

Leadership Series: *Keep on Learning*

(Richard H. Ryder, 2017)

Wendell Willkie, the 1940 Republican presidential nominee, is credited with saying, “*Education is the mother of leadership*”. What an appropriate quote, one that perfectly summarizes the Masonic Maven mission of *promoting Masonic education and leadership*. With each generation, time and events seem to pass at exponentially quicker speeds. It is incumbent on all who seek to lead or to improve themselves as leaders to constantly learn.

It is difficult to lead others without a basic body of knowledge in the field of expertise held by those being led. For example, if you have never been a soldier, how do you lead others into battle? If you have never learned computer programming how do you lead a team of software developers? Not only is knowledge power, it is a basic building block of successful leaders. As Masonic leaders we must realize that we need to continue our education in several different areas, particularly Masonry, if we want to remain current with changing trends.

How do we gain education during our quest for Masonic leadership? Well, it’s simple - learn whatever you can whenever you can. This not only includes expanding your Masonic knowledge, but expanding your skills in the following areas: team building, relationship building, conflict resolution, listening skills, public speaking, social media, time management, project management, meeting management, budgeting, and marketing. These are all skills that are useful to Masonic leaders, but you don’t need to become an expert in all areas or take a twelve week college course. Any improvement, no matter how small, in any area will expand your leadership skills. Once again, the Japanese term *Kaizen* (small, incremental improvement) is the key. The important thing is to start, then keep on learning.

The Maven’s Journal provides educational and leadership material in small doses and is the perfect place to start your expansion of knowledge. If you find an article interesting, continue your search for knowledge by going online or find some printed material that expands the topic. Maybe take a class. Also, consider discussing the topic with others to get different perspectives that may challenge your opinion. Lastly, it is important to apply newfound knowledge, so find opportunities within your lodge to learn from experience. And don’t be afraid to fail – remember, experience tests first and teaches second.

Finally, it goes without saying that expanding your understanding of Masonry can only benefit you in your quest to become an effective Masonic leader. This is true regardless of your current or future role. There is no shortage of material; however, one must be selective regarding the source of information. You can begin by checking material available through Grand Lodge or other reputable Masonic entities. Be careful of what you read on the internet; some material is questionable and sensational, or downright false. When in doubt, check with Grand Lodge and its library for reputable sources of information. For a short list of books and resources that may interest you, click [HERE](#).