

## **Ritual Award Mission Statement**

Our obligation as Masons is to see that not only the level of uniformity, but also the character and impressiveness of our ritual, is preserved in each and every Lodge in the state. Our Grand Lodge sets a *very* high bar for what is expected from each Lodge in terms of the "quality, uniformity and impressiveness" of the Ritual work.

We want all our Candidates, to get the same impressive ceremony regardless of where they take their degrees. We are striving for a "Culture of Ritual Excellence". The importance of our Ritual work cannot be overstated. The Ritual contains all of the basic lessons, tenets and principles of Freemasonry and is, quite literally, the blueprint we all follow when teaching a candidate what it is that makes a man a good Mason.

This award is created to recognize those brethren who have labored diligently to attain an outstanding level of ritual excellence and thereby promote a culture of ritual excellence within their Lodge, and inspiring those who follow to do the same.

**Grand Lodge of New Hampshire Ritual Jewel Scorecard**

1. History, Entered Apprentice Degree 4 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Middle Chamber, Fellow Craft Degree 3 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
3. History, Master Mason Degree 5 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Worshipful Master, Entered Apprentice Degree 2 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Worshipful Master, Fellow Craft Degree 2 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Worshipful Master, Master Mason Degree 3 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Senior Deacon, Entered Apprentice – Master Mason\* 2 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Chaplain, Entered Apprentice – Master Mason 2 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Degree Charges, Entered Apprentice – Master Mason 2 Points  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
10. First Gate, Master Mason 1 Point  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Second Gate, Master Mason 1 Point  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Third Gate, Master Mason 1 Point  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

13. First Craftsman, Master Mason 1 Point

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Opening and Closing Charges 1 Point

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

\* - Minus the Middle Chamber and First Craftsman parts.

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### CERTIFICATION

(To be completed by District Deputy Grand Lecturer, Deputy Grand Lecturer, or Grand Lecturer, upon completion of 12 points by a New Hampshire Freemason in a constituent lodge.)

I, the undersigned, attest that Brother \_\_\_\_\_,

a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge, No.- \_\_\_\_\_, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire, has satisfactorily completed the 12 points needed to receive the Grand Lodge of New Hampshire Ritual Jewel, and do pray that the recognition be awarded to our worthy Brother for this achievement.

Fraternally,

RW Brother \_\_\_\_\_  
District Deputy Grand Lecturer/Deputy Grand Lecturer/Grand Lecturer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Ritual Excellence Performance Ratings

There are a several key elements to effective speaking. And whether the “speech” is impromptu, extemporaneous, manuscript, or memorized, they all have common and important elements of speech delivery. For the purposes of Masonic ritual, which is memorized, ritual excellence is the delivery of the Masonic message from memory in such a way as to impart to the novitiate the wise and important truths of Freemasonry. Memorization itself can be assessed on an almost empirical basis, evaluating the number of missed, added or rearranged words and phrases against the total number of words to be delivered. Evaluation of a presenter’s ability to deliver the wise and important truths of Freemasonry necessarily is more subjective, but to which subjection some metrics can be employed to normalize the evaluation across presenters and evaluators.

The following are important elements to the delivery of the important truths embodied in Masonic ritual.

### Vocal Delivery

Vocal delivery can be described as those elements of speech to which the audience receives to attentive ear from the instructive tongue. The elements of vocal delivery are **Volume**, **Tone** (pitch and strength), **Fluency** (rate and pauses), **Articulation**, and **Animation**.

**Volume.** It is important that the presenter deliver the ritual at a volume that is appropriate to the size of the audience and size of the venue, all the while keeping the delivery intimate to the candidate. Too low a volume may result in the audience and candidate not hearing the words and hence, most importantly, losing the message. Too loud a volume may result in sounding brash and overbearing. In general, a mid-range volume is recommended whereby all can hear the message being conveyed in a confident and personal manner.

**Tone.** Tone can be used to help the “setting” of the message in the ritual passage being presented. Lower pitches, for example, should be use for serious and solemn passages, e.g. prayers and obligations; higher pitches can be used for upbeat, higher energy, higher excitement passages, e.g. “Hail, Friend!” and “...What is the cause of this confusion...”.

**Fluency.** The ritualist must deliver the passages at a rate of speech that enables the audience to be engaged in what he is saying and to hear and understand what is being said. Too fast a delivery and the performance sounds like mere rote regurgitation of memorized lines without understanding of the truth to be conveyed. Too slow a delivery and the audience may lose interest through impatience or think the presenter is unprepared. The ritualist must also demonstrate a smooth flow to his presentation with limited breaks of unintended pauses and appropriate use of intended pauses for transition or effect without 'fillers' (er...uhm...ah...).

**Articulation.** Articulation refers to the clearness of speech. Local dialect and accents notwithstanding, it is important that the rituals “frame the word” aright. For example, it’s “Brethren” not “Brotheren”. And while there are several acceptable pronunciations to many of the Biblical references in the Masonic ritual, there are certainly unacceptable ones.

**Animation.** Animation is the equivalent of “vocal gestures”. It is the effective use of modulating volume, tone, and fluency. With too little vocal animation the presenter shows a lack of enthusiasm and energy. Too much vocal animation may distract the listener and cause the message to be unheard.

## **Nonverbal Communication**

Close to 60% of regular, in-person communications is conveyed through body language. That number is likely higher for presentations and theatrical performances. Thus, it is an important part of ritual excellence. The key elements of non-verbal communication are **Eye Contact, Body Posture, Facial Expressions,** and **Gestures.**

**Eye Contact.** Eye contact is used to involve the audience and, in particular, it should draw the candidate into the ritual proceedings. This is particularly important for the delivery of histories and charges of each Masonic degree. The candidate should have the impression he is being spoken to directly but for the benefit of all present as well.

**Body Posture.** Body posture can convey a variety of things but it inevitably conveys attitude. Image King Solomon sitting with one of his legs crossed over other knee. Or the Master approaching from the East with hunched shoulders and a saunter as opposed to upright, regular steps. For most Masonic ritual, an upright, formal posture is appropriate.

**Facial Expressions.** Facial expressions are vital to communication and augment the meaning of what is being said. Nodding the head expresses approval or can reinforce a positive statement (“The suggestion is a good one.”). Bringing the eyebrows together in a furrowed brow can express anger (“Craftsmen, you know the law...”). Turning the head and looking skyward or stroking the chin can indicate contemplation (perhaps expressions used before rendering the decision, “Rise, Craftsmen. My pardon is granted...”).

**Gestures.** Hand and body movement are just as important to the telling of ritual. Together with facial expressions, gestures are the bodily animation that coincides with and augments the vocal animation. Too few gestures make the presenter appear uncomfortable and robot-like. Too many gestures can make the presenter seem unpolished and may be distracting to the audience. If the ritual presents a story of movement and progress, i.e. the passing of the pillars and a regular ascent by a flight of winding stairs to the outer and inner doors, then it is not only appropriate but recommended that the presenter provide the candidate with the ambulatory sensation of craftsmen on the way to the middle chamber. Conversely, charges to the candidate are best given with little walking to enable the candidate to focus on the spoken word.

**Use of Props.** Masonic ritual is rich with imagery. Our lodge rooms are abundant with visual aids, props, tools, and accouterments that help imprint on the memory the lessons of Masonic tradition. An easy and perfect example of effective use of gestures in ritual work is in the pointing to the starry canopy, mosaic pavement, rough and perfect ashlar, emblems, and other props in the course of the presentation.

## **VOCAL DELIVERY: Effectiveness of sound to express the meaning of ritual**

*The following are some of the behaviors that can be observed when an individual is engaging in highly effective vocal delivery:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Engages the Candidate in the ritual and holds their attention with consistent eye contact
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consistently talks to the Candidate, holding his attention, while also engaging the rest of the audience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses hand gestures and body language to point out objects in the lodge and otherwise augment the spoken ritual

*The following are some of the behaviors that can be observed when an individual is engaging in moderately effective vocal delivery:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Makes some eye contact with the Candidate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes appears to be “talking to space” or to the floor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses some hand gestures to sometimes augment the spoken ritual

*The following are some of the behaviors that can be observed when an individual is engaging in ineffective vocal delivery:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Does not make eye contact with the Candidate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Frequently appears to be “talking to space” or to the floor or other objects in the room rather than Candidate or audience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does not use any hand gestures to assist in pointing out objects that augment the story
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exhibits a lack of control of hands and body to the point of distraction

## **NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: Effectiveness of body language to enhance the spoken word of the ritual**

*The following are some of the behaviors that can be observed when an individual is engaging in highly effective nonverbal communication:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Each audience member in the room can clearly hear and understand what is spoken
- \_\_\_\_\_ Varies volume and tone throughout the presentation to engage the candidate and for emphasis at various times
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consistently uses planned pauses as transitions or to let what is being said “sink in”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clearly and articulately pronounces all words correctly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Presents a combination of volume, tone, and fluency in a well-orchestrated vocal animation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consistently holds the audience’s attention start to finish

*The following are some of the behaviors that can be observed when an individual is engaging in moderately effective nonverbal communication:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Some/most but not all audience members can clearly hear and understand what is spoken
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes varies volume and tone and sometimes lulls into a monotone delivery
- \_\_\_\_\_ Generally pronounces words clearly and correctly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses some planned pauses as transitions or for effect, but may also have moderate number of unplanned pauses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Able to hold the audience's attention through most of the presentation

*The following are some of the behaviors that can be observed when an individual is engaging in ineffective nonverbal communication:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Very few audience members can hear and understand what is spoken
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses a single volume throughout the entire presentation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Monotone delivery with little to no inflections
- \_\_\_\_\_ Speaks too fast with little pause
- \_\_\_\_\_ Speaks too slow or hesitantly with many unplanned pauses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pronounces many words incorrectly or slurred
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unable to hold the audience's attention during most of the presentation

## **Grand Lodge of New Hampshire Ritual Jewel Scorecard**

*You Are Allowed 10% Memorization Error. Word Counts For Each Part And Number Of Allowable Errors To Still Qualify Are Listed Below. You Will Also Need A Minimum 90 Points Out Of 100 On Performance To Qualify.*

1.	History, E A Degree	Word Count: 3179:	Allowable Errors: 318
2.	Middle Chamber, F C Degree	Word Count: 1635:	Allowable Errors: 164
3.	History, M M Degree	Word Count: 3670:	Allowable Errors: 367
4.	Worshipful Master, E A Degree	Word Count: 1786:	Allowable Errors: 179
5.	Worshipful Master, F C Degree	Word Count: 2204:	Allowable Errors: 220
6.	Worshipful Master, M M Degree	Word Count: 1567 1 <sup>st</sup> Sect	Allowable Errors: 157
		Word Count: 1131 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sect. :	Allowable Errors: 113
7.	Senior Deacon, E A- F C- M M*	Word Count: 651 EA	Allowable Errors: 65
	* - Minus Middle Chamber & First Craftsman	Word Count: 532 FC	Allowable Errors: 53
		Word Count: 574 MM	Allowable Errors: 57
8.	Chaplain, E A –F C-M M	Word Count: 82 EA	Allowable Errors: 8
		Word Count: 201 FC	Allowable Errors: 20
		Word Count: 225 MM 1 <sup>st</sup> :	Allowable Errors: 23
		Word Count: 213 MM 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Allowable Errors: 21
9.	Degree Charges, E A – F C - M M	Word Count: 504 EA	Allowable Errors: 50
		Word Count: 539 MM	Allowable Errors: 54
		Word Count: 99 Opt. Poem	Allowable Errors: 10
10.	First Gate, M M	Word Count: 135	Allowable Errors: 14
11.	Second Gate, M M	Word Count: 120	Allowable Errors: 12
12.	Third Gate, M M	Word Count: 298	Allowable Errors: 30
13.	First Craftsman, M M	Word Count: 903 From start of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sect	Allowable Errors: 90
14.	Opening and Closing Charges	Word Count: 452	Allowable Errors: 45

Ritual Performance is how you deliver your lines. Ritual should be performed as if you were telling a story, speaking slowly, clearly, distinctly, and with appropriate voice inflections, pauses and gestures, all designed to keep the Candidate as well as the sidelines engaged.