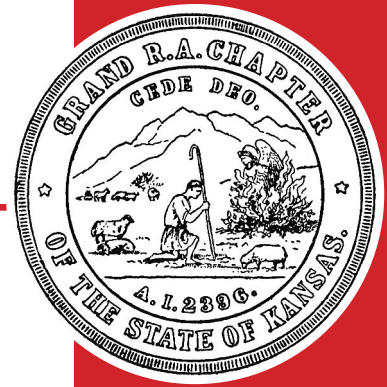


News of the Ark

A Monthly Publication of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas



From the Grand Captain of the Host

Excellent Companion L. Kent Needham, Grand Captain of the Host

The Most Excellent Grand High Priest has asked the current Grand Chapter Officers to write articles each month for this supplement.



Greetings Companions.

When asked to prepare an article for this issue, I spent a significant amount of time contemplating what would be a beneficial message to share. After thoughtful consideration, the concept “servant leadership” continued to be at the forefront of my mind. What is servant leadership? We speak about it often in leadership training and encourage its use throughout our Masonic walk. While I believe I knew what it entailed, I thought it would be beneficial to explore more deeply that leadership style and share what I learned with you. By the way, Google and AI are great tools and I used them extensively to educate myself and bring this information to you.

To provide a little background Robert Greenleaf published his essay “The Servant as Leader” in 1970, effectively coining the term “servant leader.” The essay details how there’s more to being a leader than decision-making skills—the people you lead have to trust you and believe you have their best interests at heart. The servant leadership theory puts an emphasis on facilitating the growth of people around you and serving the needs of others. It is one of many ways to make an effective leader. Scholar Larry C. Spears expanded Greenleaf’s ideas as outlined in the core characteristics below.

So back to the question, what Is Servant Leadership? The concept of servant leadership takes an altruistic approach to leading by focusing on the support and growth of others. A true servant leader is a servant first, serving others to not only help produce quality results but to improve their professional growth as well (whereas leader-first roles are usually more about power and acquisition of control).

As it relates to business, a servant leader focuses more on involving team members in the day-to-day decision-making processes of the business than a more authoritative, traditional leader would. Servant leadership skills help connect coworkers at both the management and employee level, building an efficient, synergistic engine. While Masonry is not a business, this concept is particularly important in Masonry as we are all volunteers. Our involvement is not a job, and we are not getting paid to participate. If you want our buy in and participation, we need to see the value and rewards of where we are being led. If you are in Masonic leadership, you will not be very successful in reaching your goals by imposing the authoritative approach to leadership. We, as Masons, need to buy

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into where our leadership wants to take us, or we will just drop out, and the organization will not move forward in a positive direction.

While there is a lot written on this subject, the prevailing research indicates there are seven principles of servant leadership, often known as the Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership, and ten core characteristics which are often recognized for identifying key servant leadership traits. The 7 principles are:

- **Person of Character:** Acts with integrity, humility, and ethics, ensuring their actions and values remain consistently aligned.
- **Puts People First:** Shows genuine care for team members by actively supporting their personal and professional growth.
- **Skilled Communicator:** Listens earnestly, demonstrates empathy, and values continuous feedback rather than just issuing directives.
- **Compassionate Collaborator:** Fosters a psychologically safe, respectful, and inclusive community where everyone feels a sense of belonging.
- **Has Foresight:** Imagines future possibilities and anticipates the long-term consequences of actions to guide the team with clarity.
- **Systems Thinker:** Understands how different roles, processes, and strategies interconnect, allowing them to lead effectively through complex changes.
- **Leads with Moral Authority:** Inspires respect and trust by modeling desired behaviors and focusing on a shared vision rather than exercising arbitrary power.

Scholar Larry C. Spears offers ten core characteristics which servant leaders usually possess, and are:

- **Listening:** Actively hearing and understanding others' needs and viewpoints.
- **Empathy:** Striving to understand, validate, and support others' feelings and perspectives.
- **Healing:** Nurturing emotional health and helping followers become whole.
- **Awareness:** Possessing self-awareness and understanding of the surrounding environment.
- **Persuasion:** Using influence, consensus, and dialogue rather than relying on authority or coercion.
- **Conceptualization:** Mentally defining the "big picture" or vision, bridging daily tasks with long-term goals.
- **Foresight:** Predicting future outcomes based on current actions and trends.
- **Stewardship:** Taking responsibility for the organization and its people, acting as stewards rather than owners.
- **Commitment to the Growth of People:** Nurturing personal and professional development within the team.
- **Building Community:** Fostering a sense of belonging and collaborative spirit within the organization.

These characteristics don't just appear. There are four key behaviors and mindsets that are usually possessed by a servant leader and include:

- **Humility:** Putting others first and focusing on empowering them rather than personal ambition.
- **Leading by Example:** Working alongside employees and demonstrating high ethics rather than just giving orders.
- **Trustworthiness:** Building credibility through consistency and integrity.
- **Flexibility:** Adapting to team needs and changing environments.

So, now that we, myself included, understand more clearly what servant leadership is, how can we take this information and objectively analyze where we need to improve to be the best leader we can be to propel the Craft forward in a positive direction. We have a strategic plan which, if followed, can guide us well into the future. However, it will take all of us, as servant leaders to make that happen. Now that I have a better understanding of what a servant leader is and what he should do, I will work harder to be a better servant leader for our Craft. Will you join me in that endeavor?

L. Kent Needham

The Royal Arch: A Beginning

You may not realize how many different orders and appendant bodies choose their membership based off of Royal Arch Masonry. We all know that, in most jurisdictions, you have to be a Royal Arch Mason if you want to join a Council of Cryptic Masons. Some jurisdictions do not have a Council of Cryptic Masons, but instead confer their cryptic degrees within the body of a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. In all jurisdictions it is required of those seeking to join a Commandery of Knights Templar under the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America to be a Royal Arch Mason. In Kansas, we predicate membership in Templary based on membership in Cryptic Masonry.



There are yet other masonic bodies and orders who pick their members based on their service to masonry and their qualifications to join those bodies. The following list includes just a few of the masonic bodies which choose their members based on membership in a Royal Arch Chapter.

Allied Masonic Degrees (AMD)

Membership is based on being a Royal Arch Mason. Those selected to join the AMD should be interested in philosophy, scholarship, and research. This body confers and holds several older degrees which are generally no longer worked within the United States of America.

Knight Masons

Members must be a Royal Arch Mason before they are proposed and invited to join a Council of Knight Masons. They confer what have become known as the Green Degrees of Irish Masonry. Councils of Knight Masons confer the degrees of Knight of the Sword, Knight of the East, and Knight of the East and West.

York Rite College

The York Rite College selects its members from those who are members of a Lodge, Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, Council of Cryptic Masons, and Commandery or Preceptory of Knights Templar. Membership selection is by invitation only and the College exists to be of service to the York Rite of Freemasonry.

Knight York Cross of Honor (KYCH)

The KYCH select its members from those who have led, with distinction, as a presiding officer of each of the four York Rite bodies. These include the Lodge, Chapter, Council, and Commandery. Membership is given upon invitation only and only to those who have dedicated themselves to service in the Masonic fraternity.

Red Cross of Constantine

Knight Companions of the Order must be a Royal Arch Mason in good standing and subscribe to a belief in the Christian religion as revealed in the New Testament. Membership is by invitation and each Conclave has a prescribed limit.

St. Thomas of Acon

Membership is by invitation only and chosen from those who are members of a Masonic Lodge, a Royal Arch Mason Chapter, and a subscribing Knight Templar, or its equivalent in other countries.

Masonic Order of Athelstan

Courts of the Order of Athelstan select their members from those who are members of a Craft (blue) lodge and are a Companion of a Royal Arch Chapter. Membership is by invitation only.

Masonic Order of Pilgrim Preceptors

Membership is by invitation only and those invited must have presided over a Craft Lodge and a Royal Arch Chapter.

Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests

This is an honorary and invitational organization who selects its members from those who who exhibited outstanding performance as a Commander of a Commandery of Knights Templar. Members must hold membership within a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons.