



# Interview Committee Guide

## Committee Background and Exceptions

Masonry's design has always been to accept only those coming under the tongue of good report and already prepared in their hearts. Failure to find anything wrong isn't sufficient reason for acceptance. Look for the positive aspects in his favor, but be alert to the negativities.

Being appointed to this Masonic Duty should be considered as an honor. The Worshipful Master is indicating his faith in your Masonic abilities, knowledge and devotion to Masonry in general and your Lodge in particular. If you're serving in this honorable duty for the first time, have no fear. At least one experienced committee member will bear the responsibility for providing directions. And if you'll concentrate on this guide you'll better understand the importance of care and concerns for careful screening of men who're seeking acceptance into our fraternity and into our Lodge of Brothers.

The Chairman of the Investigating Committee should arrange a face to face visit in the candidate's home if possible and with his wife or significant other in attendance so that she can comment and ask questions. It's important for her to know what type of organization he is contemplating for his life, how it might affect the family, time and monetary funds that will be required, and etcetera. It's also important to make it clear that family and friends are welcome to participate in various social activities of the Lodge.

All three members in the committee should take an active part in these processes. The Committee Chairman may assign committee members to some particular duty, perhaps to make contacts and pose questions about the candidate. In your studies of this guide you'll probably think of what questions to ask, or you may first discuss ideas with the Chairman. **The main idea is to determine the true character and general reputation of the candidate.** Based on this determination the interview committee makes a recommendation to the WM as to the suitability of the petitioner to become a member. The efficiency and thoroughness of the committee's work has a direct and long-lasting impact on the future success of the Lodge.

## Family Life

Observe what kind of relations there seems to be between the parents and children. Are there demonstrations of love and affections or indications of negativity or fear? What you observe may indicate how he would respect or disrespect our lodge of brothers and the physical lodge hall, but especially within its purposes and fraternal affairs. Observe the attitudes between the husband and wife toward each other. Attitude can be a good measure of character that would be brought into our lodge environment where peace and tranquility is so essential among Masonic Brethren.

## Adherence to Masonic Tenets

We must remember that it is our duty to guard the portal (west gate) of our Symbolic Craft. Masonry needs positive, not negative virtues among our ranks. It's not enough that an applicant has never been caught in a wrong doing and spent time in confinement for it; he must be of a character that the judicial courts aren't of concern, especially if we're to consider him to become a brother in our fraternity and our Masonic family? Will he be obedient to the laws under whose protection we live? Does he feel that his status is such that he would not be less tolerant of others than himself? Do you get the feeling that his heart is one that you believe can and would probably be a congenial brother within your Lodge and become an integral part of our lodge?

We must ask ourselves; do we really and truly believe that he will set examples in and out of the lodge that would bring favor that could attract other good men to the goodness that's offered by our beloved Craft? It's not enough that he doesn't have a lot of enemies; does he have a lot of friends who will readily vouch for his good character? Does the appearance of his home environment appear to be conducive for his involvement in the community and our fraternity? Would the costs of time and monetary funds take away from the needs of his home and family? These are important matters that must be answered before we recommend him for further consideration by the Lodge of Brothers.



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### Motivation for seeking Membership

It's not only your *right* as a Masonic candidate investigator, it's your *duty* to learn of his reasons and desires for becoming a Mason. Does he think that he will achieve material gain for business or political status in the community, or any other selfish manner? Or is he just curious about the so-called *Masonic secrets and goals*? If any such reasons are his intent, he would be very disappointed and probably of no value to the Brotherhood of Masonry. If he's hoping to influence others for any dishonest gain, he is knocking at the wrong door. He must understand that we're willing to be of service in preparing a good man to become a better man, but he must be willing to strive for perfection by his own will and accord, to reach as near perfection that a mortal being is capable, by use of the lessons Masonry has and is willing to offer.

The candidate for the degrees of Masonry should have a sincere desire to be of help to others, to have a respect and veneration for the fraternity which has been loved and respected since its conception, nourished and improved by so many good and devoted men throughout the ages. He needs to feel admiration and demonstrate a willingness to pattern his life in respect for those great men that have traveled in these Masonic paths before us, such as those respected Brothers, such as George Washington, George Custer, Harry Truman, Eddie Murphy, John Wayne and so many other good, well known, respected and faithful servants. He should have a desire to be among like-minded men who can mutually enjoy experiencing brotherly love and affection.

### Interview Committee Report Instructions:

At the time of appointment by the Worshipful Master, meet as a committee to assign responsibilities for checking references and social media profiles. Based on the information collected from those brethren who have recommend the petitioner and the reference check, select a list of open questions either from the list provided below or an adaptation thereof. These questions should be open in nature so as to facilitate conversation and sharing of information. Always keeping in mind your duty to guard the west gate of our gentle craft.

The Committee shall meet at the conclusion of the interview to complete the report and make their recommendation. Note that the report form should not be present during the interview as it could adversely impact the comfort level of the petitioner. When completing the report, rate the petitioner in each of the 4 areas. A rating of 1 indicates the petitioner is has not exhibited desirable traits in the respective area while a rating of 5 indicates that there are many examples where the petitioner excels.

### Interview Question Categories:

1. **Open questions**
  - a. Begin with the words "what", "why", "when", "where", "who" and "how" or with "tell me ...".
  - b. They invite descriptions and explanations in the applicant's own words and should form the majority of the interview
2. **Closed questions**
  - a. Begin with words such as "do you ...", "can you ...", "have you ...", "did you ...".
  - b. They invite "Yes" or "No" answers and are used to vary the intensity of the interview and to clarify points.
  - c. They are especially useful when confirming information around essential qualifications.
3. **Probing questions**
  - a. Are normally open in their type and ask the applicant to provide more detail on points of relevance.



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## Open Questions

1. Why do you want to be a Freemason?
2. What do you bring to Freemasonry?
3. What is your knowledge of Freemasonry?
4. This Lodge was founded for those with an interest in ... What has been your involvement in ...?
5. Do you understand that once initiated you are a. Freemason for life, whether or not you continue as a member of this or any other Lodge?

## Closed Questions

1. How long have you known your petition signers?
2. Please tell us about yourself; who you are, your family, hobbies, work and other interests?
3. What other membership organizations do you belong to, or have you belonged to in the past?
4. What voluntary or charitable work have you undertaken?
5. How would others describe you?
6. What are your personal strengths and most noteworthy characteristics?
7. How would you describe your personal values?
8. Please give examples of how you live the following values in your own life: Integrity, Respect, Care & concern for others, Belief, Co-operation, Charity.
9. Which of these Masonic values are the most important to you?
10. What do you know about Freemasonry?
11. What interests you about or attracted you to Freemasonry?
12. Why do you want to become a Freemason?
13. Why are you interested in joining this particular Lodge?

## Probing Questions

1. Who else do you know who are Freemasons?
2. What other links have you had with the Craft?
3. What do you hope to gain from being a Freemason?
4. What expectations do you have of the Lodge you are seeking to join?
5. What do you expect from Freemasonry as a whole?
6. What do you think you can offer the Lodge?
7. Given that the Lodge acts as a branch of a larger organization, and requires people with different skills to make it operate, what particular contribution do you think you can offer?
8. Have you discussed Freemasonry with members of your family?
9. What do they think of your joining?
10. Are they prepared to support your membership and take part in social activities?
11. One of Freemasonry's principles is the charitable giving of time and money, according to ability. Are you willing to support the Lodge's charitable activities and to give of your time and money when you are able?
12. We ask that members commit to regular attendance at Lodge meetings, rehearsals, Lodges of Instruction and social events. In this Lodge these take place on (dates). If you get more involved in the Lodge it will become increasingly important that you are present on these occasions. Are you able and willing to commit to regular attendance on these occasions?
13. The cost of Freemasonry includes a joining fee, annual subscriptions, dining fees for each meeting, charitable giving and the cost of regalia. Your sponsors have already supplied you with a full list of this expenditure. Are you able, willing and free to afford and commit to these costs?
14. Is there anything else you think we should know that might be relevant to your joining and continuing in member