yourself how your own topic supports that need. Present it in that light.
 - Present a high level overview of your topic or just its main point, and then relate that main point to what the audience is interested in. If that's not possible use a transitional topic that both your subject and that of your audience's both relate to. This will act as a bridge between the two topics.
- **Develop a need for them to be interested in your topic**
 - Ask your audience why they would be interested in what you topic is about or
 - Ask them what they already know about the topic. This would allow you to develop an interest from their perspective.
 - If it's obvious to you what the major benefit to the audience is of your topic then start with an introduction something like *"I'd like to discuss with you a topic that I believe has a direct benefit or interest to you and your Council. The topic is {state the topic} and its benefit is {state the benefit}."*
 - Explain why your topic will help make their Council more Active, more Involved and Repeatable in the future. If you can't relate this, ask yourself *"Why am I covering this topic?"*

Taking time to prepare the topics you will be presenting to your Grand Knights and their Councils will pay great dividends. There use to be a commercial by E. F. Hutton

The Second Best Job in the Order that went “*When E. F. Hutton speaks people listen*” In the same way when you can relate your topic in the light of your audience’s interest, ***people will listen!***

4. **Involve Your Audience** – What if you prepare your talk so well that you could stand at the Grand Knight’s podium and deliver it without the Council members or Grand Knight present? Without the need of your audience’s presence you might as well print out your words and email it to your audience. But if you do need them to be present and involved in your presentation then now you are talking about a live face to face conversation. The point I’m making here is that conversations are two party events that require active participation and involvement by both parties, while monologues and traditional preaching require only one voice. If you are like me, than you find little interest in listening to monologues or being preached to. As human beings we long for interaction and exchange of ideas and points of view. Unless you are a highly skilled orator or an extremely motivating speaker who can involve and challenge his audience with words alone, you need to craft your talks as conversations and not monologues.

Conversation requires two voices so one of your goals should be to prepare a means to solicit vocal responses from your audience. This is most often done through the use of questions and active listening to the responses. By asking questions of your audience you relate your desire for them to be part of your presentation. By active listening to the responses you allow yourself to change the pace that you present new information and the type and content of the questions you will need to ask as you continue with your presentation.

You will recall that I have already discussed the common types of questions and their uses. The table that follows will provide you with a quick review.

Use	When
<p>Open-ended Questions</p>	<p>You want to open discussion, especially when your audience is reluctant to speak.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>How do you feel about that?</p> <p>What's your opinion on this topic?</p> <p>How is this important to your Council?</p> <p>Can you give me your reaction to this?</p> <p>How would you approach and solve this problem?</p>
<p>Close-ended Questions</p>	<p>You want to reduce interaction to bring the audience back to the main discussion or when you want to engage a very talkative person without him monopolizing the conversation. Closed-ended questions tend to have very short replies, such as Yes or No.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>So based on all that's been said are you in support or against the proposal?</p> <p>Will you be there to help out?</p> <p>Are you volunteering to chair the event?</p> <p>To give others here an opportunity to express their ideas would you agree with me that we should allocate some time in the future to discuss your point further?</p> <p>How many brothers would it take to accomplish this?</p> <p>How much time is needed?</p> <p>What would it cost?</p>
<p>Key Point Questions</p>	<p>To get your audience to distill down to one or more key points, the main point or a conclusion.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>So that I'm clear, could you summarize your main point?</p> <p>What conclusion do you feel this brings us to?</p> <p>What are the top three issues of this project that our discussion has revealed?</p>

<p>Confirming Questions</p>	<p>You want to be sure that you understand what your audience is attempting to get across to you. You can also use this type of question to be sure that your message is getting across as well.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>So if I understand what you have expressed is <u>say in your own words what you think they are trying to get across</u>. Is that correct?</p> <p>So it sounds like you saying that you are in support of us going forward with this. Is that what you meant to express?</p> <p>Can you tell me in your own words what I just related, so I'm sure I'm getting across the right message to you?</p>
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Have your questions prepared ahead of time, especially those to solicit interaction from your audience. Ask yourself the question “*How am I going to involve my audience?*” when you are preparing yourself for your talk and ideas for possible questions will be more likely to come to mind.

5. **Communicate both Verbally and Non-verbally** – Only a small portion of our communication is conveyed solely with words. It is our non-verbal gestures that convey our mood, our motivations and our enthusiasm.

Be conscience of your body language, your facial expression and the use of your hands when you speak. These should convey a friendly and warm disposition. Refrain from gestures that denote a closed or guarded demeanor. Such as folding your arms or sticking your hands in your pockets. If you are uncomfortable using your hands to add emphasis to your words, leave them by your sides.

When you talk look at your audience. Attempt to make eye contact with them. Smile and present a relaxed, open and fluid stance. You’ll notice an immediate change in the disposition and receptiveness of your audience.

6. **Inspire, Challenge and Motivate** – Inspire your audience to continue the good things they are already doing. Challenge them to increase their Activity and the Involvement of their Council members. Motivate them to take advantage of the opportunities for service and to set goals to extend their current service through short and long term Council efforts. When preparing your talk or presentation ask yourself “*How does my talk Inspire, Challenge and Motivate?*” If you can’t answer this question, you may need to review the material of your talk and modify or add to it.
7. **Communicate Your Key Points** – The main message of this section is to communicate the key point of your talk to your audience. How often do we hear someone talk or present something and find that after 24 hours we are having difficulty remembering what the key points of the talk were? Ensure your audience walks away with your key points! Tell them what your key points are at the beginning of the talk, expand on them during the talk and finally summarize them at the end of the talk. One speaker I know asks his audience what the key points of his talk were before summarizing them at the end. In this way he has an immediate feedback on how effective he was making the point of his talk understood.

Stating your key point at the beginning of your talk sets expectation, focuses your audience’s attention and loosens and fertilizes the mental soil that you are planting your ideas in.

Explaining the key point during your talk is the actual mental planting of the ideas you plan to present. There is no need to dig an extremely large hole if you are depositing a simple seed or small idea, nor is it prudent to deliver a complex or large idea in raked over soil. So match the time you take to explain your key point with its inherent simplicity or complexity.

Summarizing your key point at the end of your talk is like packing down the soil around the idea you have just

planted. It will more likely survive and grow in your audience's mind.

So in summary, communicate your key point at the beginning of your talk, explain your key point in an appropriate time period to ensure it is understood and finally summarize at the end of your talk to secure it's permanence in your audience's mind.

8. **Ask for Feedback** – Have you ever been asked by the manager or owner of a restaurant you have dined in “*How was your meal and how was the service?*” The manager has an expectation of the quality and presentation of the food that the cook prepares and of the level of service he/she expects will be delivered by the waiters and waitresses. But did they pull it off? The feedback the manager receives from the customer is critical to the continuance of the business. It allows the manager to praise the service staff for happy customers, work with the staff to correct things the customer was not happy with and to right any customer dissatisfaction with apologies and appropriate refunds. Since 9 out of 10 dissatisfied customers don't complain but instead stop doing business with you, the importance of feedback cannot be understated.

As a respected leader in our Order, feedback should be very important to you. In concert with all the tips we have covered, asking your audience for feedback can provide valued input as to whether or not you pull it off. For this to work it is imperative that you listen to the solicited feedback with your ears and not your mouth. The slightest amount of defensiveness you counter any feedback with can stop this important flow of information in its tracks! It is fine to ask for further details or to pose confirming questions, but when it comes to declarative statements consider limiting yourself to “*Thank You!*” or “*I appreciate your feedback, please continue!*” This tells the person you are getting input from that his comments are valued and that you are receptive to his involvement in the conversation.

Thank your audience for their feedback and attention with warm and sincere appreciation. Consider their input a gift given to you that will further facilitate your development as an improved communicator. I personally am still developing as an effective communicator and often find myself slipping back into the comfortable role of delivering monologues, especially when I am called on to speak off the cuff and unrehearsed. When I have time to prepare my talk I try to review the list we just covered to build audience involvement into my presentation. But when I speak unprepared I find it helpful to remember a simple acronym I made up. It is the word SHIFT. I remember it by thinking to SHIFT my attention to the audience. Smile, be Humorous, Involve, ask for Feedback and Thank them. It embodies most of the tips we discussed and is easy to remember for impromptu talks and presentations.

Should you have other ideas or suggestions for improving the role of the communicator I would be very interested in hearing from you and receiving your feedback. Thank you for your time spent in reading this section.

4.0) District Deputy as a Planner

The ability to plan is important to any leader. But as a role model for your Grand Knights, to the degree that you carefully plan will directly influence whether they will plan for their Councils.

The Council Event Calendar as discussed within “*Toward a More Active Council*” explains the how, what, when and where of planning to a new Grand Knight and offers ideas and suggestions to existing Grand Knights that may have already developed a Council Event Calendar. My goal in this section is to influence you to the benefits of developing a similar District Events Calendar. To facilitate this I have included that section into this book modifying and tailoring it to the needs of a district planning tool.

4.1) Your District Event Calendar

A District Event Calendar should cover an eighteen month rolling duration. Each month's completed page will be replaced with a new one at the end of the calendar. While you might decide to do this every three months, there are specific advantages and benefits to making this happen every month. The more often you review your past efforts, the quicker you can take advantage of what was learned. The more often you plan for future dates the more likely you are to continue this process each month. Waiting three months to add to your calendar can seem like a sizable task that could easily be put off until "*another time*". But in practice, it may never get re-scheduled until it comes creeping up on you a few months before the event should have been scheduled next year. The last benefit I see in more frequent re-scheduling is the mindset it will instill in you as a leader, and in the District Deputy that succeeds you. If you are planning every month, you are far more likely to view other aspects of your District's Activity, Involvement and Grand Knight Development in a similar consciously designed way.

If You Don't Already Have a District Event Calendar

So how do we get started? Unfortunately I don't know of any magical way to get started with a District Event calendar if your District doesn't already have one, but there is one way that seems to work without too much effort. This technique involves filling out a calendar for the events and activities your District accomplished last year. This may sound a little counter productive, in that we are suppose to be creating a plan for future events, but learning from the past is actually a great way to get started. There's a saying by George Santayana that goes: "*Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it*". Using this technique will allow us to learn from our previous challenges and to repeat all our successes.

To start the event calendar, obtain a blank calendar for the previous year or printout a blank calendar on your Personal

Computer. You want a single month per page as your format. A number of applications will allow you to do this (For Example: Using the Calendar Wizard in Microsoft Word, the Calendar Option in Microsoft Outlook or one of the many freeware calendar packages available on the internet {just search for “Free Calendar Software” in your favorite search engine}). Even if you have to draw a calendar on blank pieces of paper, do it!

Next, if this is your first year as a District Deputy talk with you predecessor and ask him what events he scheduled last year. Start with each month and write in every event and activity he can remember that your District was involved in. Having old copies of his District and its Councils Newsletters are good sources to pull this information from. Don’t spend too much time getting the exact date correct, as long as you hit the right month. With this step complete you are now at the same point as those District Deputies who have completed an existing event calendar, last year.

Populating Your New District Event Calendar

Our next step starts with a blank calendar that starts with next month as the first page and continues out for a total of eighteen months in the future. So for example, if you are doing this in the month of June 2007, you would need a blank calendar that has one page per month starting with July 2007 to December 2008. Since this will be your master copy, use a pencil to write in it.

We now need to copy those events from our last year’s calendar to the same month in our new 18 month calendar. Again you don’t need to be super exact at this time. If an event was scheduled on the 2nd Sunday in June of last year’s calendar, reschedule it on the 2nd Sunday in June in next year’s calendar. As you review the events each month you can tweak dates as more information about an event becomes available.

Adding Knights related Milestones and Events

Our next step is to include all the dates for State and District Events These may include the following and others you want to schedule:

<u>State Events</u>	<u>District Events</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Convention• State Ball• State Membership Drives• Scheduled Third Degrees• State Pro-Life Events• State Free Throw• State Soccer Challenge• Other State Functions and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• District Free Throw• District Soccer Challenge• Installation of Council Officers• Former DD Appreciation Night• Council Business Meetings• Council Planned First Degrees• District Second Degrees• District Service Projects• Other District Functions and Events

There will likely be other events or Due Dates unique to your District. If there are, add them to your New District Calendar at this time.

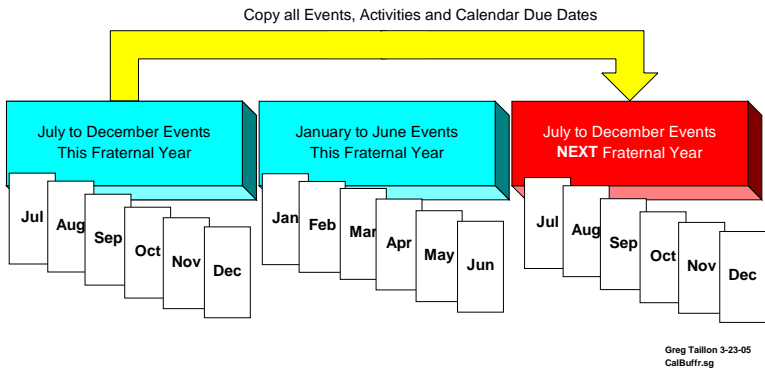
Add New Event Ideas to Your Calendar

You may be aware of new events or activities that either you personally would like to see occur or ideas that have already been discussed between you and your State Deputy. For example, the possibility of a New Council Development effort in your district may have been a goal mutually set. Or you may have discussed the hosting of a Third Degree or some other state event within your district. Pencil these into the Calendar.

You should now have a pretty good picture of what your District will be involved in for the next 12 months. It is now time to extend the Calendar's reach to make it a true long range planning tool.

Creating a Six Month Buffer

While not complete, your calendar should be coming along nicely at this point. And it is now time to create a six month buffer in our planning. To do this, simply take all entries for your first six months of the calendar and repeat them into the thirteenth through the eighteenth month pages. The diagram that follows will help demonstrate this concept.



Try to reschedule the events in a relative fashion (i.e. Second Sunday of July to Second Sunday of July in the next year). If you don't have specific dates for State events, minimally write the event at the top of that month's page to show that it will likely occur in that month. In this way you won't forget about the event and can schedule it more precisely as time goes on. This six month buffer will not only help you to acquire a long term planning habit, but also will greatly reduce the next District Deputy's workload by allowing events that will occur in his tenure to have been reviewed and refined by a minimum of thirteen and a maximum of eighteen months.

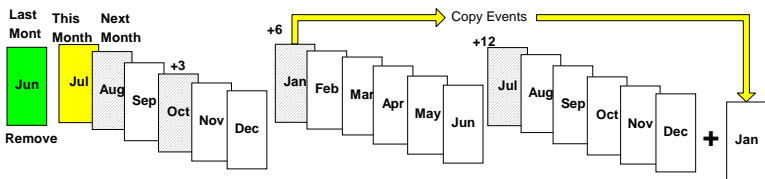
How to Maintain Your District Event Calendar

Once you have a complete eighteen month calendar, the work to maintain it while important can be fairly minimal and can be done in a simple and quick four step process each month.

1. Review Last Month's Events
2. Do a Final Check on Events scheduled to be run Next Month
3. Do a Quick Check on Future Events that are Scheduled three, six and twelve months away
4. Add a new month at the end of your eighteen month Calendar and add events to it

If you allocate 15 minutes for this review, it will pay handsome dividends. During your review each month, you should be looking for "*lessons learned*" of past events and "*actions needed*" for future events.

As a simple example, if you are in the beginning of July you would review the events that were completed in June (Last month) and those that will occur in August (Next Month). You would then quickly look at October (three months), January (six months) and next July (twelve months). Your last step would be to add January of next fraternal year to your Calendar and copy the events you just reviewed for January of this fraternal year to it.



Greg Taillon 3-23-05
EventRx.org

You and your District Warden could use these sample questions to accomplish the review:

For Events completed in the previous month

1. Do we consider the event successful? If not, what did we learn to make the event better?
2. What else could we change to make the event appeal to all of our Grand Knights and their staffs?
3. Should we hold the event next year? If no, what should we replace it with?

For Events to be held during Next Month

1. Are we ready to hold this event? If not, what needs immediate attention?
2. Do we have enough volunteers from the District? If not, what do we need to do to fix the shortage?
3. Have we got the word out to our Grand Knights or to the specific targeted audience of the event? If not, what actions can we now take to do so?

For Events scheduled three, six and twelve months from now

1. Do we have any new scheduling information on these future events?
2. Are there any tasks that we need to start soon to support the future event?
3. Are there any opportunities to involve any of my Grand Knights in these activities?

As you use this practice you should notice that the review of Next Month's events will take a shorter and shorter time to accomplish. Why? Simply because they will have been reviewed twelve months out, six months out and three months out. These quick and simple review snapshots keep district event planning on your current radar screen. Eventually you find that you can manage this process by exception as opposed to discussing every detail. You and your District Warden will both start offering "*So what did we learn from this?*" or when reviewing future events "*Let's get ready for this ahead of time.*" This is exactly how you and your District Warden should be thinking. This reflective and anticipatory mindset can only bring great benefits to the vitality and health of your District.

For Your New Eighteen Month Page

Just a few thoughts about your new page you'll be adding to your calendar. You are simply copying events. If you are unsure of specific dates, either guess or add them to the top of the page. You might even want to put something like **TBS** (To Be Scheduled) before these events to remind you that they still need specific dates. The important thing is to ensure this new month gets added **each** month. It keeps your six month buffer intact and gets you always looking to the future.

Remember, healthy Districts are built on repeatable practices. So making this scheduling process a natural practice of your District will greatly contribute to its long term growth and active continuance. It will also provide the perfect example of how you want your Councils to plan as well.

5.0) District Deputy as an Optimist

Despite popular belief the glass really is half empty, but at the same time, it is also half full. Optimism and pessimism are only points of view to our perceptions of the life around us. Whether you focus on the weaknesses of your district, the flaws in its Grand Knights and the lack luster history of its membership growth and reoccurring high rates of suspensions or focus on the positive past Activity and Service of your Councils and the potential for future Activity/Involvement growth as well as the potential for leadership development of its Grand Knights and future leaders, neither viewpoint can change what has already happened but will have a lasting impact on the present and future condition of your district and its Councils.

What you choose to focus your energy and mindset on is what is likely to continue into the future. Complain about what is negative about your district and you will most likely continue to complain at its condition at the end of your term of service. Focus your mindset, your energy, your enthusiasm and your communication on the development and formation of repeatable practices and planning in your district and you will see those things come to fruition. Being an optimist versus a pessimist is simply a choice you make just like the choice your Grand Knights will make before their term of office begins. Their decision while personal will be influenced by your choice. People and leaders like to belong to like minded groups. So strong is this desire of belonging that they will willingly change both their mindset and behavior just to be viewed as belonging. Present a strong positive and expectant demeanor and you can expect your Grand Knights to want to imitate you, as you by default are their role model representing experience and past accomplishment in the role they are now challenged with. Here are a few ideas you might want to consider in becoming a role model optimist.

5.1) How to Become a Better Optimist

Optimism in your role as a District Deputy can be measured by how you define events that occur during your term of service. If you learn to define positive events such as new leadership skills being demonstrated by one of your Grand Knights or evidence of new activity, involvement within his Council and a related increase in membership and retention as being

- a) because of something you did or influenced,
- b) a sign of more good things (i.e. growth and development within that council) to come
- c) and evidence that these same good things will happen in your other councils,

Then you've traveled half of the journey to optimism. If you can also learn to think of the challenges and sometimes negative events such as unexpected suspensions, poorly run Council Meetings, Grand Knights not turning in their forms on time, poor attendance of your Grand Knights at State and District events and lack of inspiration and direction from your Grand Knights to their council membership as

- a) not your fault but instead why you are needed in your leadership role, and
- b) as isolated occurrences that have no bearing on the outcome of future events within your district,

Then you have completed the path to becoming a true optimist!

5.2) Some Additional Ideas to Consider:

1. When something positive happens in your district, stop to analyze your thought process for a moment. Are you giving yourself due credit for making it happen? Think of all the strengths you possess and ways you contributed, both directly and indirectly, to make this event occur. For example, if one of your Grand Knights achieves Star Council, don't only give him credit, but also think of how your coaching, motivation and support also played a role.

2. Think of other councils in your district that could be affected by this good event. Also, think of how the strengths that you possess, that helped caused this good thing to happen, can also cause other positive events in your other councils. For example, what leadership skills did you work on with the Star Council Grand Knight and what specific repeatable practices did you influence him to develop within his council? Think of how you might apply these efforts to your other Grand Knights using the positive result (Star Council) as proof that your guidance can help.
3. Imagine what future successes could be in store. You hold the key to your district's success, so shouldn't you expect positive results from the other councils you will work with during your tenure? Even if your district makeup changes next year or your State Deputy asks you to take on a NCD or Council Renewal effort. Picture in your mind how you WILL be successful with these challenges, just as you were with ones in the past.
4. When negative events do occur in your district, think of the mitigating circumstances that could have contributed to them. It's far more important to understand why something went wrong and identify a fix or positive remedy then to believe that it is a reflection of personal weakness or failure.
5. Finally remember that there are nearly endless opportunities and ways to do better in the future. Keep your mindset on the next potential success or evidence of positive development in your Grand Knights. Stay open to positive suggestions, ideas and areas where your dedications and talents can influence more successes within your Grand Knights and their councils.

You should see a pattern in what we have discussed so far. The obvious path to becoming an optimist is by maximizing your successes and minimizing your failures. While it is still beneficial to identify the shortcomings of your Grand Knights and their councils, so you can help

them to improve, focusing on their strengths and positive accomplishments can never hurt. The more you practice challenging your thought patterns, the more automatic it'll become. And the more your Grand Knights observe this behavior the more likely they are to imitate it. Always remember that virtually any failure can be a learning experience, and an important step toward your next success!

5.3) The Benefits of Being an Optimist

Think of the Knights you have met or have come in contact with. Do some of them always have a smile and a positive thought? These people seem to view even failures as experiences to learn from. Despite what has happened in the past, they seem to always view today as a promise that 'tomorrow will be better'. Or likely, you yourself are one of these people. A person filled to the brim with positive thoughts and optimism. If this is the case, you may have already experienced some of the benefits of optimism, namely better health and a life filled with less stress. This is not a coincidence or your imagination. The result of many research projects studying optimists and pessimists, and have found that an optimistic view delivers these benefits:²

- **Better Health:** A study of Harvard University students found that those who were optimists at 25 were significantly healthier at ages 45 and 60. Other studies have linked higher rates of infectious disease, poor health, and earlier mortality with having a pessimistic demeanor.
- **Greater Achievement:** Studies of sports teams and found that the more optimistic teams create more positive synergy and performed better than the pessimistic ones.
- **Persistence:** Optimists don't give up as easily as pessimists, and are more likely to achieve success because

² Benefits listed are from an Internet article on Stress Management by Elizabeth Scott

of it. Some optimistic businessmen like Donald Trump have been bankrupt (even multiple times!), but have been able to persist and turn their failures into millions.

- **Increased Longevity:** In a retrospective study of 34 healthy Hall of Fame baseball players who played between 1900 and 1950, optimists lived significantly longer. Other studies have shown that optimistic breast cancer patients had better health outcomes than pessimistic and hopeless patients.
- **Less Stress:** Optimists also tend to experience less stress than pessimists or realists, because they believe in themselves and their abilities, so they expect good things to happen. They see negative events as minor setbacks to be easily overcome and positive events as evidence of further good things to come. Believing in themselves, they also take more risks and create more positive events in their lives.

In summary, choosing to become an optimist or more optimistic is a decision each of us can make. By viewing the good and positive in our lives we will tend to keep ourselves and others around us on this affirmative track. As role models, we can expect our Grand Knights to want to imitate whatever viewpoint our behavior and demeanor expresses whether positive or negative. By choosing to become better optimists we will enjoy greater future successes, less stressful lives and live healthier and longer lives.

“A man is but the product of his thoughts - what he thinks, he becomes.”
~ Mahatma Gandhi.

6.0) District Deputy as a Problem Solver

In my years of managing Information Technology (Computer) professionals, I had a habit of refocusing my staff to see opportunities out of perceived problems. Needless to say the phrase *“It’s not a problem, it’s an opportunity!”* was heard often. One day one of my project leaders came into my office with a very concerned and serious face. Obviously something was wrong. He closed my door and said quite sternly, *“Greg, this is not an opportunity; I have a serious problem with the project I’m working on!”* I paused for a moment then broke out in a big smile, came from behind my desk and shook his hand and said *“Congratulations, that’s GREAT news!”* He looked at me in both shock and disbelief, and replied *“Didn’t you hear me, I have a serious problem! Why are you congratulating me?”* I replied *“Because without problems to solve we would not need your services as an employee. And if none of my staff had problems to solve there would be no reason for my services as an employee either. So now that we’ve established a reason for our existence as employees of this company, how are we going to solve this Great Opportunity?!”* In the next 30 minutes we mapped out the tasks necessary for him to accomplish as well as the tasks he needed me to do to assist at a managerial level. As an interesting footnote, the solution to his problem not only greatly contributed to the successful completion of his project but also opened new opportunities for him as a senior project leader on much larger programs, due to the reputation he developed as a creative problem solver.

I share this story with you to hopefully refocus your perspective as a District Deputy. Yes, you’ll have Councils that will be filled with opportunities for your unique problem solving talents. If all Councils were active, growing and totally self reliant, there would be no need for your service as a District Deputy. So in a way you should be thankful that there are potential opportunities for improvement within the Councils and Council leadership under your guidance and care.

In our discussion on optimism you saw that how you view the world around you can have a great impact on your success. This carries over to your approach to the problems you'll encounter within your district. Viewing them as opportunities puts an immediate positive spin on them. Think about this, it's not a trite concept or just playing with words. Your approach to how you view your Grand Knights and their Councils can be either a negative, difficult and laborious undertaking to deal with or a positive, motivating and exciting opportunity for growth, learning and achievement! Which one you choose will also impact how your Grand Knights will see the same facts of the situation.

6.1) Problem Solving Helps

Break problems or opportunities into smaller pieces.

Question: Can an 80 lb man eat a 2,000 lb elephant?

Answer: Yes, one bite at a time!

While big problems can sometimes appear insurmountable, small problems are routinely tackled and solved in our daily life. It is complexity and the perceived size of major problems that cause us so much stress and concern. So why don't we turn our big problems into groups of smaller ones? Breaking large complex projects into their natural components not only reduces complexity but also provides an opportunity for involvement. For example, suppose you are planning your autumn or spring district organizational meeting. Your goals might be to ensure excellent attendance from all your Councils and to deliver a program that effectively addresses the needs of your Grand Knights and their staffs so that they may better lead their Councils. These two goals make the project a far more challenging effort than simply setting a date and sending an email to your Grand Knights that you're holding a District Meeting and their attendance would be appreciated.

You might think “How am I going to get not average but excellent attendance? Instead of 3 out of 5 of your Grand Knights, maybe you’re thinking that the Grand Knights, Deputy Grand Knights, Chancellors, Program and Membership Directors and your Financial Secretaries from all your 5 Councils would achieve your goal of excellent attendance. From our new optimistic viewpoint, this is going to be a wonderfully challenging problem to solve. And after you accomplish this you also need to deliver a lot more than covering their duties from the material within the Grand Knight’s Handbook and telling them about the State Membership Blitz that has been scheduled for the autumn or spring. You may need to deliver different information to each of the roles that will be attending. i.e. Grand Knight, Deputy Grand Knight, Chancellor, Membership & Program Directors and Financial Secretaries. And you need to make it interactive to get the attendees involvement and input into what will be covered. Plus with everything else being scheduled you’ll need to find an open date and a location large enough to accommodate that many people.

The point I’m attempting to make here is there is a lot of things to think about and some things that need to be analyzed further to come up with new ideas and solutions to the problem inherent in tackling a large project or event. Yes they are all wonderfully challenging in their present size and scope. But if you approach each with a divide and conquer perspective, they can be turned into an organized list of easy to accomplish subtasks. For example:

Big Task:

What should be covered for the Financial Secretaries who will be attending?

Sub Tasks:

1. Call each of your Financial Secretaries and ask them “What are the three most difficult duties they have found in their jobs. Listen, ask clarifying questions to fully understand their input and record these without comment or judgment.

2. Contact your State Deputy for recommendations for the best Financial Secretaries in your State Jurisdiction.
3. Call one or more of these Financial Secretaries and ask them the following questions:
 - a. What has changed in the Financial Secretary duties or procedures mandated by Supreme in the last 5 years?
 - b. What are the 3-5 key things that a great Financial Secretary does compared with just an average Financial Secretary?
4. Generate a simple outline based on the problems your Financial Secretaries gave you and the ideas you collected from the top Financial Secretaries you chatted with.
5. Send this outline to all your Financial Secretaries, as the agenda that will be covered for their training. Ask for feedback and their involvement.
6. Make a request of each of your Financial Secretaries to speak for five minutes on one topic or about one of their successful past experiences in supporting their Councils or Grand Knights. Such as: Reducing suspensions, setting up Council Budgets, helping the new Grand Knight prepare for his Business Meetings, orienting new members around the Council, etc.

Each of these subtasks can be accomplished with a minimum of effort. Most require only a phone call. Once you flesh out the other major parts of the project in a similar fashion you'll be ready for the next step which is to compose your project plan.

Develop and use Project Plans for all large projects or Service Efforts.

A Project Plan is a simple listing of all major and subtasks with two additional pieces of information.

- Who will be responsible for the task and
- When the task needs to be accomplished.

When the task gets completed you can simply draw a line through the item or place a check mark aside of it. When you are at this stage of your project plan it can provide you with great opportunities for involvement. Just like getting your Financial Secretaries involved, do the same with the other potential attendees. Asking your Grand Knights to come prepared to speak for 5 minutes on a specific subject within the program they helped shape is a sure way to improve the likelihood of their presence. Do the same with the Deputy Grand Knights, Chancellors and Council Directors.

Here's an example of a simple format you may want to consider using in preparing your project plan:

Done	Main Tasks or Subtask	Who is Responsible	When	
			Start	Finish
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What should be covered for the Financial Secretaries who will be attending?	District Deputy	1-July	20-July
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Call each Financial Secretaries and ask them "What are the three most difficult duties they have found in their jobs.	District Deputy	9-July	11-July
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Solicit Help from my most senior Financial Secretary	District Deputy	11-July	11-July
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact your State Deputy for recommendations for the best Financial Secretaries in your State Jurisdiction.	District Deputy	11-July	11-July

The Second Best Job in the Order

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Have my senior Financial Secretary call one or more of these Financial Secretaries and ask them the following questions:</p> <p>What has changed in the Financial Secretary duties or procedures mandated by Supreme in the last 5 years?</p> <p>What are the 3-5 key things that a great Financial Secretary does compared with just and average Financial Secretary?</p>	Senior Financial Secretary	12-July	14-July
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Generate a simple outline based on the problems my Financial Secretaries gave me and the ideas my senior FS collected from the top Financial Secretaries</p>	Senior Financial Secretary & District Deputy	15-July	16-July
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Send this outline to all of our Financial Secretaries, as the agenda that will be covered for their training. Ask for feedback and their involvement.</p>	Senior Financial Secretary	17-July	17-July
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Make a request of each of our Financial Secretaries to speak for five minutes on one topic or about one of their successful past experiences in supporting their Councils or Grand Knights. Such as: Reducing suspensions, setting up Council Budgets, helping the new Grand Knight prepare for his Business Meetings, orienting new members around the Council.</p>	Senior Financial Secretary	18-July	20-July

How to Develop a Project Timeline.

There are two approaches you might want to consider when determining when a task needs to be completed. The first way (*Finish to Start*) is useful when we already have a fixed date for the event or program we are planning. Start by ordering all your tasks by which needs to be completed first to those that need to be completed last. Next begin with the last task and assign its finish date one or two days before the date of the event. Estimate how long the task will take to accomplish and this will give the date it needs to start. Backup one day and that will become the finish date for the 2nd to last task. Keep repeating this process until you get to the first task. This now becomes the start of your project.

The second approach (*Start to Finish*) is useful when you don't have a date for the event, but know the work that needs to be done. For example to form a new Second Degree team involves a number of major and sub tasks. The work involved in these tasks will determine when you could get the team certified by your State Ceremonials Director/Chairman. Start by ordering all the tasks, just like before by what needs to get done first, to when tasks need to get done last. Now start with the first task and put today's date for its start date. Estimate how much elapsed time it will take to complete the task and this will give you the first task's finish date. Add one more day and you'll have the start date of the second task. Repeat until you have scheduled all the tasks. The finish date of the last task is the completion date of the project or for our example when the team would get certified.

How to Shorten the Timeline of a Project

Under both approaches: *Finish to Start* and *Start to Finish* you can decrease the time it takes to complete a large project by doing some of the tasks simultaneously. To accomplish this the tasks of the project must lend themselves to being done independent of each other and you need to involve others. For example if you are inviting six types of Council positions (Grand Knights, Deputy Grand Knights, Chancellors, Membership Directors, Program Directors and Financial Secretaries) and you have five councils you would need to contact 30 people. You could instead contact only the Grand Knights and get them to take on the subtasks of one of the remaining groups. For example, the 1st Grand Knight would contact all the Deputy Grand Knights; the second Grand Knight would contact all the Chancellors, etc. Granted this is not the approach you may have expected. More likely you would have expected me to say that the first Grand Knight contact his people, the second Grand Knight contacts his people etc., but the first approach gets each Grand Knight to contact other knights within his district and outside his normal

sphere of influence. This is good exposure and gets more people in your district to know each other.

Either way, you can see how this reduces your workload and shortens the timeline for the project. As well as these two benefits you are also involving others in this district project, which one day when one of your Grand Knights is a District Deputy will likely be repeated and emulated.

This approach to problem solving is equally applicable to your challenging efforts your Grand Knights will encounter within their own Councils, so while employing this technique yourself, you demonstrate a powerful leadership skill that your Grand Knights and their staffs are likely to emulate and develop as one of their own leadership skills.

6.2) Use Positive Can-Do Words

When you or your Grand Knights express a perception of the world around you with spoken words, you are affirming that perception and giving it credibility as your personal reality. Thus simply by using negative words and concepts in our everyday conversations we may limit our realm of possible creative solutions to the opportunities we come across. It is just as easy to say “I have a challenging opportunity” as it is to say “I have a problem”. I realize the difference may appear to be subtle, yet in my own experience I’ve found it can make all the difference on how I approach the challenge that comes my way and how people I influence approach the challenges of their lives.

Using positive, can-do words and phrases in our conversations and presentations not only identifies to our audience that we have a positive mindset, but more importantly it will affect our own actions, decisions, opinions and any advice we offer. It can radically change how we approach and tackle the challenging opportunities we will encounter as a leader, role model and coach. This is the real power in changing our normal choice of words. Here is a list of powerful positive words and phrases that you might consider working

into your everyday speech and by example can be woven into the tapestry of your Grand Knights' speech as well:

“We can”

“We will”

“Let’s plan for it”

“This can be tackled”

“Let’s attack this challenge”

“We can design a solution to this”

“Let’s start”

“Let’s figure it out”

“This is a great challenge”

“This is do able”

“We can succeed at this”

“That is a Great Idea”

“Let’s come up with some new ideas”

Action Words

Accomplish	Conceive	Engage	Implement
Achieve	Confirm	Engineer	Improve
Acquire	Connect	Enhance	Improvise
Adopt	Consider	Enlighten	Increase
Advance	Construct	Enlist	Influence
Affect	Contact	Enliven	Inspire
Affirm	Continue	Entertain	Integrate
Alleviate	Counsel	Enthuse	Introduce
Amplify	Create	Evaluate	Invent
Appreciate	Decide	Excite	Involve
Ascend	Defend	Expand	Keep
Assist	Delight	Explore	Know
Associate	Deliver	Express	Labor
Believe	Demonstrate	Extend	Launch
Bestow	Design	Facilitate	Lead
Brighten	Devise	Finance	Light
Build	Direct	Forgive	Live
Call	Discover	Foster	Love
Cause	Discuss	Further	Make
Choose	Distribute	Gather	Maintain
Claim	Draft	Generate	Manifest
Collect	Dream	Give	Master
Combine	Drive	Grant	Mature
Communicate	Educate	Heal	Maximize
Compete	Elect	Hold	Measure
Complete	Embrace	Host	Mediate
Compliment	Encourage	Identify	Model
Compose	Endow	Illuminate	Mold

The Second Best Job in the Order

Motivate	Progress	Respect	Team
Move	Promise	Restore	Touch
Navigate	Promote	Return	Trade
Negotiate	Provide	Revise	Transform
Nurture	Pursue	Sacrifice	Translate
Open	Realize	Safeguard	Travel
Organize	Receive	Satisfy	Understand
Originate	Reclaim	Save	Unify
Participate	Reduce	Sell	Use
Pass	Refine	Serve	Utilize
Perform	Reflect	Share	Validate
Persuade	Reform	Speak	Value
Plan	Regard	Stand	Venture
Play	Relate	Summon	Verbalize
Practice	Relax	Support	Volunteer
Praise	Release	Sustain	Work
Prepare	Rely	Take	Worship
Present	Remember	Tap	Write
Produce	Renew	Teach	

6.3) Focus on How and not If.

In “*Toward a More Active Council*”, I relate a story about a Grand Knight who is able to triple and then quadruple the amount of money his Council collected during their annual Tootsie Roll Drive. If you’ve read my first book you should remember it. If not, I’ve repeated it here for your consideration. It drives home the point that focusing on the how to do something versus whether its possible to accomplish is an approach to successful problem solving and achievement.

Excerpt from “*Toward a More Active Council*”

When I first joined my council it consistently raised around \$3,000 during its annual Tootsie Roll drive year after year. One year a newly elected Grand Knight called a meeting of the committee to set a new goal for the coming year. He asked the committee to really stretch themselves in setting this goal. On the night of the meeting, the new Grand Knight arrived a half hour late on purpose. By the time he arrived, the committee had already set the goal at \$5,000, which they all felt was indeed a stretch. The Grand Knight listened quietly as the chairman explained the new goal and how it might be reached. The Grand Knight then thanked the committee for their work on the goal

and asked them if hypothetically the goal was \$10,000, would they have done anything different. *“Well, we’d need to get the financial support of local businesses and we’d have to increase the number of days of the drive”* replied the chairman. Another committee member added *“We’d also have to expand the number of workers and ensure we have better coverage for each two hour timeslot.”* After a few more general needs were offered, the Grand Knight suggested to the Committee that the new goal be \$10,000. The committee replied that a 70% increase moving from \$3K to \$5K was a stretch but a more than 200% increase to \$10K was just impossible, hypothetically or not. The Grand Knight explained that the new goal **WAS** possible as they had already come up with ideas to accomplish it. All’s that was left was the details. He then asked them not to focus on whether the goal was possible, but to assume it was, focusing their efforts on the **“HOW”**.

This expectant “can do” attitude of the Grand Knight was passed on to both the committee and the council that year and the \$10K goal was reached. As a footnote to the story, the following year the goal was raised to \$12K, but the council only raised \$11,800! The second goal was missed, but a total of \$21,800 was raised, for the two years, instead of the accepted \$6,000 it would have been. This increase of \$15,800 (\$21,800-\$6,000) that had been achieved is labeled a success in most people’s books!

By getting yourself in this mindset, you tend to focus on the actual planning of your project and getting it under way. By not wasting time to evaluate why you might not be able to accomplish something provides you with the assumption that it is solvable and doable. This will release the creative part of your brain to come up with how to accomplish your task or project. Any focus spent determining why you can’t accomplish something will also release your brain to come up with creative reasons why you can’t or shouldn’t do something.

Try this little exercise:

Assume your district doesn’t have a Second Degree Team and your State Deputy has asked you to consider creating one. Think of ten reasons why you might not be successful or shouldn’t attempt it. Be creative and fill in the 10 reasons fairly quickly.

The Second Best Job in the Order

Reason why a Second Degree Team should **not** be started or will **not** be successful:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

I tried this myself and came up with the following excuses:

1. Can't get volunteers to learn the parts
2. Don't have Second Degree robes
3. Councils will travel to a different district that has a team that is closer to their Council
4. Do not have time to organize this effort
5. Not enough candidates to support the team
6. Robes and paraphernalia are too expensive
7. No place to store the robes and paraphernalia
8. District will likely change with the next District Deputy which will disrupt the team
9. All Councils don't have their own first degree teams
10. It was tried before and failed.

If your exercise went like mine, it wasn't that hard to come up with all those why not's. Now let's assume a different track. What if your State Deputy said to you "*Whether or not it is possible what would we have to do to create a second degree team in your district assuming we have an unlimited number of resources?*" List all the things you think would need to be done:

Tasks Needed to Create a Second Degree Team

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Here's my list:

1. Acquire paraphernalia
2. Get volunteers to learn parts
3. Schedule practices
4. Determine where to store the robes and paraphernalia
5. Schedule dry run before certification
6. Schedule with State Ceremonials Director the team's certification
7. Schedule first live degree with candidates
8. Communicate plan to create team
9. Plan a celebration dinner for the new team with the State Ceremonials Director and State Deputy present.
10. Deliver Certification cards to Team Members at a Council Business Meeting.
11. Develop backup for all parts and get these certified.
12. Develop a Degree Calendar for the entire fraternal year and publish it to your Grand Knights and brother District Deputies in adjacent districts.

You should have 8 to 15 tasks itemized on your list. And it also should have been fairly easy to come up with this list. Notice how our minds work. We can be creative whether or not

we are thinking about negative and limiting things or positive and constructive things. So the real question is which list will be more likely to create a new second degree team?

Using the previous technique, we learned to break down our tasks into smaller pieces and to involve others in the running of the project; now adding this *how and not if* approach you should see how it will improve the probability of success even further.

6.4) Take Risks on People, New Ideas and How Much you can Accomplish.

My last bit of advice to assist you in your problem solving is to suggest that you stay willing to take risks.

Task Risks with People

Stay willing to take risks with people when you are expanding involvement within your district projects, for you will never know the true potential of people in your district until you offer them the opportunity to succeed at a task or project. And while its normal to expect and to solicit the involvement of your Grand Knights, don't limit participation to only them. Depending on the size of the Councils within your district you might have between 150 to 1500 potential candidates who could be invited into district level events and projects. Be on the lookout for members who are busy, outspoken and passionate about the work they do for their local Council or Church. These are sometimes the individuals who want to rock the boat with new and creative ideas. Sometimes these ideas are not thought through, but they still can breathe life into old events, projects and ways of doing things. There never seems to be a lack of people who can add experience, organization and critical critique, but those that can offer a fresh perspective normally come at a premium. Take a risk and engage these members.

On the other side of the fence are those individuals who tend to remain meek, mild and more apt to listen than speak.

You'll find that many times these people have more to offer than their outside appearance tends to show. They first need to be asked, then supported and encouraged. They have more often than not been waiting for your invitation. They say that still waters run deep, so take a risk and ask that quiet knight if he'd like to help and be involved in one of your projects. You will likely identify individuals bestowed with talents, ideas and a renewed motivation to be a part of the working of our Order.

Take Risks with New Ideas

Don't settle for only self generated ideas. Actively solicit new ideas from others and task a risk to embrace those ideas. While all ideas are not polished gems if you don't assume that each new idea could be the winner you are looking for, it's easy to let the real gems slip past us. Always explore why a new ideas **CAN SUCCEED** versus why it will fail. As we discussed previously, focus on the "how" and not on the "if". Ask yourself as well as the people around you:

- *"How could we make this idea work?"*
- *"What would need to be done for it to succeed?"*
- *"How would we get started with this new idea?"*

Granted you'll sometimes come across an idea that just won't work. In these cases let the idea become a catalyst for alternative ideas. Ask *"How might we change this idea"* or *"What other ways are there to accomplish our goal similar to this idea?"* In getting us to new successful ideas, in this way, even the very worst idea has benefit.

When a new idea is proposed to you, give yourself time to thoroughly explore its possibilities. All too often ideas are discarded after a very cursory evaluation. Always ask the originator enough open ended questions to thoroughly understand not just the idea but how they see it being implemented and how it contributes to the success of the task or project at hand.

Take Risks on the Goals You Set

If the bar is always set at 17', the pole-vaulter will never clear 18'. The same is true in the projects, leadership development and other opportunities you take on within your district. If you set your mark to help develop one first degree team in your district, you will be unlikely to develop two. If you set your mark on three new teams, there's a possibility that one, two or three will get setup, but the chance that four or five will be formed is unlikely. If you involve your favorite Grand Knight in district activities you will develop one future District Deputy candidate, but if you set your goal to involve all of your Grand Knights in the running of your district, the likelihood of having developed three, four or five future District Deputies is more probable. Use this technique while involving your Grand Knights and you may see them setting the bar higher in their own Council goals.

In summary, we have presented a number of techniques and hopefully some new ideas to help you take advantage of the opportunities within your district whether the challenges are small and simple or large and complex. We saw how to break projects into smaller tasks, ways to shorten the time it takes to complete a large project through involvement, how to focus on the "how" and not the "if" and how to take risks with people, ideas and goals. If you have already been using these techniques, please take this section as a review and confirmation of your efforts. If instead some of the material presented new ideas to you, consider putting them to use within your district right now.

7.0) District Deputy as a Council Guest

If you don't already, consider yourself a guest of the Councils you visit. Even in your own Council, assuming its in your district, try to detach your familiarity with its members and the Grand Knight, and present yourself the same way you have to with your other Councils, that is, as an outsider. This approach can provide a number of benefits to you. First it helps

The Second Best Job in the Order

provide objectivity to the local operation and people of your district. While you want to appear friendly and cordial, a degree of separation is important. To properly assist the Grand Knight you need to be able to see the forest from the trees. If you are involved in the local operations of a Council, it can be hard to keep an unbiased and neutral perspective. This is why I recommend that for the duration of your service as a District Deputy that you step down from leadership involvement within your own Council and not get involved in the running of events within your other Councils. This can initially be hard to do if you were a very active member of your Council before becoming a District Deputy. But not only will it assist you to maintain your objectivity, it will provide opportunities for others in your Council to take your place and get involved. In addition, it gives the Grand Knight the opportunity to practice the skill of delegation and involving others. Your objectivity will allow you to step back and see the big picture, independent of local issues and personalities.

The second benefit of presenting yourself as a guest is that it will make Council members more receptive to your presence as a sounding board that they can confide in. It's surprising how comfortable people can be explaining the things that concern them to strangers versus people who are related or close to them.

As a "*guest*" of most of the Councils within your district you can expect a level of hospitality and openness that you might not experience within your own Council. Sometimes bordering on disrespect of your role as District Deputy, your Council's familiarization and past knowledge of you as a member and most likely as a Past Grand Knight can make it hard for you to be perceived as a neutral and an objective guide. Given Supreme's financial responsibility to our Order, they attempt to reduce district mileage expenses by assigning a District Deputy to his own local Council. So you'll likely need to work harder to maintain a level of perceived objectivity with your Council brothers. Here are a few suggestions that may help:

The Second Best Job in the Order

- Refrain from joining in the discussion of events and motions during your Council's Business meeting.
- In discussions with members of your Council after a Business meeting, try to steer the subject to district, state or Order wide topics versus local events or issues.
- When asked your opinion or viewpoint about a local issues or project, turn the request around and ask their opinion. If pressed, suggest that as a District Deputy you wish to remain neutral and objective and would rather see the Grand Knight lead the Council to a resolution that represents the desires and viewpoints of the general Council membership.
- Explain to your local Council Grand Knight that you need to be perceived as an objective and neutral guide. Ask him to take the lead in all discussions of local issues and efforts. Explain to him that it is important for him to be perceived as the leader of his Council and that you will be redirecting requests for your involvement to him.

Being invited to someone's house for dinner gives you the opportunity to acknowledge your host's hospitality by expressing your appreciation sincerely and often throughout the evening. You may even bring a bottle of wine, flowers for the table or other small gift as a token of your thanks for being invited. While the phrase is "*being a gracious host*", I call the actions above "*being a gracious guest*".

When visiting your Councils, try to be a "*gracious guest*". Recognize that you are being welcomed into another leader's organization and business meeting. You are being bestowed with respect and their hospitality. Thank the Grand Knight and his members at the beginning of your remarks. Identify something positive during the Grand Knight's and Program

Director's reports and make note of it to the Council members. Identify something you personally enjoy about coming to their Council and express it to them. Find something positive about the Grand Knight's leadership style that you can challenge the rest of his Council to emulate. This does two things, it compliments the Grand Knight and it challenges his Council members to develop the same skill or practice. Obviously you need to put this into your own personality so that it is perceived as sincere and not empty flattery. Follow some of these ideas and your district will describe you as a "*gracious guest*"!

8.0) District Deputy as a Support to his Grand Knights

We all need someone, in our corner behind the scenes, providing support, motivation and encouragement. As a District Deputy you are called on to accomplish this for your Grand Knights. If you've been a Grand Knight you already know that one can easily get overwhelmed by the responsibilities of the position. Not only is it a big role to fill but many times it can be a thankless job with criticism, strong opinions and bruised egos being directed to the man behind the podium. The last thing a Grand Knight needs is criticism, strong opinions or a controlling ego from his District Deputy. First year District Deputies often struggle with the directing management style that worked so well in their own Councils when they were Grand Knights. As they start their second year or sometimes their third year they discover a change is needed. Intuitively they often hit upon this new role of Grand Knight Supporter. I've noticed this change between new and senior District Deputies and often wished to convey this earned wisdom to the new District Deputies I've worked with. While there are always the exceptions of men who "*get it*" right off the starting line, there are also those that struggle their whole four year term without "*getting it*". So whether you are in the norm or one of the exceptions please take the following advise in the spirit it is given.

- Be your Grand Knight's Best Friend
- Support him to make his own decisions
- Talk with him before and after his meetings
- Be a Great Listener, especially to him
- Always have a sincere compliment for him
- Praise his accomplishment and growth as a leader
- Ask him a ton of self discovery questions before giving him your advise on how to do something
- Let him make and learn from his mistakes
- Keep him positive by always being positive yourself
- Involve him in the activities and decision making of your district
- Remain open and receptive to his requests, ideas and point of view and
- Motivate and challenge him to deliver high levels of service to our Church and his Community

9.0) District Deputy as a Positive Force in our Order

The position of District Deputy is not only a very prestigious assignment; it also provides an extremely important contribution to our Order. The leadership development you deliver has a lasting impact not only on the Councils of your district but on the membership at large. Knights who are led by effective leaders are able to deliver higher levels of service to their Church and Communities. Our clergy, their parishioners and the people within our neighborhoods will judge our worth by these actions. And our God will judge these efforts in their ability to accomplish our mission as Christians, that being to bring others to his Son. So in a different perspective your purpose as a District Deputy is to develop and motivate leaders in God's army to accomplish that mission. Each Grand Knight and Council member will be influenced by your words, actions and by the positive changes you develop in them.

The Second Best Job in the Order

A District Deputy is viewed as a model to be emulated. Not only will Grand Knights want to be like you but also members of their councils. This provides you with a great opportunity to make that model one of a positive force within our Order. Every time you convert difficulty and pessimism to potential accomplishment and optimism you are building that model to one that will be followed and imitated.

I salute the dedication, hard work and service you provide toward the goals of our Order. I offer my sincere thanks to you for accepting this request of service from your State Deputy and all you will accomplish during your term. Know that your legacy will be the strong leaders that you have helped grow and nurture. Know also that you and your families remain in my prayers and thoughts.



**Notes area for your Ideas on the
Role of the District Deputy**

Section Three: Dealing with Leadership Styles

While the last section of this book has dealt with your role in developing leadership skills in your Grand Knights, this section attempts to categorize different challenging leadership styles that you will or may already have come in contact with. Each style and its description is followed by one or more suggested strategies to address the leadership development that may be needed. These suggestions not only include my own thought and experiences but those of successful former District Deputies and Past State Deputies I have discussed this topic with. Hopefully they will give you ideas and added insights to best assist your Grand Knights.

The Weak Grand Knight

Grand Knights come into their position from many walks of life and many different life experiences. They may have little or no leadership experience with limited communication and organizational skills. How they became Grand Knights could constitute a whole range of reasons. The weak Grand Knight despite his best intentions is not prepared to take on the responsibilities of the Grand Knight role, but his Council has expressed their trust in him, so you'll need to support him and help make him successful.

Weak Grand Knights rarely know what they want to accomplish during their term and unless supported by a strong well structured Council they are unlikely to accomplish much as their legacy when they leave office. Both good and bad is the fact that they are easily influenced. They may be swayed by strong voices in the Council or with the supportive voice and advice of you, their District Deputy. Weak Grand Knights are also more likely to struggle on basic parliamentary procedures and the basic flow of the business meeting. Expect them to be overwhelmed with the volume of information directed to them by Supreme, their State Council, as well as their own Council.

Finally a weak Grand Knight may travel the path of least resistance and go with whichever way the wind blows.

How to Help a Weak Grand Knight

- **Provide Structure and Direction** – Sit down privately with them and explain and have them role play the Order of Business and protocol of a Business meeting.
- **Motions Quick Reference** - Provide them with a simplified quick reference sheet for handling motions, amendments and voting majority requirements
- **Printed Meeting Agendas** - Have them develop a printed agenda for both their planning meeting and their business meeting. These should contain key motions, issues or important discussion to be covered at the meetings.
- **Grand Knight Report** - Help him compose a Grand Knight's report to be presented at his next Business Meeting. This report should contain what he wants to accomplish in the coming year and how he plans on accomplishing it.
- **Council Processes** - If these processes are not in place with the Council already: Set up a meeting with the Grand Knight and his key officers and discuss the need for and how to develop
 - An 18 month Event Calendar
 - A fixed expense and fixed donation budget
 - A New Member Program

These are covered in detail within "Toward a More Active Council"
- **Deadlines and Milestone Calendar** - Set up with the Grand Knight a complete list of deadlines that include Supreme and State Council dates as well as special milestones and planning dates of his own Council. These should include deadlines that will occur in the next 90 days. Suggest that he reviews the dates on this list at all of his Council meetings.

The Second Best Job in the Order

- **Involve the Deputy Grand Knight** - Suggest that he share all Council information with his Deputy Grand Knight. Ask him to start involving his Deputy Grand Knight in all important planning and decision making. This will assist the Grand Knight with another's viewpoint as well as set the stage for the development of his Successor.
- **Pre-Meeting Contact** - Call the Grand Knight a week before his planning meeting and a week before his business meeting to touch base with him and insure he has thought out the issues he will need to deal with.
- **Keep his decisions, his own** - Take caution not to make this Grand Knight's decisions for him. Always ask him what you might want to just tell him. You can't always be with him for every issue that he'll face, so getting him to make his own decisions is a better development track than making him dependent on you.

The Political Grand Knight

Having good political skills is not a bad thing. Being able to determine how each camp will vote on a particular issue and why, helps a leader to pick his battles or modify his strategy, based on the will of his Council. It is when these skills are used to exclude others or to force the Grand Knight's will on his Council without all viewpoints being acknowledged, reviewed and if possible an attempt to find common ground that being political can be detrimental to the well being of a Council.

How to Help a Political Grand Knight

- **Grand Knight to ALL members** - The very best you can do for this type of leadership style is to get the Grand Knight to understand that he is the Grand Knight for all members of the Council and not just those that agree with him.
- **Engaging Dissenters** - Ask him how he might engage the people of his Council that differ from his opinions to assist him in moving the Council forward as a united body versus opposing fractions.
- **Neutral Moderator at Business Meetings** - Caution the Grand Knight that his role is one of a neutral moderator at business meetings. He should be orchestrating the flow of the meeting and leaving his opinions at home. Help him understand that it is the combined opinions and viewpoints of all members that issues should be resolved by. It is up to the Grand Knight to bring these different points of view out on the floor and assign members from both camps to jointly work out the details of any proposed solutions.
- **Activity and Involvement Impact** - Help make this Grand Knight aware that the downside of excluding others or forcing his will on the Council will be a significant decrease in activity and involvement. This will obviously lead to decreases in recruitment and increases in suspensions; neither of which will serve the Grand

Knight's mission or long range goals for the betterment of his Council.

This type of Machiavellian politics can also harm the Council down the road after the present Grand Knight's term of office. Members who leave the Council because they felt they were excluded or slighted will likely offer their opinion of the Council to others as "*an organization that doesn't care about its members*". This can be extremely damaging and very difficult to recover from.

The Pessimistic Grand Knight

A true pessimist sees the world and the people around him as lacking in worth. Things will always turn out bad and people should not be trusted or relied on. This attitude is damaging to both the Grand Knight and to his Council.

How to Help a Pessimistic Grand Knight

- **Be an Optimist** - Assist him by first being an optimist yourself. Always find opportunity in any problem or issue. Display a positive expectation that things will always work out for the better. After accomplishing and demonstrating this expectant positive attitude you'll now be ready to help shape your Grand Knight's attitude.
- **Be Patient** - Don't expect drastic change in your Grand Knight. The battle from negative to positive can be a very gradual one.
- **Be a Facilitator of Change** – Recognize that you as a District Deputy are only the facilitator of this change and not the decision maker. It is the Grand Knight that will decide how positive or negative he will be.
- **Ask Leading Question, Don't Preach** – Ask lots of leading questions to this Grand Knight. For example “*Can you name three things that will benefit your Council if they take on a particular project?*” Or ask him what he thinks would be the benefit to the individuals/members who attend his business meeting if he were more optimistic and expectant of positive change.

This self discovery can go a long way into moving the Grand Knight from a pessimistic to a more optimistic demeanor.

The Long Term Grand Knight

Some councils can become trapped into a condition of no officer progression with the same Grand Knight or a Past Grand Knight being used year after year to lead the Council. These gentlemen may be very experienced and capable leaders, but they risk the Council becoming more and more fixed and stagnant. If the officer ranks are not changing in an upward progression, opportunities for new Council members to grow in the leadership ranks will not present themselves. This can lead to disinterest and ultimately suspensions. If but nothing else an active officer progression in a Council sets the expectation for new members that they are expected to take on more responsibility and leadership in the Council.

While this condition is more likely to occur with a long time established Council, it can also occur in brand new Councils. The telling characteristic of these councils is a lack of involvement. What I mean here is that members and the officers of the Council are not being called on by the Grand Knight in the decision making and activity planning of the Council. Once this gets to a certain point officers become less likely to want to take on the added responsibilities of the next higher position and in particular the Grand Knight's role. The long term Grand Knight having served three, four, five or more years may feel trapped and reluctant to step down, fearing a collapse of the Council when no other member steps forward to replace him. In very small councils with little recruitment or activity a Grand Knight may decide the trappings of the position versus the little work he's called on to do, represents a comfort level. He enjoys the honor of wearing the purple ribbon and retaining the title, and may have little desire to seek a successor. He may even dissuade the Council from taking on new activity or attempting membership drives in order to retain his hold on the Grand Knight's position.

Most long term Grand Knights serve in the position with the feeling that the continuance of the Council is at stake. New members would likely be overwhelmed to assume the Grand

Knight's position, with little or no experience of how the Council works and what the position of Grand Knight entails. Existing members may be made up of a large number of Past Grand Knights who feel they have already served their time and have no desire for a second term. Understanding all the aspects of the problem within this type of Council will help you assist the Grand Knight and Council to rebuild a leadership pool that new Grand Knights can be drawn from.

Helping to Retire the Long Term Grand Knight

Here are some ideas you may want to give a try to:

- Ask the Grand Knight a series of questions that lead him to self discovery of the main problem in the Council. You could just tell him, but it wouldn't be as effective. Ask him:
 - *“Why are there no new candidates to take on the position of Grand Knight?”*
 - *“If you were to become seriously ill and had to step down as Grand Knight what would happen to the Council?”*
 - *“What expectation is being set for new members to become future leaders?”*
 - *“If you knew you positively couldn't run for Grand Knight next year, what would you do to ensure someone would be ready to take on the position?”*

The answers to these questions will help you to direct the Grand Knight and the Council to take the next step. If the Grand Knight is willing to rebuild an officer progression here are a few helps you can offer him.

- Officer Progression starts with new members. Expectations need to be set with every new member that their assumption of leadership positions in the Council is expected. And for this to work the Grand Knight and Council has to assign responsibility to and include these new members in the running and activity planning of the

Council. Simply put, they need to establish a connection between the new member and his Council.

- Council Officer Positions in particular Deputy Grand Knight, Chancellor, Recorder, Advocate and Treasurer should be temporary positions leading to the more responsibility and movement to the next higher position. If these positions are currently filled by members who have been in their position more than two to three years, they can cause a log jam that will stop new members from jumping over these positions to a Deputy or Grand Knight role. Officer progression should entail the movement between all Council Officer positions.
- When looking for candidates for new Grand Knights and Council officers, the Grand Knight should consider existing members as well as new members. Sometimes it takes a little coaxing to persuade the existing member to seriously consider the challenge of filling an officer position, but it will bring new blood to the Council leadership ranks the same way a new member would.
- Have a mix of existing and new members will benefit the Council by marrying experience and knowledge with new ideas and fresh outlooks to the challenges that every Council faces.

The Talkative Grand Knight

We all like to talk and express our ideas, but every now and then we'll come across a Grand Knight who never seems to stop talking and never seems to come to the point. Meetings drag on and the Grand Knight's opinions and viewpoints are always looming. Instead of promoting others in the Council to express their ideas, he seems to monopolize every discussion and may not even be aware that others are being left out until it's too late.

How to Help the Talkative Grand Knight

You can help this type of Grand Knight by offering him the following:

- Explain to him that a Grand Knight is a moderator of the discussion and business on the floor. This means that his opinion is out of order and not pertinent to the discussion at hand. Serving as the *Chair*, it is actually unfair to offer one's opinion as it may sway the vote in one direction or another. This is not the role of the Grand Knight!
- The moderator's job is to ensure that the opinions of the members on the floor are heard. This is done by asking questions and not making statements. Ask for members who are silent to join in. For example: "*Brother Smith, you've been very quiet this evening, what are your thoughts on the topic that is on the floor?*" The moderator or chair should only use statements for making points of order, such as repeating a motion, calling for a second and then managing the discussion so that all unique ideas are heard.
- Explain to this type of Grand Knight that the only part of the Business Meeting where he should express his opinion is during the Grand Knight's Report. As a guideline this report should be kept to a single typed page.
- By focusing on moving the discussion to motions and votes, the Grand Knight can drastically reduce the time necessary for a Business Meeting and thus keep the

meeting interesting and bearable. Both new and existing members will appreciate a smartly run meeting.

- Finally, whenever the Grand Knight hears something on the floor and has the desire to add his two cents worth, ask him to remember instead “ASK A QUESTION” of someone who has been quiet on the current topic. The position of the Council Leader is one of great influence which should be treated with great respect. But in this role it is far more important to involve others than to express your own opinion.

The Recycled Grand Knight

There are normally two reasons that a Past Grand Knight runs for the Grand Knight position again.

The first situation we have already talked about (that of the Long Term Grand Knight), see that section for helps.

The second reason a Past Grand Knight may be employed which can be beneficial to the Council is when the Deputy Grand Knight isn't ready to assume the Grand Knight position. In this case the Past Grand Knight might serve one year to give the Deputy the time and experience necessary to take the reins the following July.

Helping the Recycled Grand Knight

Here are some helps for this Past Grand Knight that you can offer:

- Let him know that his role should be one of a mentor. He should meet with the Deputy on a regular basis to set strategy, long range goals and plan for activity.
- The Past Grand Knight should give the Deputy multiple opportunities to run planning and business meetings. Most of us learn best by doing versus being told what to do.
- When decisions need to be made, the Past Grand Knight should always request a solution from his Deputy. If the

response received is a poor one, the Past Grand Knight can use this as a training opportunity. He should ask questions of the Deputy to allow him to re-evaluate his decision. Questions such as “*Did you consider {this} in your decision?*” and “*What did you consider in coming to that decision?*”

- The Past Grand Knight can also assist the Deputy by involving him in the selection of Council directors and chairmen and how the Past Grand Knight will utilize each of his officers in the running of the Council. Additionally the Past Grand Knight should discuss with the Deputy how each new member will be made involved in the decision making and activity planning of the Council. This activity will help the Deputy when he picks his own staff and plans for the Council involvement during his term as Grand Knight.
- Finally it is important for the Past Grand Knight to realize that he is setting a role model for the Deputy Grand Knight to follow. So over and above preparing the Deputy, the Past Grand Knight should have a significant goal for the council to accomplish. Setting this long term goal for the Council will likely be emulated by the Deputy during his term.

The “Flash in the Pan” Grand Knight

“Before he became Grand Knight nothing was happening in our Council. But as soon as he was elected there was activity and recognition. Our new Grand Knight chaired nearly every service project, did 90% of the recruitment, wrote up all our service projects and drove nearly all our fund raising. He met regularly with all the service directors and completed a review of our bylaws without the help of our Advocate. He even started publishing a Council newsletter and produced a Council website. He achieved Star Council two years in a row. So they appointed him a District Deputy and since the Deputy Grand Knight took over everything has been reversing back to the way it was before the Grand Knight showed up. Our

The Second Best Job in the Order
activities have been cut in half, we only recruited 1 new member this year and we haven't seen him since his first degree. We processed 10 suspensions so far and won't even qualify for the Columbian Award this year. Every one is blaming the current Grand Knight who is threatening to resign."

Sound familiar? This describes a fictitious "Flash in the Pan" Grand Knight that shows up at an inactive Council and raises it to the top with regards to membership and activity. I'm sure we can all think of a few instances in our time with the Knights that are similar to this. The challenge here is not the activity that the new Grand Knight brings to his Council but instead how he accomplishes it. Some highly motivated leaders sometimes feel that no one can do it as well as they can. So instead of spending their time increasing participation and involvement they focus solely on creating new activity. And most of the time they do most of the work themselves. These leaders while being highly motivated are also self achievers. They look for things to accomplish or resolve. These are things that might have never been accomplished within their Council if it weren't for them. So how do we assist this type of Grand Knight and their Council after they move on?

Helping the "Flash in the Pan" Grand Knight

Here are a few thoughts for your consideration:

- Bring the future to these Grand Knights before it happens. Explain that while the activity they bring is important, the lack of involvement can lead to a collapse of the Council or minimally a return to comfortable ways and inactivity. Explain to them that they need to focus more of their time in delegation than assuming all responsibility themselves. Explain that each member they can put to work will allow them more time to accomplish more activity in the Council.
- Suggest a buddy system be adopted for each activity the Grand Knight starts. Once underway each activity or event

The Second Best Job in the Order is to be released to another member (*the buddy*) of the Council. Here are some examples:

Grand Knight Action	Buddy	Buddy Action
<u>Council By Law Review</u> Propose and organize a. Explain to Council. Appoint Advocate to Chair.	Advocate	Run the Review meeting, Present proposed changes to Council. Once voted on submit to Supreme, Publish and distribute approved bylaws.
<u>Fall Membership Drive</u> Propose and organize. Serve as Speaker at Drive. Define activities, and resources needed.	Membership Director	Assign Speakers to Masses. Advertise in Council and parish bulletins. Document Entire Process
	Fin. Secretary	Order Membership Material
<u>Spring Membership Drive</u> Act as Speaker	Membership Director	Completes all activities following documented procedures
<u>New Service Event</u> Co-Chair, Propose, organize, lead, delegate half of the activities to the Co-Chair	Service Director or Co-Chair	Document Guide to Event Co-chair activity with Grand Knight
<u>2nd Occurrence of same Service Event</u> Switch roles with co-chair or delegate to new co-chair	Service Director or Co-Chair	Lead and assign GK some activities. Follow documented Guide

- Suggest to the Grand Knight that he start developing his Deputy Grand Knight to succeed him. Ask him to pick two Business Meetings during the year where the Deputy Grand Knight will plan to run the meeting. The Grand Knight should arrive slightly late to the meeting and sit with the members and not at the head table. He should attempt to say nothing during the meeting, instead he should write down the good things the Deputy Grand Knight does and those things they can discuss together that might benefit from a different tact or leadership technique.
- Suggest the Grand Knight develop an Activity Event Calendar with the Deputy Grand Knight and the Service Directors. During this second year ask the Grand Knight to

let the Deputy Grand Knight drive the new year's calendar planning and formation.

- While there are many other things that can be proposed to the Grand Knight, you are trying to foster a change in his mindset from one of self-reliance to one of delegation and involvement. You'll know if he has got the message by his willingness to involve and let go. Your encouragement and positive feedback each time the Grand Knight involves others will go a long way toward this change in leadership behavior. The good news is the Grand Knight will still accomplish a lot of new activity and leaves a legacy that others can continue.

The “Non-Planner” Grand Knight

Just like a weak Grand Knight, the non-planner starts out without a rudder to his ship. Without this clear direction of what he wants to accomplish he allows the Council to be driven by the current. Sometimes difficulties will arise and without previous plans for how to avoid them the Council’s health and future growth can be severely damaged. It’s like not knowing the river we travel on and having the current sweep our ship into the rocks. Adding structure and direction to this type of Grand Knight’s leadership style will greatly benefit him and his Council.

How to Help the “Non-Planner” Grand Knight

Here’s a few ideas to consider when working with this leadership style:

- Ask the Grand Knight what he wants his legacy to be when he becomes a Past Grand Knight. This is one way to get him to formulate a long range goal for his Council. Within reason it doesn’t matter what this goal is, it matters how well he can describe how the Council will be changed after the goal is reached. Once he sets this goal have him communicate it to his Council at the next Business Meeting.
- Suggest he make a list of activities or tasks that will need to be completed to be able to accomplish this goal. These should first be discussed with his staff of officers and directors. They in turn should present to the Council how these steps or activities, within their area of responsibility, will help the Grand Knight reach his long term goal.
- Deadlines are extremely important to the success of a non-planner. Assist the Grand Knight by giving him a complete list of his deadlines to both him and his Deputy. Ask the Deputy Grand Knight to review the next three months of deadlines at each Planning and Business meeting. Ask him to prod the Grand Knight with reminders until a deadline is

The Second Best Job in the Order

completed. Make him also responsible for adding new deadlines as they are identified.

- Agendas for each Business meeting are also a great help to a non-planner. It lets them list the flow of the Business meeting and the Old and New business that will need to be discussed. This is a great job for the Council's Recorder to develop for the Grand Knight each month. The content can be collected at the Planning meeting, documented and copies given to the Grand Knight, his staff and all members of the Council. This will keep all involved and on track.

The “Egotist” Grand Knight

Men are all affected to some extent by the testosterone that flows within us. It gives us our drive and desire to accomplish and even the desire to want to stand behind that podium and lead. Unfortunately a small percentage of us have a distorted or inappropriate sense of self worth. In less charitable words we may be egotistically driven by our desire to take credit, to receive praise and acceptance of our peers and superiors. Sooner or later you may come across a Grand Knight whose leadership style is very self-centered. This style presents a significant challenge to assist. Most egotists do not want to be told anything. They are not receptive to criticism or even advice. So another tactic needs to be employed, PRAISE!

How to Help the “Egotist” Grand Knight

- Always find things to praise this type of Grand Knight. It will open him to other thoughts and ideas. The more sincere and genuine you can be the better. While an egotist will even accept hollow praise, it doesn't make him as receptive as praise that is based on actions he rightly deserves credit for.
- Always offer your advice for change in a cause and effect fashion. For example, asking him to develop an Event Calendar by itself will likely be ignored or rejected by an egotist. But suggest that the Grand Knight would be able to receive the honor of the Columbian Award by developing and executing a Council Event Calendar puts this in a different light.
- Talk with this type of Grand Knight about the positive legacy they will leave to their councils when they become Past Grand Knights. Next, ask them what they would like to accomplish. This may simply be putting the carrot out, but it wraps your request, advice and suggestions into a more attractive package for this type of leadership style.

The Second Best Job in the Order

- Some egotists are very challenging and difficult to work with, so if you do run into one don't be disheartened. Instead pray for God's assistance and wisdom. Don't take the behavior as a personal attack; sometimes this type of Grand Knight just can't help himself. Instead focus on being non-confrontational. As long as this Grand Knight stays within the rules, he'll come out the winner in any battle of wills. Remember you are his best friend, so separate his behavior from your need to help him.
- If a little sugar coating is necessary, so be it. Smile, stay positive and be a duck (*"Let things roll off you"*). As you continue this, his trust in you will grow and he'll be more comfortable and receptive to your assistance.
- Even if your progress is slow and only a minimal portion of your suggestions have been accepted, count these gains as positive accomplishments. Keep trying and know that God will provide the means for you to touch his life and for the service experience to touch yours.

In summary, for every leadership style you will encounter in your district there are always ways you can help, assist and coach your Grand Knights to become better leaders of men. Please don't get fixated on attempting to put every Grand Knight into one and only one of these described styles. Often times you'll find a Grand Knight demonstrating multiple styles depending on the situation and who he is working with. It is more important that you are able to recognize when and how he needs to be coached. These are for your consideration as possible ways that other Former District Deputies have successfully handled a particular leadership style. Please add to them with your own ideas and tailor them to the needs of your district.



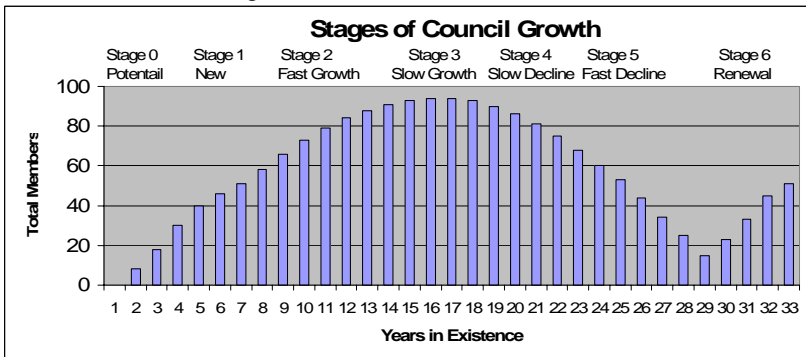
**Notes Page for your Ideas on
Dealing with Leadership Styles**

Section Five: The Renewal Process

Below is a sample council growth chart to show typical stages of an organization's life cycle. Actual growth of real councils can occur faster or slower with extended or condensed stages. The intent of the chart is to identify these typical stages and allow a discussion of the Renewal Process.

Stages of Council Health

- Stage 0 - Potential Council
- Stage 1 - The New Council
- Stage 2 - Fast Growth
- Stage 3 - Slow Growth
- Stage 4 - Slow Decline
- Stage 5 - Fast Decline
- Stage 6 - Renewal



A Council is a living organism. It comes into existence {Stage 1}, grows initially at an extremely fast rate {Stage 2}, levels off with moderate to slow growth {Stage 3} and then at some point in the future (3 Years to 50 years) can fall into a stage of slow decline{Stage 4} which can deteriorate to moderate or fast decline {Stage 5}. At this point the Council can go inactive and possibly die.

From one perspective we could accept this model as we do for anything living (i.e. our bodies, plants, relationships, etc.) but the difference we must factor in with social and service organizations is that renewal {Stage 6} is always possible. This

can shift the normal life cycle at nearly any point in its development.

Contrary to the normal practice of attempting to renew a dead or extremely inactive council, I'd like to suggest an alternative approach to renewal. Instead of attempting to raise the dead or dying council, which is always possible, why not perform annual physicals on the patient and write out a prescription to treat what ails them. This strategy has the potential of changing the life cycle to one that levels off after birth and then its growth fluctuates with small losses and moderate gains for an overall long term healthy existence.

I would propose to you that a Council's health and where it is in its life cycle needs to be measured by more than its recruitment numbers. Even an active and healthy council can experience a slow recruitment year and likewise a fairly inactive dying council can achieve 6-10 new members with a new shining star Membership Director or top recruiter. Despite out of the ordinary low recruitment numbers the strong healthy council will continue to deliver high levels of service and activity while the inactivity of the dying council will likely lead to the eventual loss or suspension of its new members.

There are much better diagnostic tools available! A simple count of the service projects and social events the council has conducted in the last 12 months will give you a much better reading whether the council's heartbeat is steady and strong or slow and faint. A simple tallying of how many members are involved in the active running of the council (i.e. involved in the decision making and activity planning) will provide a better indication whether the council body is fit and trim or withering away to atrophy. And finally the presence or absence of council owned repeatable practices will more clearly indicate the council's ability to sustain long term activity and delivery of service. This will indicate whether the council is likely to be a candidate for early mortality or long term survival.

These three thermometers will help you compile a far more comprehensive bill of health for your councils. And once diagnosed, you will be able to suggest a path of recovery for

The Second Best Job in the Order the Grand Knight to consider following. Remember that while a doctor might prescribe medication, exercise and a healthy diet, it is the responsibility of the patient to take his daily medicine, go out for walks or to the gym and to choose a balanced diet complimented with fruits and vegetables.

As a District Deputy, your role is that of the doctor. Since you see your patient regularly you have many opportunities to encourage, motivate and coach them into a health path and continued future development. But it is the responsibility of the Grand Knight and his council to consider whether to follow your advice so don't get caught up in assuming this responsibility. Diagnose, advise and then continue to motivate and coach in a non-directive and supportive manner.

Introduction to the Renewal Process

No matter where your councils are in their life cycle it is never too soon or too late to consider elements of a formal renewal process. Sometimes this means to add activity or to simply cash in on existing activity with focused recruiting. Other times a council's need for renewal can require the same effort as developing a new council.

The New Council Development (NCD) Process is well defined and documented by Supreme. It gives you, the District Deputy, a systematic approach to follow when developing a NCD effort. Most District Deputies will normally be working with fairly healthy councils that require more overseeing than a dedicated hands-on effort such as NCD. But when faced with the task of attempting to renew a dying or inactive council, I have not found a formal documented process to use. So by employing some of the techniques and general approach used in NCD, I have found that a similar systematic approach can be derived for the renewal of existing councils.

Councils that are in most need of formal renewal will have many similar characteristics. Some of these are listed below:

- **Lack of clear and common direction/mission within the council**
(Could each member of the council state the purpose and direction their local council is attempting to accomplish?)
- **Small number of “Active” Core members**
(The group of men that not only attend business meetings, but also support and attend council functions and programs)
- **Low Business Meeting Attendance**
(While seeing 3,4 or 5 members at a meeting may be a clear give away that renewal is needed, 8,9 or 10 maybe fine for a brand new council but not for one of over 100+ members)
- **Out of touch with needs of Parish & Community**
(Can the council state these needs and do they have formal plans to address them?)
- **Weak or strained relationship with Pastor**
(If a council is inactive the relationship with the pastor could be merely one of indifference, as the council is having neither a positive or negative impact on the parish. It is not the pastor that owes the Council support, but instead the Council that should be supporting the pastor!)
- **No or very few activities or programs conducted**
(If a council is only conducting a few activities in each of the 5 service areas, it has room for improving its activity)
- **Low Recruiting and/or Poor Retention of existing members**
(Does the Council recruit 1-2 members/year who drop out in 6-12 months due to inactivity of the council)
- **No Formal or documented Goals, Long Range Plans or Direction**
(If asked to be shown what their council is planning to accomplish this year and the next few years in the future, could your Grand Knights provide anything that is documented and distributed to the Council Membership?)
- **No planned Calendar of Events or Activities**
(If a council is not planning and scheduling future events and activities and then communicating that calendar, they risk having nothing to offer new or existing members to be involved in.)

Why does a council need Renewal?

As a dying council goes through its final, slow, inactive death, the negative impact will not only be felt within its local community but also throughout the State and our Order. People's perception of what the "*Knights*" are all about, is carried with them wherever they go. Thus it's easy to see why being able to apply a renewal and rebirth process to inactive councils is so important. One may also find that the process is even easier than a similar New Council Development as the foundation of a Knights organization is already in place!

But what if the council is not dying but simply inactive or not as active as it could be? Implementing a renewal process can provide many of the same benefits to existing councils. Such as:

- It will deliver more service to our Church and Community
- It can add more activity and fellowship within the Council
- It can improve the retention & activity of existing members building a stronger connection between them and their Council
- It helps eliminate or minimally reduce potential suspensions
- It attracts new members and their families to the Council
- And it makes the Council a lot more fun to belong to!

I offer the following process for your consideration for use by your Grand Knights. Please tailor and add steps to this process to match specific needs of the councils you wish to use it with.

Existing Council Renewal Process

STEP 1: Evaluate the Council's Assets & Liabilities

What does the Council have going for it and what things are holding it back? These are the first things to determine in this approach. Request your Grand Knight and his staff list out anything they can think of that would be considered as positive aspects of the Council. Some examples are listed below:

- Specific programs or activities the council is still active in
- A Council Event Calendar if it exists
- Names of core members who attend all business meetings and council events
- List of Past Grand Knights
- What the council currently does for the Parish and/or Pastor
- Current filled Officer positions
- Current filled Director/Chairman positions
- Council Newsletter
- Current Council Roster
- An established Admissions Committee
- An active Membership Director
- Untapped sources of candidates (colleges, multiple parishes, Catholic Organizations, etc.)
- Council Home or Parish based meeting place
- etc.

Likewise, and as objectively as possible, have them list any negative aspects of the Council. Be aware that the members of your council may be reluctant to admit to some of the problems of their Council. Some examples follow:

- Negative or indifferent relationship with pastor(s)
- Long, boring or emotional Business meetings
- Lack of Activities, Programs or Events
- No documented Council Calendar of Events
- Unfilled Officer positions

- Unfilled Director/Chairman positions
- Lack of Council Goals and documented Plans to accomplish them
- Pessimism (negative outlook on life) by Grand Knight, Past Grand Knights or existing members
- Financial Difficulties
- Adversarial relationship between Council Officers and a Home Association Board of Directors
- Tight control by the current Grand Knight that limits Officers and Members from direct involvement in the running of the Council and planning for activity etc.

STEP 2: Survey the Potentials of the Parish

Your Grand Knight's next step is to determine the potential of possible Recruitment & Retention Efforts. To do this he needs to know the number of potential candidates within the parish. One simple way to estimate this is to have the Grand Knight and his staff attend **all** weekend masses and simply count all men over 18 they see attending. From this number, a percentage will already be knights, a percentage will not be able to be recruited due to family commitments or interests and a percentage will make up their recruitment target. To make things simple, lets assume 1/3, 1/3 and 1/3, thus if they counted 120 men attending mass, then it would be reasonable to assume that at least 40 of these are potential new knights. Have them record this number as their Recruitment Target. The Grand Knight should also come up with the number of inactive members on his roster. Have him pick a similar percentage as his goal to make active again, say 30-40%.

STEP 3: Meet with the Pastor (Grand Knight, DGK, Membership and Program Directors)

This step is probably the most important. Getting the pastor support can greatly influence the success of any renewal effort. Have the Grand Knight plan well for this meeting. Here are some of the objectives he may want to accomplish at this meeting:

- **He should explain his objective to the Pastor** – The Grand Knight should readily admit that the council has been inactive to the pastor or not fully servicing the need of the parish.
- **He should list the benefits of an Active Parish Council** – The Grand Knight should prepare a list of specific benefits to give the pastor. These should be backed up with examples of service delivered by other councils in the area to their parishes and communities.
- **He might even want to give the pastor the names of 3 or 4 pastors who have active parish councils.** The Grand Knight can suggest that the pastor call them to discuss their experience with their own local councils.
- **He should ask for and discuss the work Knights could help the parish with** – The Grand Knight should come prepared with his own list of service ideas which can help seed the conversation with the pastor. The Grand Knight should ask lots of questions to ensure what the pastor offers as service needs is fully understood.
- **He should ask for the pastor's support in identifying men in the parish that can assist in the completion of the service list that is developed.** – The Grand Knight or Membership Director should record this list of names and make contact with them.
- **He should explain the Recruitment Process** – The Grand Knight should explain how a Membership drive will work.

STEP 4: Committee Meeting to Plan Strategy

Once the Grand Knight has his pastor's support he is now ready to start his renewal planning. He should call together a Strategy Meeting with minimally the following people in attendance: the District Deputy, the Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, Insurance Field Agent and the State (and Council) Membership Directors. The goals of this committee meeting are to determine and document what and how the Council will accomplish as it is being renewed.

Plan the Council's Goals first. The Grand Knight should be tying in the needs expressed by the pastor at his initial meeting with him. He should make these goals formal but doable. Most importantly he should document them so that they can be shared.

Using as a basis, the book "*Toward a More Active Council*" or other documented Activity Plan, the Council should develop a Full Membership Program. It should include a Recruitment Program to bring in the new members, a Retention (Involvement) Program to recapture the interest of existing members and a New Member Program to ensure that the council's new members become active, knowledgeable knights as soon as possible.

STEP 5: Publish Council Goals & Membership Program

After the strategy meeting, the Grand Knight should ensure that all Goals, Plans and Programs are formally documented. These should be distributed personally to the Pastor, and given out to the Parish and Community. Request the Council do an insert into the Parish bulletin and submit a short article (or just the facts) to the local papers. This will ensure that everyone in the parish and community are aware of the Renewal Process and the Council's plans for revival.

Take a week or two to communicate to ALL who will listen! This is the job of the Grand Knight and his staff. Their goal is to get as much awareness as possible before the first Membership Drive.

STEP 6: Implement Recruitment and Involvement Programs

Once the word is out, it is now time to put the Council's plans into action. The Recruitment Committee should have scheduled the first three Membership Drives. Likewise the Retention Committee should have scheduled the first three months of events, programs or activities for the renewed council. Ensure that some of these directly address the expressed needs of the pastor. It is important to publish these dates in a Council Calendar of Events that can be communicated to the parish and community. Once this is done the Council simply implements these events, which will be the first physical sign of the Council's Renewal. The Council should publish all results.

STEP 7: First Degrees and Follow Ups

The District Deputy and Grand Knight can assist the Council's recruitment efforts by scheduling First and Second Degrees to coincide with the planned Membership Drives. If the council doesn't have a degree team, make plans with one of the teams in your district. Get the assistance of the State Ceremonials Director if you are having difficulties finding an available team. The reason this step is important, is that we want the recruiters to be able to give actual meeting dates of the Admission Committee and planned First Degrees to be able to potentially schedule the candidate for both of these. This sets expectations and moves the admissions process along.

Follow up by you, the District Deputy, is critical at this stage of the Renewal Process. The ball is rolling and we don't want any momentum to be lost. Use frequent phone calls, visits and Scheduled Planning Meetings for the whole team (District Deputy, Grand Knight, Financial Secretary, Insurance Field Agent and the State and local Membership Directors). Have the Grand Knight plan these for once a month.

Final Note

At any step in the process it is very reasonable that a snag could occur. Don't hesitate to modify the process to fit the situation. Use your State resources for additional assistance whenever needed. For example, if the Grand Knight is having problems winning the Pastor's support at step 3, ask the State Chaplain if he might talk to the pastor. If the Council is having difficulty putting together programs to run, request the State Program Director to lend a hand. Your brother District Deputies can also be called on for assistance and advice. Have the Grand Knight keep in close contact with the Council's assigned Insurance Field Agent. He has a wealth of experience to offer and will act as a close partner with the Grand Knight during the Renewal Process and later follow-on with the council.

Renewal can be a wonderful process to regenerate purpose and direction to a council. If focused on increasing the activity and involvement of the Council you can expect positive results which will help get the Council back on track to delivering service to its Church and communities.



**Notes Page for your Ideas on
Council Renewal Process**

Section Six: Anatomy of a Model Council

We should all strive to achieve perfection even if we never get there. For a Grand Knight to travel that journey it is helpful to have a model to strive toward. Over the years I've observed that many good councils demonstrate many of the same practices. Even some of the weaker councils I've seen will employ one or more of these traits. As a composite, I've put together the following list that describes the characteristics of an ideal model council for Grand Knights to aim for. It raises the bar for just about any council and it's intent is to give you the District Deputy a ruler to measure your councils with. Hopefully it will give you some areas to discuss with your Grand Knights for improving their councils and getting a little closer to that ideal.

Model Councils Plan for Activity and Involvement

If you ask the Grand Knight from our model about the Activity and Involvement of his council, not only will he give you a list of activities and who is involved within his council, but he'll also show you how his council plans that activity from year to year. He'll be able to provide a documented plan for involving council members in the running of the council and planning for its activity. These plans for Activity and Involvement set this council apart from other good councils who only schedule activity and encourage members to stay involved.

This Grand Knight frequently engages new members for their feedback and input. He also has a strong working relationship with the Past Grand Knights of his council which he can rely on for assistance and the wisdom they have gained from leading the Council during their term of office. The Grand Knight actively solicits opinions and ideas from all members of the Council and where possible attempts to integrate these ideas in the working plans of the Council.

Model Councils have a Member Development Plan

Great companies have development plans for all of their top managers. These track the executive's exposure to different aspects of the company and aim his or her future assignments to give them a well rounded experience to those major areas of the company that a key VP will need to understand to be able to lead their future departments, divisions or the entire company.

Great councils are not that different. Our model council actively tracks and plans for each member's leadership growth through the Director and Officer chairs of the council. It is not enough to hope that new Grand Knights will come forward every year to lead the council. Great councils plan this officer progression many years into the future. For these councils, the loss of a Grand Knight or Deputy Grand Knight due to changes in health, employment or for personal reasons is not a disaster but something their officer progression can absorb and deal with. One other aspect of the Member's Development Planning is that it starts before a new member makes his first degree and follows him from one Grand Knight's administration to another. This means the process belongs to the council and not to an individual Grand Knight. Because of this ownership the planning for this member development becomes the normal mode of operation for the council and is far more likely to continue and be maintained.

Model Councils have Planned Council Budgets

So far we have portrayed our model council as having a focus on planning. This successful organization plans for activity, involvement and the development of future leaders. So it should be natural to expect that they also plan for the financial aspects of the council as well. Having a Council Budget each year and a process to develop, refine, implement and follow it, allows the funding of their council to be driven by its mission versus the mission being driven by how much

the council can afford. Great Councils have a well thought through budgeting process that plans for both the normal expenses and the funding of the council's service efforts.

Starting with the mission set by the current Grand Knight and his staff and by the activity planned within the council's Event Calendar, their budget committee plans an itemized expense list that includes monies to keep the council running, expected up front money to run their events and the major donations that the council regularly provides its Church and community. Against this list they itemize regular revenue sources such as dues and regular fund raisers the council performs each year. The difference between these two lists (Expenses and Revenues) represent the shortfall the council will need to generate to balance its incoming and outgoing cash flow.

Specific plans or ideas for funding any shortfall are documented to allow easy distribution to the council members to consider when discussing and approving the budget.

Though not required, our model council staggers their Fixed Expense and Fixed Donations budgets having one run the fraternal year (July to June) and the one the calendar year (January to December). They do this to align a major donation with the summer schedule of a major fund raiser. Other model councils stagger their budgets to allow their councils to focus on one budget at a time.

Our model council knows that budgets are plans and guides toward sound financial management of a council. The needs of their Church and communities can and often do change during a budgeted year. Because of this they plan and build in a small cushion or contingency fund into the budget to allow the council's financial obligations to ride out the difference of what was budgeted and the actual cost or need as it presents itself.

Model Councils have Repeatable Practices

Our strong vibrant model council stays that way independent of the gentleman wearing the purple ribbon and anchor jewel around his neck. This organization designs, documents and then uses council owned procedures or practices to do things in a standard and repeatable way. We have already talked about three of these: Activity Planning, Member Development and Budgeting. Other practices that our model council employs each year include.

- Developing a Council Event Calendar
- Collecting feedback and input from all council members
- Developing an annual council vision and long term goals
- Developing a Five Year Officer Progression Plan and revising it each year
- Introducing and integrating new members into the activity of the council.
- Involving new and existing members into the running and activity planning of the council.
- Maintaining the council's Degree Team with the involvement of the entire council.
- Maintaining and promoting the active involvement of Past Grand Knights.
- Maintaining a high level of involvement and participation of council members with State Council events and programs.

Many of these repeatable practices are covered in more detail within "*Toward a More Active Council*" Refer your Grand Knight to this book for these details. Your encouragement and guidance in assisting your Grand Knights to implement one or more of these is vital. Explain the benefits of each guiding but not forcing them to their implementation.

Model Councils have Excellent Communications

Our model council communicates to its members and the communications is frequent, two way and followed up. It involves not only the Grand Knight but also his officers and directors. This feedback is used to fix problems, improve events and make council activities more inviting to existing and newly recruited members.

This communication starts with face to face contact and is supported with other paper and electronic means and not the other way around. The council knows that despite the advances in technology, it is personal contact that makes their members feel connected and needed for the success of their council's service efforts.

This council's leaders solicit two way conversations with the general membership and they hear a lot of input and feedback that the Grand Knight could never expect to hear in the same time frame. This is discussed with the Grand Knight on the phone or at planning meetings with the entire staff.

Our model council knows that the key to good communication within a council is involvement. The more its members know about the workings of their council the more involved they can become. Because of this, information about the workings and activities of their council is documented and readily available to all members. This council has working procedures to educate and inform new members about how the council works and repeatable practices to keep existing members informed as well. This is sometimes done by the Grand Knight who will explain parliamentary concepts and council operating practices during the business meetings. Each month they have a different council officer explain what his duties are and how he performs them. This demystifies these roles and makes men in the general membership more likely to aspire to serve in the future.

To supplement this face to face communications, our model council publishes a monthly newsletter. It provides contact information, minutes of the last business meeting,

inspirational columns by both the Grand Knight and Council Chaplain, a list of upcoming council and State events, profiles on the Knight and Family of the month winners, a little bit of humor and a profile of each new member that has joined the council in the last couple of months. The newsletter is edited by a computer savvy new member and funded through advertisements from local businesses in the community the council serves. Another computer savvy new member has put up a website for the council and has made it the repository of all the council's documentation. This includes how each of their major events and projects are run plus reports on the last 12 months of council activity. The intent is to allow new chairmen and co-chairmen of Council projects to have a readily available guide to how the project was run in the past. Changes and improvements are then added to the existing project documentation.

The design and content of the website is driven by an advisory committee made up of five members and chaired by the Deputy Grand Knight. Other items now available on the council's website include the following:

- Council Event Calendar
- Council By Laws
- Links to their State and Supreme's website.
- Current Officers and Directors contact page
- "Ask your Grand Knight a Question" form which the Grand Knight answers within 48 hours.
- Electronic (PDF) copies of recent council newsletters
- Pictures of all council officers and directors
- Photo Gallery of council events run during the fraternal year.
- List of projects and responsibilities council members can volunteer for to assist the Council and Grand Knight
- Feedback form for suggestions to improve the council website
- Council Prayer List
- Guide to Making a Motion or Amendment
- Guide to proposing new activities or events for the council to take on.

The website has sparked interest in joining the council by a number of recent candidates and has also led to three new major events the council now sponsors.

Model Councils Deliver Service

Our model council has an impressive track record for delivering service to the three churches it supports and the local communities where its members reside. The council has three Round Table liaisons that work with their pastors and sit on their pastoral councils. They report back to the Grand Knight and council membership the needs they uncover on a monthly basis. The council also has liaisons within the Religious Education programs, local Boy & Girl Scout troops, high school sporting coaches and the special needs superintendent of the school district.

The Grand Knight meets with the leaders of the other service groups in the community on a quarterly basis to share event calendars and to work joint efforts in support of the community.

The Council's service efforts have been recognized at the award program at its State Council Annual Convention and by Supreme as a Star Council 9 out of the last 10 years.

Any Council can emulate a Model Council

While the model council we have described may appear on the surface to be unrealistic, it does represent the type of service organization that any council can strive for and attempt to emulate. Your job is to motivate, encourage and guide them in this direction. Even by picking only one aspect of this model and attempting to put in place those actions that will move their councils toward that goal can be a productive undertaking for your Grand Knights. Your positive and expectant attitude will lead them to the conclusion that positive change is possible and that taking even a baby step in the direction of improvement is a worthwhile endeavor to challenge their councils to.



**Notes Page for your Ideas on
Anatomy of a Model Council**

Section Seven: Best Practices of Successful District Deputies

Positive and Expectant Attitude

Great District Deputies maintain a positive, expectant attitude when dealing with the challenges of their district. This attitude is very catchy and you'll find that most if not all of their Grand Knights have caught it. They have that same positive outlook that their District Deputy demonstrates and, as Grand Knights, they act as expectant of the success of their council membership as their District Deputy expect their success as council leaders.

Clear Mission and Goals

Successful District Deputies know what they want to accomplish for the up coming fraternal year. They have a clear mission and purpose for being a District Deputy and they communicate this message to their Grand Knights. They challenges themselves with significant undertakings that will contribute to the success of their districts, State Council and the Order. They consider alternative creative ways to accomplish their more challenging goals and opportunities. They always assume that success is possible and when one tactic doesn't work they learn from it and try another.

They challenge their Grand Knights to set their own mission and goals to accomplish. They focus on the *how to* and not whether they or their Grand Knights can accomplish a specific goal.

They take stock at the end of the year to recognize their successes, to amend their tactics for those goals, that were not completed and to learn from their mistakes. They motivate their Grand Knights to review and learn from their own performances as well.

Leadership Training

Successful District Deputies are always training leadership within their districts. They ask questions more than twice as often as they express their own opinion. Even their advice is given as a question to make their Grand Knights come to their own conclusions and self discover their own abilities to make good, sound decisions.

Effective District Deputies train District Wardens and Grand Knights within their district to become prospective future District Deputies and State Council leaders. They involve their Grand Knights in the workings and decisions of their district.

Issues and problems raised by their Grand Knights become opportunities for leadership development. Without giving the solution these District Deputies guide their Grand Knights to consider all aspects of an issue and to come to their own solutions. After a solution is implemented a good District Deputy will use the results whether positive or negative as a learning process to further develop their Grand Knights ability to use past decisions as a basis for improving future decisions.

Mentoring and Coaching

District Deputies with long term effectiveness and accomplishments mentor and coach their Grand Knights versus directing them. They are great listeners who employ active listening techniques to acquire as many facts and background information about an issue before forming a decision or drawing a conclusion. Because of the example they set, their Grand Knights' listening skills improve as well.

Great District Deputies are in constant and frequent communication with their Grand Knights. Phone calls before their Grand Knights' business meetings and one-on-one sessions after the meetings are often employed.

As coaches, they attempt to emphasize their Grand Knights' strong skills and develop those areas that will make the Grand Knight a better overall leader. They challenge and

motivate their Grand Knights without directing or demanding specific behaviors that they might have chosen when they were Grand Knights. These District Deputies recognize that each man has been given a unique set of skills, talents and experiences by God. Great District Deputies know that it is not their job to shape their Grand Knights in their own image but rather to develop them into the best type of leader that matches the Grand Knight's own managerial style, personality and demeanor.

Successful District Deputies are always mentoring. They are creative trainers of leadership. Each experience, event, activity, issue, or conversation with their Grand Knights is an opportunity for them to uplift, inspire, challenge and motivate. These District Deputies are always on the look out for ways to assist and develop their Grand Knights into successful leaders of our Order. When you ask their Grand Knights their opinion of these men, you'll get feedback that describes a supportive, positive relationship. They'll describe their District Deputy as "*their best friend in the Order*", "*focused on their success*", "*helpful, guiding and challenging in their efforts to make them (the Grand Knight) a better leader*".

District Planning

The very best District Deputies are forward thinking and good planners. They have a goal in mind to improve their district and have specific plans to accomplish their future vision. These plans will be integrated within the leadership development of their Grand Knights. They may include the formation of new First and Second Degree teams, the development of a strong District Warden, better communications and teamwork among their councils, new district events and activities, increased participation in State events by their councils or one of many other creative paths to strengthening and developing their districts.

District Warden

Successful District Deputies view succession within their district as important as succession within the Grand Knight's council ranks. To accomplish this, great District Deputies look for Past Grand Knights that hold promise to become great future District Deputies. During a four year term these District Deputies may train one, two or more District Wardens on the role of a District Deputy as a coach and as a mentor. They will involve them in the decision making and planning of the district and assign them the responsibility of leading specific district functions for them to gain experience working in a district leadership role. The way the District Deputy demonstrates his mentoring and coaching with his Grand Knights will provide a clear model for his District Warden to emulate when they are given the opportunity to serve as a District Deputy themselves. Finally the District Deputy's accurate and honest evaluation of his District Warden as a potential future District Deputy to the current State Deputy will ensure the continued success of the district, the State Council and our Order.

District Ceremonials

While ceremonials in themselves don't guarantee the growth of councils and districts, they do play a part in it. Effective District Deputies focus some of their efforts to create, foster and grow both council and district level degree teams. They couple the formation of these teams with increased council and district involvement. Just as a Grand Knight can increase the involvement of his council members by using the formation of a degree team as an entire council activity, so can the District Deputy in the forming of a district ceremonial team. By bringing together knights from the different councils of his district the District Deputy provides the opportunity to foster district-wide teamwork and at the same time to deliver a convenient exemplification experience that retains a local feeling among the knights of his district.

Communications

Effective and successful District Deputies are great communicators both in one on one and one to many environments. They are warm and welcoming in their demeanor. They are both receptive to feedback and actively solicit input from whomever they talk with. As well as being a conduit between the State/Supreme Councils and their local Grand Knights, they also communicate feedback and input from their councils to the appropriate State Council director, chairman or State Officer.

They are also in frequent communications with their State Deputy or Regional Coordinator to provide status and progress of their councils and any opportunities for new council development that might arise.

Their Grand Knights are encouraged and welcomed to contact their District Deputy as their need demands and the District Deputy will instigate communication to the Grand Knight on a frequent and regular basis to maintain a high level of information flow between them.

Patience, Faith and Prayer

Change doesn't happen over night. To be an instrument of positive change with your district you need to become (or remain) a patient man. While possibly trite, the adage, "*Good things come to those who wait*" has wisdom for us to follow. Our own development as men and Christians has taken time and faith. So it will be with the men under your guidance. Be patient with them and never lose faith in their successful development as leaders of our Order. And when the going gets tough, disappointing and not to your expectation, pray! God may have different plans than what you started out to try to change. Release yourself from the difficulties you find yourself battling and allow His will to be done. Pray for understanding to the direction and path He intends you to follow. Pray to be enlightened and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Start again in the new direction now made clear to you. You'll know that you

The Second Best Job in the Order are on the right path and will have divine guidance to succeed. As Knights and as Christians we are called upon to evangelize Christ's message of Love and Salvation to others. As a District Deputy your work in building strong Grand Knights who are more capable of extending service to others through the events, activities and efforts of their Council Membership is in my eyes a work of evangelization. While there are the administrative and secular aspects of your role as a District Deputy, know that it is this evangelistic purpose that is the real intent and mission of your calling to be a leader of leaders within our Order and Faith.

God Bless

Greg



**Notes area for your Ideas on
Best Practices of Successful District Deputies**

In Conclusion

I wish to thank you and commend you for your interest in the ideas and suggestions I have offered throughout the book. It shows me that you possess a strong desire to improve your district and the leadership of its Grand Knights. I know that however you adapt these practices and ideas to the unique needs of your district that the results will be positive and ensure a new phase of growth and strong leadership within our Order.

Comments on the Book

I'd love to hear about your successes and any new ideas you may have for improvement. Please know that you and your Family will remain in my prayers and thoughts.

God Bless
Greg



Notes Page for Your ideas on the entire Book

You've been a successful Grand Knight directing your council to service delivery to your Church and Communities. You have now been asked to be a District Deputy. Will that same leadership style work in this new role?

Learn what the role of a District Deputy is and is not! Learn why a supportive, coaching and mentoring leadership style is required.

Why don't your Grand Knights just do what you did when you were a Grand Knight?

Learn how to support different leadership styles and how to make your Grand Knights better decision makers and leaders.

The Second Best Job in the Order is Greg Taillon's second book on his experiences in the Knights. In it he relates a proven approach to being successful in the leadership role of the District Deputy. Complimenting his first book ***Toward a More Active Council***, which focused on the leadership development of the Grand Knight's role, Greg presents this book as a coaching guide for District Deputies and District Wardens seeking to become District Deputies



He is currently working on his third book called ***Our Mission as Knights*** which explores and discusses the special role a man takes on once becoming a Knight of Columbus.

Greg joined the Knights in September, 1985 and has served as both a Grand Knight and District Deputy as well as in numerous State Chairman and State Director positions. At the time of publication of this book he was the NH State Council's State Deputy.

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