

# Grand Lodge of Nebraska



## Exit Interview

Developed by the Membership Committee of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska

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## INTRODUCTION

This exit interview was developed as a tool to be used by Nebraska lodges and their membership retention committees to evaluate why a brother is leaving lodge. Whether used on its own or together with other resources available on the Grand Lodge website, it can be a valuable tool to see if there are areas where lodge can improve itself or its processes and potentially regain a brother.

Before you contact the brother to conduct this exit interview there are a number of steps that you should take to ensure that you are properly prepared to have this conversation.

- It might be useful to check with the top line signer, or other brethren who were close to the member, to see if they have any knowledge as to why he is leaving.
- Obtain the brother's contact information either from the lodge secretary or the Grand Lodge Office.
- Look into the brother's Masonic History. When and where was he Initiated/Raised? How active has he been? Was he involved with other lodges? Did he participate in Appendant Bodies? The brother's Blue Lodge Masonic History can be obtained by contacting the Grand Lodge Office at (402) 475-4736.
- Was there an incident/event/crisis that occurred for the brother around the time that he became inactive?
- Every situation and every lodge is different, so do not stop with only the suggestions listed here. Gather as much relevant information as you can so you go into the conversation prepared.
- Repeated attempts to contact a brother who has left a lodge may be needed. Do not give up after one attempt and try to contact the brother via phone, email, and snail mail if necessary to contact him.

Finally, keep in mind that the brother may have some frustrations and that the conversation could turn unpleasant unexpectedly. It is important that you approach the conversation with patience, understanding, and friendship. Letting him drag you into an unpleasant exchange will not help anything. If he is overly confrontational or unable to participate in a civil conversation, it may be best to thank him for his time and bid him a good day. However, a smile in your voice, a friendly and empathetic rapport, and a genuine desire to listen to the brother's concerns can often turn a tense conversation into a constructive and positive discussion.

## EXIT INTERVIEW

### 1) The Greeting

At the beginning of the conversation you'll want to set the tone and handle matters of etiquette, for example

- Give a friendly greeting
- Thank the brother for taking the time to talk with you
- Introduce yourself, if you've not well acquainted
- Tell him why you are calling and ask him if he has time to talk with you

### 2) Getting the Conversation Started

The first question just opens up the conversation and encourages the brother to share his story. Feel free to adjust the wording to fit with the situation.

Question: **“Would you care to comment on your decision to leave Masonry and not continue your membership?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3) Lodge Response

This question gives you a chance to inquire whether lodge leadership knew about the circumstance that the brother relayed in the first question. It's possible that the brother will answer this while answering the first in which case just record the information here and move on without asking this separately. Or you can adjust the question as appropriate.

Question: **“Did you discuss the situation or circumstance with someone at the lodge?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up Question (If Yes) **“What response did you receive when you discussed the issue?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4) Meeting Questions

It would be best if you know the answer to the first part of this question before the conversation begins so you can fill out the first response on your own, otherwise you'll need to ask them both.

Question: **“How often did you attend lodge meetings/events?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up Question: **“What was missing, or what could have been added/changed to make you want to attend lodge meetings/events more often?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

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5) Areas for Improvement

Question: **“In reflecting on your decision to leave Masonry, what events, activities, or circumstance would have made your membership more rewarding or enjoyable?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

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6) Thinking about the Positive

If you can build upon hints given earlier in the conversation, or on events that you're aware of, you can personalize this question to lead the brother to talk about positive things he gained from his membership.

Question: **“Do you feel you gained anything from your membership? If so, what?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

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7) Lodge Leadership

Question: **“Did you feel comfortable approaching members of the lodge leadership?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up Question (as appropriate) **“Why?”** or **“Why not?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

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8) Solicit Suggestions

Question: **“What could have been done to make your experience in Masonry more appealing?”**

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **SUMMARY**

The Grand Lodge Membership Committee encourages lodges to use this document any time they have a brother leave lodge. Identifying what causes brothers to leave is vital to a lodge's long-term survival, as well as that of the Grand Lodge. If used effectively this document can provide vital information to help the lodge improve and prosper.

Do not lose sight of the fact that knowing why brothers leave is not the end of the Exit Interview. If there are areas for improvement the lodge must act to improve those things and reduce the reasons a Brother may leave Masonry. Knowledge without action is wasted.

Information gained from an exit interview may not only help your lodge, but if the information is shared other lodges could learn from the experiences of your lodge. Find ways to share your experience, both positive and negative, with the Exit Interview via Grand Lodge Area Meetings, lodge visitations, write-ups in the "Nebraska Mason", during visits by Grand Lodge Officers to your lodge, or reach out to the Grand Master or one of the Grand Lodge Officers.