

Breaking the Mold

Advice from all of the 2012 Section Officers and Advisers on how to “Break the Mold” and improve your Section’s Conclave



Discussion led by: 2010 Western Region Chief Fred Gross

At the 2011 Western Region Gathering

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1 General Advice

1. Fun activities!
2. Food, our cooks make amazing food!
3. Collect the programs from other Section's conclaves.
4. Patch auctions.
5. Outdoor cooking classes/demos.
6. Quality youth.
7. Open mindedness.
8. Our section training program, where all the people that sign-up for a certain course stay together and create new friends for the entire morning.
9. By attempting to lower our budget costs on CVC activities we can lower our overall Conclave cost to a reasonable price.
10. Our high use of Indian games (such as double ball) which gets our youth excited and creates a sense of fellowship.
11. Fun, fun, fun, fun, looking forward to the weekend!
12. Make it more manly!
13. Stop relying on email as our main communication system.
14. Use PowerPoint quotes of inspiration.
15. Our Section is able to easily communicate with all Lodges, and the Lodges easily communicate with each other which makes the Section stronger.
16. Change of leadership.
17. Change of schedule of events.
18. Initiative, go-getter attitude.
19. Make many friends.
20. Involve everyone.
21. Use FaceBook while at Conclave. Promote the FaceBook page before Conclave and give last minute updates and getting people excited. At Conclave, use FaceBook almost like Twitter and give updates throughout the day. Parents even followed along with Conclave and loved it.

22. Section “Top Lodge” Award: Instead of a plaque or spirit stick, get a custom made trophy to unveil at the Friday night show. Everyone will want to earn the award and it goes home with the Top Lodge to display in their Council Office.
23. Use Skype for COC and last minute conference calls.
24. A new active Arrowman award for Conclave, such as a white tab with the Section Totem silkscreened in black.
25. Mentor CVCs so that they can bring their ideas to fruition.
26. Vigil Service Dinner: Vigil honor members serve dinner and distribute note cards with inspirational words.
27. Provide an excellent food service experience. Don’t serve “camp” food.
28. Great training and degree program.
29. More variety in Conclave activities.
30. Good Lodge visitations.
31. Vigil rededication ceremony Friday evening. Use Vigil resources to support Conclave.
32. COC reception: A gathering of important people that organized and planned the conclave. Invite an honored guest and visiting Arrowmen.
33. Patch design trading.
34. Improve the Conclave schedule.
35. Manage resources well.
36. Sharpen focus.
37. We all need to remember that we serve our Arrowmen and our Lodges.
38. High Adventure promotion.
39. Variety of hosting sites and diverse themes.
40. Connect Conclave elements to the theme.
41. Promote, promote, promote.
42. Improve show quality.
43. Control costs.
44. The Game of Life.
45. Special activities for adults and new members.

46. Make it simple.
47. Use the military and donations.
48. Make it flashy.
49. Learn from the past.
50. Have a COC retreat to be used for initial planning and for the COC to meet each other.
51. Use the Chamber of Commerce in or near the city where Conclave will be for resource help.
52. Buy costumes and props after Halloween.
53. Theme ideas:
 - New Frontiers
 - Serve All
 - Thing of the Spirit
 - Fuel the Fire Within
54. Invite National Officers.
55. Guest entertainment: singers, bands, magic acts, dog act?
56. VIP/Service team for National Officers and special guests.
57. Have a trading post with items that **youth** want to buy—but do not over-buy Section branded items.
58. Start Conclave off strong! Friday night is a great chance to start the event off on a good foot.
59. Have great trainers that have been trained.
60. Have enough (good) food for seconds.
61. Duct tape will solve **most** of your Conclave issues.
62. Lodge Ball:
 - Get a referee.
 - Announcers/color-commentators **really** add.
 - Separate teams evenly, do not pick teams with captains.
 - Have a prize for the winning team (does not need to be big)
63. The **simple** Conclave plan (everything else is icing on the cake):

- Get people there.
 - Get them fed.
 - Don't injure them.
64. Vary training from year to year. Don't always use the same old training classes.
 65. It isn't how you start, it is how you finish.
 66. Journey to Excellence Conclave training, also on the OA strategic plan.
 67. Get at least 10 youth from each Lodge to Conclave so that each Lodge will have an equal say in the election.
 68. Invite neighboring Section Chiefs and Advisers.
 69. Invite local Indian talent/historians for educational activities.
 70. Reconnect Officers on both the Lodge and Section levels to what Brotherhood and Cheerful Service mean.
 71. Make sure that the registration process at Conclave is smooth.
 72. Conclave activities centrally located for easy access.
 73. Reuse a Youtube video even if many have already seen it.
 74. Do not allow there to be dead spots in the show. Make sure there are great transitions.
 75. Get local, non-OA talent to showcase their skills.

2 Advice for Section Chiefs

1. More communication between CVCs, leaders, and adults.
2. Frequent contact with Lodge Chiefs giving and receiving feedback.
3. Put time in the COC meeting to share best practices.
4. Create a section calendar that includes timelines (back-dating).
5. Hold "mystery topic" five minute puzzler at each COC (i.e.: a topic of concern). Spend those five minutes brainstorming solutions to the topic.
6. Stop the bad habit of **assuming** Section CVCs have reports ready for COC meetings by sending out reminders; making phone calls to check status reports; set deadlines for CVCs to check in with the Section Chief before the meeting.
7. Instead of having only one person on the CVC team for each activity, the Section Chief should brainstorm with each CVC the prospects for each particular committee. Then hold a workshop on how to recruit teams.

8. Section leadership seminar.
9. The Section Chief and all three Section Advisers went to all Lodge banquets in the Section to show interest in helping the Lodges.
10. Use your advisers.
11. Be open minded.
12. From NYLT: “Take care of your troops, and your troops will take care of you.” Always delegate, build a strong team, and use good communication skills to successfully work with others.
13. Talk with fellow Chiefs about new things to try.
14. Feel free to remind adults that the OA is youth led.
15. **Early** planning. Mobilize your resources (Lodge Chiefs, CVCs, Advisers) ASAP. Gather ideas and develop them into a cohesive vision for your Section, the manifestation of which should be your Conclave.

3 Advice for Section Vice Chiefs

1. Learn how lodges are struggling or good ideas they have to share with each other.
2. Encourage the Lodge Chiefs to participate in each other’s LLDs.
3. Encourage Lodge Officers to participate in other Lodges’ activities.
4. Take adults and youth on LAPs. Also remember to have questions ahead of time.
5. Tirelessly work to find unique ways to support Lodges.
6. Encourage Lodges to form dance and drum teams so that they can participate in AIA activities at Conclave.
7. Visit other Lodges and find out info on what they need help on.
8. Make sure that Lodges share information with each other.
9. Be adaptive. Be creative. Have fun!

4 Advice for Section Secretaries

1. Use all resources/technology available to get info to/from Lodges.
2. Get help from all Lodges on the Section newsletter. Demand articles and ideas for activities from Lodge Chiefs and Advisers. Also a print letter is much better than an internet one.

3. Be precise. Be prepared. Be ready. Be diligent.
4. Have a good newsletter. Use Adobe InDesign, have a good name, and consolidate information.
5. Find new ways to connect people together.
6. Conclave promotion using flyers, newsletter, Constant Contact, website, and personal contact.

5 Advice for Section Advisers

1. Communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate with Lodges and other leadership.
2. The ability of our advisers to take a back-seat role while still being able to guide our youth leaders.
3. Support and build relationships with Section Officers. Support and guide them.
4. Encourage an increase in personal contact between Lodges.
5. Encourage the Lodge and Section Officers to lead by example.
6. Divide the CVC into two groups where each group reports to one of the Associate Section Advisers, who then report to the Section Adviser.
7. The Section Chief and all three Section Advisers went to all Lodge banquets in the Section to show interest in helping the Lodges.
8. Keep adult CVC Advisers from dictating and micromanaging CVCs to allow youth to be creative.
9. Section Advisers are such an important part of the Section. It is important to step back and let the youth run the Section, but it is also important to help your youth officers feel like they are valuable, even when you are helping or bringing up issues. You're awesome, we can't do it without you!
10. Enable youth leadership.
11. Find communication methods that work best with your youth.
12. Assist Lodges and Arrowmen in making Conclave, NOAC, OAHA, and other National programs more affordable and exciting to go to.