



# Education Monthly

November 2012

*R.W.Bro. John Forster, Chairman of Masonic Education*

*Masonic Education and Lodge resources are spending much time this year developing materials for prospective candidates and for newly initiated, newly passed and newly raised candidates. To give you some idea of the need for such activity I have published below an extract from the U.G.L.E. Pro. Grand Master to their recent mentoring conference. All of what he says is important to us but especially so at the Lodge level. I'd encourage everyone to discuss these issues in your lodges and to send me your feedback and best ideas. Write to me with your thoughts: they will be considered.*

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**EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS BY THE M.W. PRO GRAND MASTER  
PETER LOWNDES, UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ENGLAND TO THE  
FOURTH MENTORING CONFERENCE.                      22 MARCH 2012**

Each candidate must understand the basic logistics that are involved in becoming a Freemason. It is really about a proper welcome. I am not going into that in detail today – other than to say that a candidate should never feel under briefed and should be made aware of his financial and time commitment. During this stage the personal mentor answers any questions the candidate may have for him to gain a sense of belonging. In other words, there should never be any surprises.

The second stage is to understand the basics of the ritual, especially after initiation and then passing and raising. This understanding should lead to the ability to answer questions about the myths that non Masons have – so that right from the start, members can counter the questions about the so-called funny handshakes, the nooses and trouser leg being rolled up – all these classics. The questions on these myths need to be answered accurately and without embarrassment. I am not talking about an in depth knowledge, but more a common understanding. The Mentor can, of course, point them in the right direction for this additional and important information, as they require it.

We all understand the need to look after candidates, but it is the third stage of giving them the confidence – from the very outset – in order that they can speak to, in particular, family and friends about Freemasonry. That, Brethren, is vital to ensuring the future. A candidate – and indeed this applies equally to the rest of us – needs to understand how to talk to the non-Mason about what Freemasonry means. The aim is to have as many members as possible as ambassadors for Freemasonry.

Brethren let me repeat what I said in December that an ambassador is not a rank or office - it is a mode of behaviour. On the fundamental understanding that we recruit only people who live up to our principles – an ambassador will not only understand the basics of ritual but also, importantly will be able and willing, with our support and guidance, to talk to family and friends about their Freemasonry, as and when appropriate. We need to have confidence in them to do so competently. To quote the Grand Master, ***“Talking openly about Freemasonry, as appropriate, is core to my philosophy, central to our communications strategy and essential to the survival of Freemasonry as a respected and relevant membership organisation”***.

I hope that I have set in context the work you are going to do. Firstly in helping Lodges to effectively adopt the new office of Mentor and secondly in discussing ways in which mentors can help our members become confident and competent ambassadors for Freemasonry. We at Grand Lodge will give you every support. In a nutshell brethren our strategy is:

- To promote a positive image of the craft.
  - To remove discrimination towards our members.
  - To encourage the right men to join.
  - To help them enjoy their membership.
  - To encourage them to talk positively about Freemasonry.
  - Thus completing the circle.
- Click [HERE](#) for | the full address or copy and paste into your browser

<http://freemasonrytoday.com/news/initiatives/mentoring/item/560-pro-grand-masters-address-to-the-fourth-mentoring-conference>

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