



SESSION 1: A Time to ACT

Duration: 30 minutes

Facilitator: Section Chief

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the purpose and structure of the ACT Conference.
- Describe the HPL metrics and why they matter in measuring lodge performance.
- Define my role as a leader and accountability partner in promoting growth in the OA.

Supplies: Electronic device to access PMP Report site

Welcome 2 minutes

Welcome to the Section XX-XX ACT Conference! Your attendance demonstrates commitment to your lodges and the OA. We are excited for a day of training, networking, and fellowship. We gather here today at a critical time for the Order of the Arrow. Our role as a section is first and foremost to ensure that lodges have the tools, talent, and template to create their own success. This event has been developed in an effort to give you the resources and the curriculum necessary to help your lodge Adapt, Collaborate, and ultimately Thrive (ACT).

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Let's begin our program, as all OA events do, by joining together in reciting the Obligation of our Order.

[Recite the OA Obligation]

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Now, I'd like to ask one of you to read the learning objectives for this opening session.

[Delegate reads learning outcomes]

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ACT Overview 10 minutes

As we well know, our organization faces significant challenges this year. From bankruptcy to a global pandemic, 2020 tested the strength of not just our program, but our fixity of purpose; and from those difficulties, we learned something: the Order of the Arrow is resilient. Virtual fellowships, online ordeals, engaging podcasts, and socially distanced service projects demonstrated just how ready we were to push past the fear and uncertainty we all felt. However, we didn't travel this journey alone. Lodge leaders looked to one another for ideas and inspiration. We asked for guidance from those facing the same challenges we were. National and regional training resources featured lodge leaders whose innovative thinking yielded substantive results, and we learned how best we can learn from others. Together, we began responding to the many disruptions we experienced last year.

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To start things off, I'd like to ask you one simple question: why are you here? Why did you decide to come to this Section ACT Conference? Take a moment to write down your response in your delegate guidebook, then share your reason with your group.

[Allow three minutes for responses to be written and shared, then ask delegates to share their responses with the whole conference. Responses should focus on a desire to improve the lodge.]

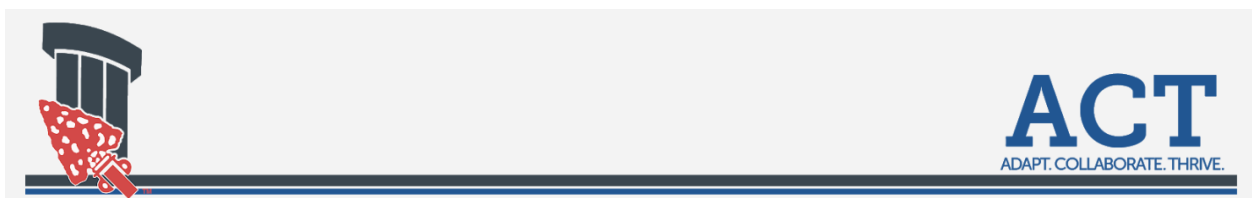
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Now, I'd like us to dig a little bit deeper. Again, I ask why are you here? Except this time, I want to know what has inspired you to stay involved, to give back as much as you do. Write down your response then share with your group.

[Allow three minutes for responses to be written and shared, then ask delegates to share their responses with the whole conference. Responses should center on experiences, values, and relationships.]

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Each of us has continued in service because of the meaningful experiences offered through the Order of the Arrow—they're why we became active and engaged members to start. But those experiences are also the reason we're here today in a more literal sense. Your past and perspective yield valuable insight, and we want to hear from you. Today, your peers from around the section will serve as a sounding



board, and through collaboration we will develop plans to act which can be brought back to your lodge, ready to go.

We know every lodge is different, with its own strengths and opportunities. We also know the best organizations continue to regularly examine their own processes and practices to ensure they are doing what is necessary to Thrive. Our goal is to help you create the systems necessary for your lodges to build on their strengths, learn from our peers, and create an organization which will exist long after we are no longer youth members.

ACT Now 8 minutes

We're all here because of a shared belief in the power of this program. I'm committed to bringing the OA to as many youth as possible; and I hope you are, too; but we have some serious work to do to make that happen. Keep the reason that you wrote down in the back of your mind during this weekend. We will come back to it later.

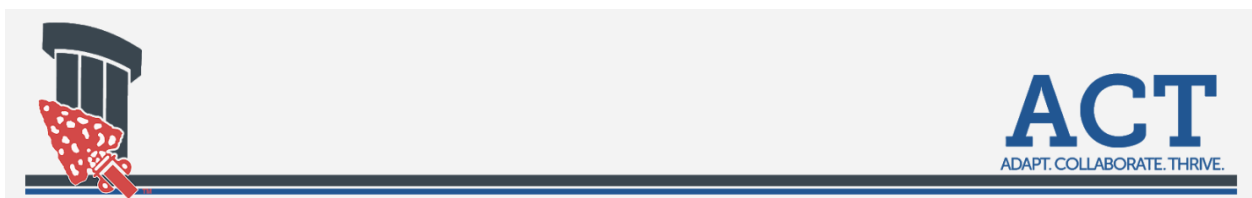
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Between 2014 and 2019, the OA lost 35,090 youth members, or about 38% of our youth membership in 6 years. Why is this? Something I often hear is that this is just a result of the membership decline of the Boy Scouts of America, but in that timeframe, BSA youth membership actually grew by almost 2%. The OA's leadership has been examining this membership loss for a few years.

The youth in this room probably remember the Journey to Excellence program ever since they joined the Order of the Arrow; but as some of the advisers in the room might know, we only started that program in 2012. It was the first time we were finally able to track lodges' performance in a variety of membership metrics. After 7 years of data analysis and looking at every single lodge's metrics, it's clear that three key performance indicators drive membership growth and lodge success:

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- Unit Election Rate: the percentage of troops, crews, and ships that host an OA visit in a given year
- Induction Rate: the percentage of candidates that attend an Ordeal
- Activation Rate: the percentage of members that attend an OA event within their first six months as an Arrowman



We refer to these three areas as “key performance indicators” because they are the metrics that are the most accurate in predicting success. This makes intuitive sense as well. To become an engaged member, you have to be elected, then attend your Ordeal, and then come back to more events. It’s the basis of what we call an Arrowman’s membership journey. We know that as lodge leaders, you are tasked with a lot. This initiative gives us three specific focus areas. All of the work you do for you lodge is important, but if we can’t get Scouts elected, inducted, and activated, we can’t hope to succeed.

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In each of these areas, we have room for improvement. We’re going to spend the next few minutes talking about the current status of each of these metrics, both nationwide and in your own lodge. Using the [QR Code in your guidebook](#), you can find the current Lodge PMP Report site and explore the data as we go through it.

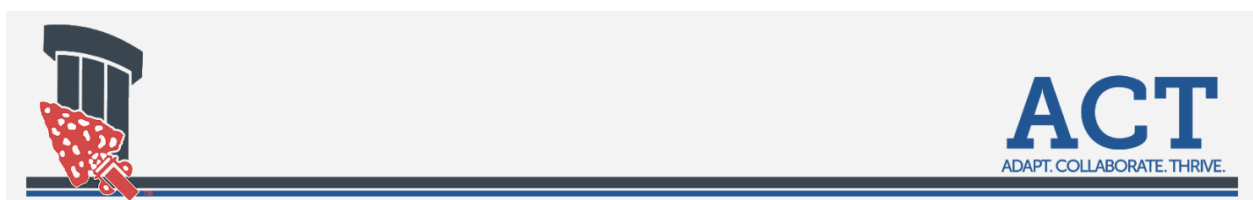
Let’s start with unit elections. It is important that every Scout has the opportunity to be elected into the Order of the Arrow, a goal we accomplish by conducting annual elections in every troop, crew, and ship. Currently, though, we hold elections in less than two-thirds of units. Right from the start, we are closing the door to one-third of our potential membership, as we failed to hold elections in **##,### units** during 2019. Of the Scouts who are elected as candidates, nearly 30% don’t attend an induction weekend. Our organization’s purpose is to recognize outstanding Scouts and Scouters, but in 2019 alone, **##,### Scouts** were selected by their units; but we never recognized them because they didn’t come to the Ordeal. Finally, we never see 70 percent of Arrowmen after the Ordeal. We spend too much of your time planning great events for only 30 percent of our members to ever show up.

In 2020, these problems compounded amid the the massive program disruptions created by the coronavirus pandemic. **INSERT BIG SCARY 2020 NUMBERS HERE**

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Now that we have introduced the High Performing Lodge initiative and discussed current membership trends, we will begin exploring how we solve these issues and chart the path to high performance. So, how do we define a high performing lodge? High Performing Lodges have a 14.5% membership density rate, meaning 14.5% of all Scouts registered in Scouts BSA troops, Venturing crews, and Sea Scout ships are wearing a sash. At this density rate, we can attain sustainable membership trends.

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We can track our progress towards this goal using the three key performance indicators, each of which has a target benchmark. If we reach a 90% election rate, 90% induction rate, and 50% activation rate, your lodge will be on track to maintain a 14.5% density rate and reach high performing status.

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Staff Introductions 2 minutes

So, who are the people that are going to help us develop these goals for our conference this weekend? I'm going to invite our staff members to come forward and introduce themselves.

[Each staff member should walk to the front of the room and self-introduce, including any current and previous positions within the OA. The staff must establish their gravitas and credentials with respect to high-functioning OA and Scouting teams.]

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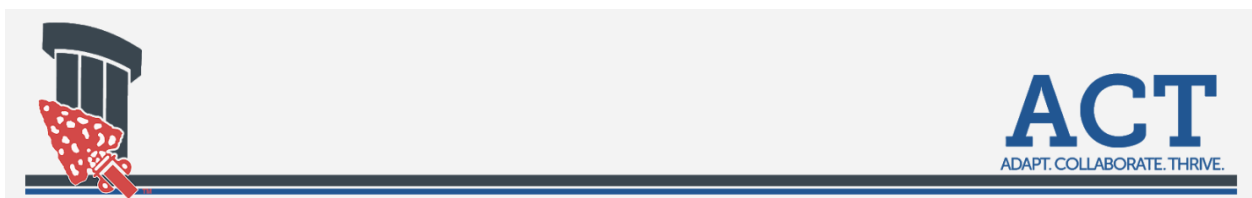
Making the Most of this Conference 7 minutes

What do people say about Las Vegas? What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. Well, this conference is not Las Vegas. If 'what happens here stays here,' then this whole event will be a waste. We cannot call this conference a success if we only do a good job training or have great food. We can only call this conference a success if you can learn new skills and implement an actionable plan to help your lodge Thrive today and for years into the future. So, here are some tips to help you make the most of your ACT Conference.

a. Remember What You Learn

With a day full of speakers and sessions, there's a lot to take in—and you're probably not going to remember all of it when you get home. So, collect your notes and information in a way that makes it easy to access when you return to your home. Regardless of your note-taking format of choice, we will invite you to write down three key takeaways at the end of each session. This will help jog your memory and give you specific to-dos when you get back to your lodge

b. Connect with the Staff and Your Fellow Delegates



Your best resources this weekend are the staff and other delegates at this conference. So, don't be afraid to ask questions or approach someone after a session to say hello, start a conversation, and exchange contact information if you want to follow-up. We don't have to limit our networking to only this conference.

c. Limit Phone Use

You may be thinking: "But—I have so many emails waiting!" But here's the thing: You're at this conference to have in-person interaction, and you don't want your electronic devices to be a barrier to making those connections. So, while you don't have to disconnect completely, put the phone away when you're waiting for a session to begin or while we are taking a break; and give yourself a chance to strike up conversations with the other delegates around you. These are the people who are your best resources!

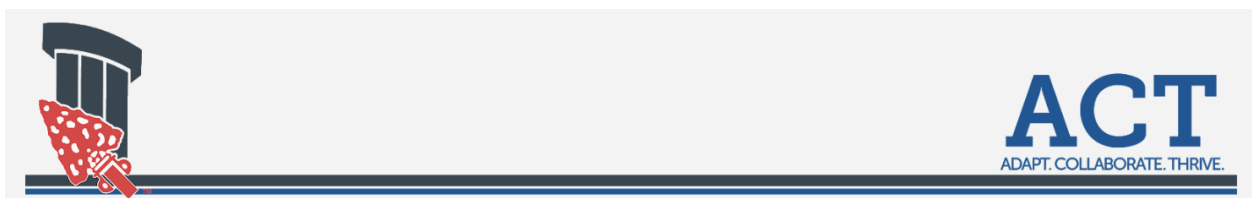
d. Follow-Up

At the conference, try to meet people who have the same positions as you in other lodges. When you return home, it's time to continue the conversation. Within a week of returning from the event, send a personal follow-up to everyone you meet to let that person know you enjoyed meeting. Additionally, set up a phone call or face-to-face meeting (adhering to YPT standards) with anyone you specifically want to build a relationship with or discuss follow-up questions.

e. Pay It Forward

You gained a lot of new information, inspiration, and contacts at the conference; and one of the best things you can do with those resources is to share them with your fellow Arrowmen who are not here this weekend. At your next LEC meeting, report to your lodge what you've learned and the goals you have set. You will spread your new skills and knowledge—and hopefully your Brothers will reciprocate the next time they go to a great training event.

Prior to this weekend, each lodge chief spoke with someone from the Section ACT Conference staff to discuss the individual goals of each lodge, especially with respect to their election, induction, and activation rates. During this ACT Conference, it is our responsibility to work with each of you to identify the specific steps every lodge will take over the course of the upcoming year to achieve these goals. This is not the start of a basic transactional relationship between the lodge and section; this is one of many collaborations where the section and lodge will be partnering together to build a thriving Order. After this conference, every lodge will have many follow-up conversations with section staff to ensure every Arrowmen has the necessary tools to get the job done!



Closing 1 minute

I know the challenges we are facing are not insignificant, but when confronting them together, they become opportunities to learn and grow. The Order of the Arrow means so much to so many. We're impacting fewer lives than ever before. Our mission and purpose are reaching fewer people than ever. Today, we have a chance to reverse those trends. YOU have that chance. Finally, I want to remind you all that we, the section staff, are here in the service of you, our delegates. If you have a question, ask. If you don't fully grasp a point, let us know. If you want to discuss something more, that's why we're here!



ACT
ADAPT. COLLABORATE. THRIVE.