

The Journey of P.E.O.

Participants (narrator and three non-speaking roles):

Narrator
Jane Doe
Two travel consultants (Chapter President and member)

Content: The Journey of P.E.O. is based on the premise that membership in P.E.O. is a life journey that each member begins the day she is initiated into a local chapter. With our Constitution and Bylaws, we are given a compass and road map to help find our way. Skit includes those items required to insure a successful journey.

Supplies needed:

Mailbox
Card table, 3 chairs
Small suitcase

Items on table:

Invitation to Membership	Calendar
P.E.O. Counsel for Membership booklet	Alarm Clock
Projects Brochures	Emblem
Map	OSC Proceedings
Compass	<i>Out of the Heart</i>
P.E.O. Constitution	Magnifying Glasses
Binoculars	Flashlight/IOLC
P.E.O. Records	Walking Stick
Membership card	Flag on a stick
Large gold star (with P.E.O. on front)	Notice of Member Moving form
Chapter Yearbook	Guide for the Unaffiliate

Timing: 25-30 minutes

The Journey of P.E.O.

Slide #1 (Project Title)

Narrator Reads:

It has been said that travel broadens one's horizons, giving a wider field of vision on the world around us. People travel for a variety of reasons. These reasons may include education, making new friends, exploring new opportunities, personal improvement or simply recharging one's batteries. In P.E.O. chapters, there is a recurring image of women on a journey: a journey of unlimited opportunities, personal growth and strong, lasting friendships.

Slide #2 (Trip of a Lifetime)

Imagine going to your mailbox and finding an invitation for the "trip of a lifetime". Sound too good to be true? Not at all. The journey is the one each of us began on the day the Invitation to Membership arrived in our mail from a local P.E.O. chapter. The purpose of this particular trip can be found in our *Objects and Aims*: "to seek growth" and "to obtain all possible wisdom."

Slide #3 (Women)

This journey was born out of a particular friendship, initiated by someone who saw something special in us. A friend, who was already on her journey, considered us to be a "woman of refinement and culture" and believed we would make an ideal traveling companion, introducing us to others who were traveling with her. As they came to know us better, they too believed we would be congenial to the group and would enrich and strengthen our Sisterhood.

At a local chapter meeting, the name of Jane Doe was proposed for membership, sponsored according to our Constitution and balloted upon favorably at the next business meeting. Her *Invitation to Membership* was mailed by the corresponding secretary.

Tonight we are going to accompany Jane Doe as she begins her P.E.O. journey.

Slide #4 (Invitation to Membership)

(Jane goes to mailbox, removes and opens the invitation.)

As Jane opens and reads her invitation, she is pleased to have been asked to join, although a number of questions immediately come to mind. The invitation briefly defines our Sisterhood and establishes the only conditions of membership: to become a P.E.O., a woman must be at least 18 years of age and acknowledge her belief in God. It also lets Jane know that before she accepts the invitation, she will be contacted by chapter members and given an opportunity to ask questions and learn about our Sisterhood so she may make an informed decision.

(Jane stands quietly near the mailbox, holding the opened invitation.)

The preacceptance counseling is a vital step in the P.E.O. journey. Before beginning any extensive trip, most women would contact an expert in the field: a travel consultant.

Slide #5 (Zebra-travel consultant)

With our travel consultant, we would want to discuss expectations, goals, traveling companions and some of the many opportunities and possibilities that may be encountered along the way. Good, solid preacceptance counseling helps the prospective member understand much of what P.E.O. is about and what will be expected of her as a member. This important step can help minimize the number of women who become inactive because they find P.E.O. is not what they expected.

(Retrieving the small suitcase, Jane goes to the “travel agency” and is greeting warmly before sitting down to talk.)

Slide #6 (Preacceptance Counseling)

Our travel consultants today are the local chapter president and the friend who first introduced Jane to chapter members. They will be following the guidelines set forth in the booklet entitled *P.E.O. Counsel for Membership Booklet*.

During our visit today, Jane will learn that P.E.O. is a sisterhood based on the principles of friendship and loyalty with the purposes that are both charitable and educational. Its outreach is to women around the world to help them pursue their educational goals. She will learn that membership in P.E.O. is a personal commitment that lasts a lifetime.

Jane will discover that the origins of this particular travel opportunity began in 1869. She will learn that her traveling companions represent all ages, educational backgrounds and lifestyles; that although there is a wonderful diversity of talents and personalities in our chapters, members share common directions, goals and ideals. Her journey will be a time of discovery and personal growth.

Slide #7 (Projects) Our six educational projects will be *briefly* outlined for Jane. We don't want to overwhelm her by a huge amount of information at this time. More specific information will be shared at a later date.

(Brochures handed to Jane by travel consultant and put in suitcase.)

Slide #8 (Safari)

She learns that P.E.O. is not something one joins because it looks good on a resume. Neither is it a political or religious organization, although individual members support a variety of political causes and have diverse religious affiliations. She will come, in time, to understand that P.E.O. is more a community of spirit in which, by serving, she will be challenged, inspired and uplifted.

Jane needs to have a clear understanding of the commitment she must make by attending as many of the fifteen meetings a year as possible. Our travel consultants will be sure that she is aware of meeting days and times. The full benefit of P.E.O. cannot be achieved if one is unable to be a regular participant in local chapter meetings. It would be like going on a safari to explore the African savanna but remaining just outside the area in a hotel room. Imagine trying to experience the awesome grandeur, the subtle changes in color as twilight approaches, or the sounds of the animals only through the descriptions of one's fellow travelers.

Slide #9 (To become a P.E.O., one must experience P.E.O.)

Before leaving on any trip, we must carefully consider what to pack to make the journey successful and rewarding. We want to be sure we have the basics, with enough room in our suitcase to pick up a few extras along the way.

Slide #10 (Map, compass, Constitution)

On every trip, travelers need a road map that will help them find their way and a compass to point them in the right direction. In P.E.O., our Constitution and Bylaws serve as our map and compass, defining our purpose, establishing our *Objects and Aims*, and giving us directions for every step of our journey. Jane is given a copy of our P.E.O. Constitution and Bylaws to study before her initiation.

(Map, compass and Constitution and Bylaws go into the suitcase.)

Slide #11 (Binoculars, P.E.O. Records)

Binoculars are a must for many trips. They help us look beyond ourselves to see the broader picture. Our travel consultants give Jane several issues of the P.E.O. Record, which will serve as her binoculars. From these she can learn more about our projects, our philosophy, our diverse membership and our outreach to the world-wide community.

(Jane puts binoculars around her neck and P.E.O. Records into her suitcase.)

Slide #12 (Women with binoculars, map, compass)

Our travel consultants will answer any questions Jane may have before she leaves. They want to be sure she is well prepared for making her decision to begin her lifetime odyssey with P.E.O. They make sure she knows to call with other questions that may arise as she studies the maps and thinks about the information they have shared with her. As she leaves, they tell her how much they are looking forward to having her join them on their journey, if that is her decision. They also assure her of their continued respect and friendship if she chooses for whatever reason not to undertake this journey.

(Jane leaves the agency with her partially packed suitcase; goes to stand just slightly off stage and writes her acceptance note and places it in the mail box. Travel agents get the note from the mailbox.)

Slide #13 (Membership card, passport)

Jane accepts the *Invitation to Membership* and is initiated into the local chapter. The day of her initiation, she is presented with her membership card, which becomes her 'Passport to Exciting Opportunities'.

(Jane and chapter president meet in center of stage, where Jane is presented with her membership card/passport which will go into the suitcase with the other items. Travel consultants return to table; Jane remains standing here through the next couple of sentences.)

Postinitiation counseling should take place soon after Jane's initiation and before the next chapter meeting. Jane has received her passport and is really on her way. She makes another trip to our travel consultants to firm up details for the first leg of her journey: active membership in a local chapter.

(Jane goes back to travel agents, suitcase and passport in hand, and is warmly greeted with hugs.)

Slide #14 (Postinitiation Counseling)

Postinitiation counseling is a vital, and often overlooked, step in assuring that our new traveler will have a successful journey and will grow into a strong, committed P.E.O. This is the time when specific information about chapter meetings is shared with Jane. Our travel consultants will be sure she understood the password and the meaning of our letters. They will explain the basic format of the meeting, from the three taps of the gavel at the beginning to the closing benediction. Such information will help Jane feel included and at ease.

Slide #15 (P.E.O. Star)

For the journey that Jane is beginning, she will have a guide – our P.E.O. star – to light her way. Each of the five cardinal virtues exemplified by our star – faith, love, purity, justice, and truth – will help light the way for her life journey.

(Large gold star with P.E.O. on front is given to Jane to tie onto her suitcase.)

Slide #16 (Chapter Yearbook)

For every journey we make, we need to have a sense of where we are going and some of the stops we will make along the way. It is time to add another item to Jane's suitcase: an itinerary. This comes in the form of the local chapter yearbook. The yearbook contains dates, times and places of all meetings. It will also provide Jane with addresses and phone numbers for all chapter members.

(Travel consultants hand a copy of the local chapter yearbook to Jane who studies it briefly before putting it into her suitcase.)

Slide #17 (Calendar, alarm clock)

Attending local chapter meetings will establish a firm foundation for all subsequent side trips and detours Jane may encounter on her journey. She will need to pack a calendar and a travel alarm clock to record the date of each meeting and to remind her to get there on time.

(Calendar and alarm clock go into the suitcase.)

Slide #18 (Objects and Aims, emblem)

Jane will be encouraged to memorize the *Objects and Aims* and to strive to apply its principles in her everyday life with all those with whom she comes into contact. As she starts to memorize, she will find special meaning in its beauty and simplicity, and begin to appreciate what a powerful blueprint for living is contained in its words.

Just as people on a group tour wear identifying badges, Jane will be encouraged to wear her P.E.O. emblem to each meeting and to all P.E.O. functions. She will learn that the emblem she was given to wear at her initiation was loaned by a member of the chapter and that hers, on loan from the sisterhood, has arrived.

(Travel consultant places pin on Jane.)

Slide #19 (Proceedings, Ohio P.E.O. website)

Travel brochures provide valuable insight into the places we plan to visit. Proceedings of our state convention function much like a travel brochure, listing resources throughout Ohio, contact people for when questions arise, and programs that can be downloaded or ordered. Our travel consultants provide Jane with a copy to read at her leisure, before returning it to the president. They also explain how Jane can access the Ohio and International Chapter websites, as both offer a wealth of information.

(Proceedings are held up before being given to Jane. Proceedings go into the suitcase.)

Slide #20 (Out of the Heart)

Well informed travelers usually want to do some in-depth reading about the history of the areas they will be visiting and learn about special people from the past who are connected with their journey. *Out of the Heart* provides a wonderful perspective on our seven Founders and describes the history of our first one hundred years. Jane will find this to be informative reading, providing valuable background information and insights into the Founders and our Sisterhood.

(Jane is given *Out of the Heart* to pack in her suitcase.)

Jane's suitcase is now equipped with all the basics she will need to begin her odyssey. She knows that it is good not to over pack for a trip; she has packed the essentials, but left room in her bag for additional items she may need as new horizons are opened on her journey. Like all travelers, she will learn that flexibility, an open mind, and a willingness to explore and learn are keys to a successful trip.

(Taking her suitcase, Jane leaves the travel agency amid friendly hugs. She remains on stage, slightly removed from the travel agency. Both consultants may remain at the table.)

Slide #21 (Animals)

As time passes, Jane becomes familiar with chapter procedures by attending and hosting chapter meetings, serving on a variety of committees, assisting with fundraising, learning the ins and outs of our six International projects and one Ohio project, and giving an occasional program. It is like returning again and again to a favorite vacation spot, where there is a comfortable familiarity in the midst of many opportunities for side trips and special activities. Jane is lovingly nurtured by her fellow travelers, experiencing quiet growth as new challenges and opportunities are encountered.

(Travel consultant gives Jane magnifying glasses, and Jane puts the glasses on.)

Slide #22 (Projects)

Jane finds one side-trip especially rewarding. Her eyes are opened further as she serves on her chapter's Projects Committee. In the process of assisting deserving women with their applications; she has the opportunity to become familiar with the grants, loans, scholarships and awards offered by P.E.O. She even hosts a gathering for young women considering Cottey College. But what she enjoys most is providing extra moral support and encouragement to the remarkable students her chapter sponsors.

Slide #23 (Officers)

In time, Jane is encouraged to explore a new path by serving as a chapter officer. She will need a flashlight to help her examine the dim corners of her new responsibilities.

(Travel consultant holds up flashlight.)

Slide #24 (IOLC)

Our *Instructions to Officers of Local Chapters* provides Jane with everything she will need to illuminate the unfamiliar aspects of her new office. Jane will find that serving as a chapter officer is a wonderful opportunity for growth and that she will be encouraged and supported by all of her sisters. As she spreads her wings, she will gain a deeper understanding of P.E.O.

(Hold up *Instructions to Officers of Local Chapters*. Flashlight, magnifying glasses and *Instructions to Officers of Local Chapters* are added to the suitcase.)

Slide #25 (Detour)

One day along her travels, Jane encounters a detour. She and her family are being transferred to another state. She anticipates some bumpy roads ahead, so she will pack a walking stick to help her along the way.

(Travel consultant holds up the walking stick.)

Slide #26 (Notice of Member Moving)

Our detour has a flag woman who will help reroute her along her journey. This individual also wears the hat of the local chapter corresponding secretary, who will use a *Notice of Member Moving* form to notify chapters or reciprocity groups in Jane's new home that she is moving to their area. She will find new sisters prepared to warmly welcome her to her new location. She may also refer to the *Guide for an Unaffiliate*.

Slide #27 (Directory of Presidents)

She may also wish to review the listing of Local Chapters and Presidents on the International website, under the Directory of Presidents. Her chapter's corresponding secretary or tech sister can assist her and provide a copy of names and addresses of chapter presidents in the area to which Jane is moving.

Occasionally when a member moves, she may not be contacted immediately by a new chapter and it is perfectly correct for her to take the initiative in contacting them. If Jane were to discover herself to be living in the same city as a distant cousin, she would not hesitate to call

and let the cousin know she had moved nearby. It is equally appropriate for her to contact her P.E.O. sisters in the area. Even though Jane's travels are taking her along a different route from that which she may have anticipated in the beginning, she is following the detour with a sense of excitement and anticipation. The spirit of adventure always holds a traveler in good stead.

(Guide for the Unaffiliate is packed in the suitcase. Jane and travel consultants leave stage, wave good-bye.)

Slide #28 (Anniversary Chapters)

We are going to leave Jane Doe now. She has met many wonderful women on her journey, all who have given her unlimited opportunities, personal growth and strong, lasting friendships. Her journey is not over. Jane has many more miles ahead of her. The sisterly love she has picked up along the way will continue to comfort her in all aspects of local chapter life as she travels many more miles in her journey. She will continue to explore new places, meet new people, expand her knowledge and grow in her commitment to P.E.O. Like all successful trips, hers has been the result of careful planning, well defined goals, participation, and expert advice.

She will return again and again to that favorite vacation spot in her local chapter, nurturing and being nurtured by her sisters. Her traveling companions have changed, and will continue to change, over time. In each place she will cherish the diversity of the women sharing her journey; the wisdom of age, the eagerness of youth and the productivity of the middle years. She will invite others to join her on the journey, knowing that new travelers are the life-blood of the trip, bringing excitement and new perspectives.

Slide #29 (Our Life Journey)

Whatever path Jane Doe chooses to take, we can be assured that she will look ahead with eager anticipation. And like Jane, each of us will go on from today, guided by our star, sharing common directions, goals and ideals on a life journey made richer by the love and support of our P.E.O. sisters.

Adapted from Montana State Chapter 2012.