

C CONDUCTORS

RITUAL DIRECTOR'S GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CONDUCTORS

“Rs, flw yr cdr & fr n dgr”

Conductors are probably the most overlooked participants in degree preparations yet their immediate physical support and knowledge of their role can affect the whole Degree for the Candidate. Conductors are of vital importance to every Degree and yet it is one of least rehearsed parts in our Ritual. More often than not, Conductors are chosen at random just prior to the Degree and may have little or no experience in conducting. A Candidate who is well-conducted will have a significantly more enlightening and enjoyable experience than one who is not. Moreover, a poorly-instructed Conductor can significantly harm the Degree itself, leading to much instruction having to be given that distracts everyone from the Ritual performance.

Ritual Directors should select Conductors for each Candidate as part of a standard procedure in filling the chairs and roles for any Degree. Conductors chosen in advance should be invited to every rehearsal on a regular basis. Conductors should be made to feel a part of the Ritual Team and expected to act as such. If there is a circumstance where a Brother wants to conduct a particular Candidate, that is no problem as long as he attends at least one rehearsal. Some Lodges appoint Conductors at the beginning of the year, right along with the other appointed officers, and these appointees are expected to act as such.

Conductors can also be utilized as shepherds on a Degree night by greeting their Candidates when they arrive, sitting with them during dinner if it is held beforehand, and introducing them to other Brothers in the Lodge.

We can't stress enough that conductors should NOT be an afterthought and they should be attending Degree rehearsals!

General Guidelines:

- The Conductor should know how to pronounce his Candidate's name.
- The Conductors (where possible) should begin the evening sitting on the North side of the Lodge close to the Inner Door, to avoid extra movements when the degree begins. If there is more than one Candidate, the Conductors should be informed *prior to the degree* what order the Candidates will enter, and should line up accordingly. This is especially true if a Conductor wants to guide a specific Candidate. The Conductors should line up as needed to conduct their assigned Candidate without any additional shuffling or confusion as the candidates enter.
- When the Master instructs the Senior Deacon to admit the Candidate(s), the Conductor(s) should move to a predetermined position where it will be easy to take the Candidate by the right hand. Some Lodges line up Conductors for plural Candidates on the North skirting of the Senior Warden's Station.
- In order to establish the best grip with a Candidate, we recommend slipping your left arm between the Candidate's arm and torso. The Conductor's elbow should be *behind* or inside the Candidate's elbow. This way the Conductor is effectively "pushing" rather than "pulling" the Candidate, which is much more secure for the Candidate. Grasp (firmly yet gently) either his hand or his wrist. Keep your and his arms parallel to the ground and exert gentle pressure pressing his arm into your side. Now you can safely and easily guide his movements just by moving his arm either right or left.
- If a Candidate wears glasses, the Conductor should place them in his shirt pocket and return them as soon as the Candidate is brought to Light. The Masters of Ceremony may have the Candidate place his glasses in his right hand prior to entering the Lodge so the Conductor can easily retrieve them.
- Candidates are *never* to be touched below the waist by the Conductor under any circumstances. All instructions are given mouth to ear. If a costume adjustment needs to be made, the Senior Deacon will do so, *only* after whispering to the Candidate that he is correcting his costume.
- The Conductor should never lose physical contact with the Candidate. When standing with the Candidate in front of him (such as at a Warden's Station), the Conductor should place his hands gently on the Candidate's shoulder as a reassurance that he is "in the hands of a field, in whose faith he must have confidence."
- The Conductor is permitted to whisper to the Candidate when a turn or facing movement is about to be made during the perambulations, if necessary.
- Conductors should never make a movement that is not directed by the Marshal. Even if a

Marshal is mistaken, it is better that everyone be uniform in their movements. When there is no freelance movement by the Conductors, this adds to good order of the procession.

- With the exception of the Brothers delivering speaking parts, there should be no talking during the Degree. A Conductor especially should never speak with Brothers on the sidelines. Even though a Brother may be speaking in a whisper, the Candidate's sense of hearing is heightened by the fact that he is blindfolded and any extra conversation will diminish the experience for him.
- Conductors need to be made aware of when they can or cannot prompt responses.
- Conductors should be instructed as to how and when to remove the Cable-tow and whom to give it to.
- Conductors should be instructed in how to remove the hoodwink and where to go after the Cable-tow and hoodwink have been removed from their Candidate.