

LODGE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE ACCELERATING HIS JOURNEY

by Right Worshipful Brother Wayne Spooner



Some of the most important work that we perform for the growth and positive development of our Lodges occurs between stated monthly Lodge meetings. An image may come to mind of a

Brother pacing in his basement while practicing ritual work for an upcoming degree or a gathering with Brethren to host a community blood drive. Yes, these scenes are important to our work as Freemasons. However, **some of the most valuable work that we perform for Ancient Craft Masonry is serving on an Investigating Committee for a man who submits a petition to our Lodge.**

No matter how tenured we are in Freemasonry, many of us vividly recall the experience of a well-executed and engaging Investigating Committee experience back when we were Membership Prospects. The Lodge Officers and Brethren who take pride in the effective execution of these critical experiences embrace a fundamental responsibility and care in accelerating the timeless educational journey made from “Prospect to Candidate to Brother.” **This committee, comprising of the three Brethren appointed by the Worshipful Master, sets out on an expedition of fact gathering, information evaluation and imparting knowledge.** Why? To determine a verdict of “favorable” or “unfavorable” by the committee members regarding the Membership Prospect, and a similar conclusion is made by that man regarding the Lodge and Freemasonry. Yes, the Membership Prospect is evaluating us as well, and that experience should provide fuel for his decision to pursue Light “of his own free will and accord.”



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A critical success factor is viewing the Investigating Committee session with the Membership Prospect as a two-way dialogue. In particular, meet at his home; it is a space that is comfortable for him and provides a literal and figurative opportunity to invite Freemasonry into his personal life. In this conversation, we want to hear about why the Membership Prospect is looking to make being an active Freemason a priority for the rest of his life. Also, we want to acquire insights about why he has chosen our specific group of Brethren to associate with and befriend. Lastly, we want to understand him, as a whole person, covering the professional / work and personal aspects and aspirations about his life including any hobbies or exceptional talents. **If we are to become Brothers, then a wise and capable Investigating Committee knows not to leave that conversation as strangers.** Therefore, the committee members should share concise personal stories about their individual Masonic journeys, talk about why they actively invest their time with fraternal activities, cover information about their professional / work backgrounds, shed light on our complex fraternal organization, and outline specific next steps on the journey to become a full member of the Lodge and fraternity.

Even if clear “red flags” arise in the discussion or during probing questions asked regarding independently discovered information about the Membership Prospect, the Brethren on this committee have a duty to the Lodge and fraternity to set realistic and clear expectations about the balloting and degree completion processes. The Membership Prospect should not wonder about next steps; those items should be covered including expected time investments and financial requirements as an active Candidate and Master Mason. He should know about the requirements to study the history, philosophy and degree ceremony experiences including taking the oral proficiency exams. Also, the Membership Prospect should be informed that he will have a Lodge Intender, a teacher, mentor and coach by his side to help him through that learning journey. **Fundamentally, inspiring a Membership**

Prospect to approach his perfect entrance into the new world of Freemasonry with confidence is part of the Investigating Committee's work.

His concerns should be addressed and questions answered. Said differently, the Membership Prospect should acquire a fundamental trust in the process and ceremonies to follow.

Past Masters, Lodge Officers and Brethren, we have an important question for you to ponder — **Will the next Investigating Committee experience that you conduct be one in which the Membership Prospect will remember favorably as a positive launching point in his Masonic journey that helped accelerate his understanding, love and admiration for our Speculative Craft of Builders?** The importance of this committee's work cannot be overstated to impact the positive health and welfare of our ancient and honorable fraternity. **May your work be Square, Level and Plumb during these Investigating Committee discussions to advance the discovery and reveal of the Perfect Ashlar that resides within the Rough Ashlar whom you encounter that day.**



Inspiring a Membership Prospect to approach his perfect entrance into the new world of Freemasonry with confidence is part of the Investigating Committee's work.



Extra Information

A candidate investigation notice can be found in many places. The first place to get your hands on this is through your lodge Secretary. Within Groupable|M2 (MORI), the Lodge Secretary has access to a documents folder which contains many resources, and the Investigating Committee Notice is there. The notice (which contains relevant information on how to complete the investigation appropriately) is also available via our Grand Lodge Website, ilmason.org through the Forms and Downloads section. Please note, you'll need to access this section with a password maintained. Follow the instructions on the site to gain access.

Look well to the West...

