

# Hacks: Managing Lodge Issues: Practical Problem Solving for Lodges

## 1. Assemble an Issues Team for the Lodge

- **Select members intentionally:** Choose team members for your team. Pick members that can keep confidentiality and have your trust and the trust of others.
- **Define their role:** Clarify that this group does not replace the Master's authority, but supports him by reviewing, discussing, and recommending solutions.
- **Meet regularly:** Schedule meetings as needed to review any small concerns before they grow into larger problems.
- **Question for the Session:** Who should be on your lodges' issues team? How many members?

## 2. Assemble an Experts List

- **Identify experts:** Who can be called on for advice?
- **Keep a roster:** Maintain a living document with names, phone numbers, and email addresses so the Worshipful Master or Issues Team can quickly connect with the right person.
- **Match expertise to issues:** Example—call on a CPA for financial issues.
- **Update regularly:** Review and refresh the list to make sure contacts are current and relevant.
- **Question:** What are the expert skills your lodges need and who (share names) could provide that expertise.

## 3. Identify What You Know and Don't Know

- **Identify the facts:** Start by writing down the known facts.
- **List the unknowns:** Identify what you don't yet know.
- **Plan to fill the gaps:** Decide how to gather missing information. Listening has the added benefit of diffusing issues. Sometimes people just want to be heard.
- **Avoid snap judgments:** Hold off on making conclusions if you have not talked to everyone necessary. This prevents decisions based on rumor or partial information.
- **Question:** What are best practices when it comes to figuring out what you know and don't know.

#### 4. Set Boundaries

- **Clarify expectations:** Regularly, outline lodge norms such as meeting decorum, respect in discussion, and how decisions will be made.
- **No But:** When saying “no,” also offer alternatives: “That’s not possible at this time, but let’s consider it for next quarter.”
- **Enforce fairly:** Boundaries must be applied consistently so members know they are respected and expectations won’t shift depending on who raises an issue.
- **Questions:** What norms are important to keep harmony in the lodge? How do you enforce them?

#### 5. Tackle the Issue Early

- **Respond quickly:** Even if the full solution will take time, acknowledge the concern right away so members know they are heard.
- **Question:** What can the lodge do to tackle issues early and get ahead of them?