



## **Session One**

# **Welcome and Introductions**

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### **Time Allowed**

10 minutes

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### **Teaching Objectives**

- Develop rapport among participants and between participants and instructors.
  - Guide participants into the beginning of the session with the assurance that they will complete Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training with sufficient knowledge and awareness of resources to be effective troop leaders.
  - Allow participants and staff to introduce themselves and lay the groundwork for relaxed and effective interactions during the sessions of the training course.
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### **Materials Needed**

None

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### **Recommended Facility Layout**

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
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### **Delivery Method**

- Instructors greet participants and provide a heartfelt welcome to the training course.
  - Instructors suggest the format and kick off the introductions of participants and instructors.
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## **Presentation Procedure**

*Scoutmaster and  
Assistant Scoutmaster  
Leader Specific  
Training—Session 1  
PowerPoint® slides  
Slide 1*

### ***Welcome***

New Scout leaders will come to Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training with a wide range of expectations, concerns, and levels of enthusiasm. Some new Scoutmasters can feel overwhelmed by the challenge of fulfilling their responsibilities successfully. Others may feel they know plenty already, even though much of what they know may not be absolutely accurate.

Beginning with the welcome, instructors create an atmosphere of sharing and support that will carry through all sessions of the course. Instructors can model the behavior and leadership attitudes that new Scoutmasters can apply when they return home own Scout troops, and they can interact with participants to emphasize that instructors are Scout leaders, too, and are there to help. At one time they, too, were new Scoutmasters. They can relate to the concerns, anticipation, and anxieties of the participants.

Most of all, instructors can make the job of being a Scoutmaster seem possible and can assure participants that they will be provided with the resources and knowledge to become successful troop leaders.

### ***Introductions***

Introductions should be kept brief and to the point, especially if a group is large. In a large group, save time by having participants meet only those sitting at their table or in their section of the room. They can get to know the rest of the participants in the hours to come.

Instructors can keep their own introductions short, too. Focus on how you became involved in Scouting, assuring participants that you were once in the same position as they find themselves—new to the responsibilities of being a Scoutmaster and perhaps a bit unsure of exactly what to do next.

Do not overwhelm participants with your own Scouting background or create the impression that there are secret or difficult aspects of becoming a good Scout leader. Whenever possible, convey the ideas that successfully leading a troop is well within the abilities of well-intentioned adults and that Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training will help them to succeed immediately.

### ***Boy Scout Handshake***

Demonstrate the Boy Scout handshake and describe its meaning. Ask participants to greet the people around them with the Scout handshake.

#### **Scout Handshake**

Made with the hand nearest the heart and is offered as a token of friendship. Extend your left hand to another Scout and firmly grasp his left hand. The fingers do not interlock.

—*Boy Scout Handbook*,  
Chapter 1, "The Adventure Begins"

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## Session One

### Course Overview

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#### Time Allowed

15 minutes

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#### Teaching Objectives

- Provide an overview of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training.
  - Explain the importance of attending Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills training and announce the times and places of upcoming courses.
  - Establish the importance of *The Scoutmaster Handbook* and *The Boy Scout Handbook* as the texts for this training and as the primary sources of information for all Scoutmasters.
  - Continue to build participants' enthusiasm for becoming Scoutmasters and to increase their confidence in their abilities to succeed as troop leaders.
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#### Materials Needed

- Copies of the course schedule for this Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training (one per participant)
  - *The Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 33105 (One copy per instructor. Participants in this training should have brought their own copies.)
  - *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009A (One copy per instructor. Participants in this training need to have brought their own copies.)
  - PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
  - Flipchart or other means of writing discussion notes
  - Wall posters
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## Recommended Facility Layout

- Session meeting area. Participants should have comfortable places to sit at their patrol tables. That setting most often consists of tables accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol.
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## Delivery Method

- Instructor-led presentation and discussion
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## Presentation Procedure

Open this presentation by asking one of the participants to read aloud the first page of *The Boy Scout Handbook*:

<b>WELCOME TO THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA!</b>
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Millions of boys have been Scouts. They joined because they liked what the BSA had to offer. Now, Scouting welcomes you.

Scouting promises you the great outdoors. As a Scout, you can learn how to camp and hike without leaving a trace, and how to take care of the land. You'll study wildlife up close and learn about nature all around you. There are plenty of skills for you to master, and you can teach others what you know. Everybody helping everyone else—that's part of Scouting, too.

Scouting promises you friendship. Members of the troop you join may be boys you already know, and you will meet many other Scouts along the way. Some may become life-long friends.

Scouting promises you opportunities to work toward the Eagle rank. Set positive goals for yourself and then follow clear routes to accomplish them.

Scouting promises you tools to make the most of your family, your community, and your nation. The good deeds you perform every day will improve the lives of those around you. You will be prepared to aid others in time of need.

Scouting promises you experiences and duties that will help you mature into a strong, wise adult. The Scout Oath and the Scout Law can guide you while you are a Scout and throughout your life.

Adventure, learning, challenge, responsibility—the promise of Scouting is all this and more. Are you ready for the adventure to begin? Then turn the page and let's get started.

—*The Boy Scout Handbook*

Lead participants in a discussion that brings out these key ideas:

- The intent of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training
- The continuum of training for new Scoutmasters
- An overview of the three sessions of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training
- Written resources for Scoutmasters

### ***The Intent of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training***

*"Adventure, learning, challenge, responsibility—the promise of Scouting is all this and more..."* This is a big, big promise. It is a promise to boys that we will help you keep by teaching you the things you must know, be, and do. Boys are looking for all of these, as well as opportunities to make friends, to lead, to be of service, to do the right thing, and to learn how to make ethical decisions.

Delivering the promise of Scouting—that's why we are here.

Thousands of volunteers have been in your position before—setting out on the fresh adventure of leading a Scout troop. And thousands before you have succeeded. Some of them struggled along the way, and to be perfectly truthful, there will be times ahead that will challenge you, as well. But your satisfaction will be tremendous when you see what value there is in bringing the Scouting program to life for the boys in your community.

Over the next several hours, we will explore what it takes to be a Scoutmaster. We'll talk about what is expected of you and what you can expect from the Boy Scouts of America. We'll also talk about concerns you may have, and we'll address your questions and doubts.

By the time we are done, you will be confident of your ability to succeed as the leader of a Scout troop. The very fact that you are here is evidence that you are willing to make your best effort. You have your own experiences to draw upon and your own sets of skills. Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training will build on your strengths by providing you with the additional skills and strategies to see you through the first months of troop leadership. You will also gain the knowledge to utilize BSA

resources to ensure that your troop continues to deliver the promise of Scouting.

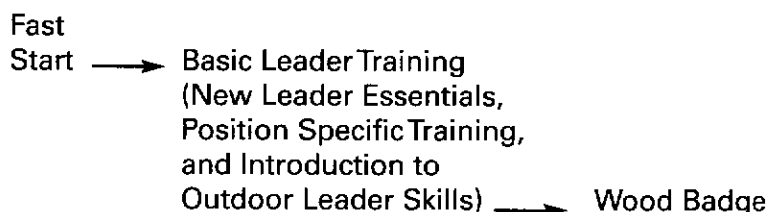
### ***The Continuum of Training for New Scoutmasters***

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training is the second of three training opportunities in Basic Leader Training designed to bring new Scoutmasters quickly up to speed on the skills and concepts that will help them succeed. Fast Start Orientation is available for leaders to complete prior to meeting with Scouts for the first time.

Session 1, slide 2



#### **Training Continuum For Adult Leaders**



Everyone here will have already attended New Leader Essentials. Information presented during that session included a look at youth development, an overview of the basic structure and funding of BSA programs, a survey of a few of the resources available to unit leaders, and a brief review of the importance of ensuring that the Scouting experience is safe.

At some point, Scoutmasters will have the opportunity to attend Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills training. During those enjoyable sessions, unit leaders will review all of the outdoor skills that the BSA expects have been mastered by a First Class Scout. For Scoutmasters new to outdoor adventures, this will be a terrific opportunity to develop sufficient skill to help make outdoor program an essential aspect of their troops' activities. New Scout leaders experienced in various aspects of camping, hiking, and other outdoor skills can use this training to refine their knowledge, to learn how best to adapt their skills to support their troops' boy leaders, and to share what they know with others taking part in Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills training.



## **Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills Training**

- The course is an important and enjoyable part of the basic preparations to be a Scoutmaster.
- It covers the outdoor skills expected of a First Class Scout.
- Adult leaders who already know some of the skills may pass that section of the course by demonstrating their abilities to an instructor.
- Adult leaders who have already completed Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills will not need to repeat the training.

After completing New Leader Essentials, Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills, Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters are considered trained and may wear the "Trained" patch on the uniform sleeve. Of course, training in the BSA never stops. All BSA leaders will discover that there are many supplemental opportunities for learning. For example, each leader is encouraged to attend a Wood Badge course on leadership within two years of joining the organization.

### **SCOUTMASTER AND ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER LEADER SPECIFIC TRAINING**

Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training lies between New Leader Essentials and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills. Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training presents the skills and methods Scoutmasters can use to organize a Boy Scout troop and support its boy leaders in developing and delivering an effective, exciting Scouting program.

#### **Instructors' Note**

*Distribute copies of the following schedule for Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. Adjust the sample to fit the needs of the current training sessions.*

Session 1, slide 3

#### **Session One—Getting Started: The Role of the Scoutmaster in a Boy-Led Troop**

Preopening Activity

Welcome and Participant Introductions

Course Overview

The Role of the Scoutmaster

Troop Organization

Troop Meetings

Working With Boy Leaders/The Patrol Method

Patrol Leaders' Council

**Session Two—Lighting the Fire: The Outdoor Program and the Advancement Program**

Preopening Activity

Introduction

Sizzle of the Outdoor Program

Nuts and Bolts of the Outdoor Program

Outdoor Program Patrol/Group Activity

Reflection

Advancement Program

**Session Three—Keeping It Going: Program Planning and Troop Administration**

Preopening Activity

Introduction

Program Planning

Membership

Paperwork

Finances

The Uniform

Other Training Opportunities

Summary and Closing

## Instructors' Note

- An important quality of BSA leadership development is that participants are not kept in the dark about any aspect of their training. Whenever appropriate, they should receive all the information and resources that will help them succeed. Providing them with copies of the schedule for this training is a perfect example.
- The course schedule to be distributed should be correctly formatted either for a training that occupies three evenings or for a session conducted during one day of a weekend. In either case, the first item on the schedule should be the New Leader Essentials training that immediately precedes this Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training.
- At the discretion of the instructor for this presentation, the course schedule could be mailed to participants before training begins. This will allow them to familiarize themselves with the course well in advance.

### **Overview of the Three Sessions of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training**

Take a look at the schedule and you can see that Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training is divided into three sessions, each focusing on several of the eight methods of Scouting:

#### **Session One—Getting Started: The Role of the Scoutmaster in a Boy-Led Troop**

- Ideals
- Patrol Method
- Association With Adults
- Personal Growth
- Leadership Development
- Uniform

#### **Session Two—Lighting the Fire: The Outdoor Program and the Advancement Program**

- Ideals
- Outdoors
- Advancement
- Association With Adults
- Personal Growth

### **Session Three—Keeping It Going: Program Planning and Troop Administration**

- Ideals
- Association With Adults
- Personal Growth
- Leadership Development
- Uniform

#### ***Written Resources for Scoutmasters***

##### **THE SCOUTMASTER HANDBOOK**

Nearly everything you need to know about being a Scoutmaster can be found in *The Scoutmaster Handbook*. We will reference it many times during Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. In fact, one way to think about this training is that it teaches you to find the answers you need in *The Scoutmaster Handbook*.

##### **THE BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK**

As you can gather from the opening passages we read about the promise of Scouting, *The Boy Scout Handbook* reflects the heart and soul of Boy Scouting. It is the book that each Scout in your troop will have, both as a guidebook and a manual of possibilities. Between its covers you can find the lore of Scouting that has evolved from 1910 to the present. *The Boy Scout Handbook* is a guide to outdoor skills, to the values of Scouting, and to ways in which the Scouting program can be delivered.

##### **OTHER BSA LITERATURE**

Beyond the handbooks for Scoutmasters and for Boy Scouts, the BSA offers a host of written resources such as *Troop Program Resources* and *Guide to Safe Scouting*. We will discuss those during this training when their importance arises.

##### ***Summary***

Being a good Scoutmaster is all about delivering the promise of Scouting to boys. This training will provide the skills you need to lead a troop successfully. The resources of the BSA will give you the background information to help you succeed.

We do not expect you to remember every word that is said here. However, you should remember where you can look for the answers you need.

Session 1, slide 4



For example, during the New Leader Essentials training, you were presented with the values and methods of Scouting. Can you remember them all? Perhaps not from memory, but you can certainly list them if you turn to Chapter 2, "The Adventure of Scouting," in *The Scoutmaster Handbook*.

These are the aims of Scouting:

- Character development
- Citizenship training
- Mental and physical fitness

The methods of how you can deliver on those aims and on the promise of Scouting are listed on the pages that follow. They are the core of our discussions in this course.

**Open the discussion to questions and comments relating specifically to the material covered in this presentation.**

(In large groups, it may be most efficient to assign each instructor to answer the questions of one or two patrols rather having one instructor attempt to facilitate the questions of all the participants at once.)

Move directly into the next presentation—"The Role of the Scoutmaster."

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## **Session One**

# **The Role of the Scoutmaster**

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### **Time Allowed**

20 minutes

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### **Teaching Objectives**

- Discuss the qualities of a Scoutmaster.
  - Explore what a Scoutmaster must be, know, and do.
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### **Materials Needed**

- Flipchart, chalkboard, or other format for writing and displaying notes
  - PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
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### **Recommended Facility Layout**

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
  - Posters on the walls
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### **Delivery Method**

- Instructor-led discussion built on participants' answers to key questions
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## Presentation Procedure

In the course overview, we looked at the contents of the three sessions:

- Session One—Getting Started: The Role of the Scoutmaster in a Boy-Led Troop
- Session Two—Lighting the Fire: The Outdoor Program and the Advancement Program
- Session Three—Keeping It Going: Program Planning and Troop Administration

You'll notice that the role of the Scoutmaster comes first. Everything else—the outdoors, advancement through the ranks, planning, and administration—is an outgrowth of Scoutmasters realizing what their role should be and then fulfilling the expectations of that role.

In fact, all three sessions of this training explore what is expected of a Scoutmaster and how you can do what is expected of you. To begin with, let's look at the larger expectations.

### ***The Qualities of a Scoutmaster***

Ask participants to describe their image of a Scoutmaster. List their comments on a flipchart. You can spur conversation by referencing famous depictions of Scoutmasters (Norman Rockwell's painting "The Scoutmaster," Fred McMurray's role in the movie "Follow Me Boys," illustrations in various editions of *The Boy Scout Handbook*, etc.)

Among the items on the list may be some or all of the following:

- Works well with boys
- Cares about boys
- Teaches boys how to do things for themselves
- Understands the Scouting program
- Sets a positive example
- Is comfortable in the outdoors

Explain that all of these qualities can be divided into three categories:

- What a Scoutmaster must *be*
- What a Scoutmaster must *know*
- What a Scoutmaster must *do*

By recognizing what one must be, know, and do, a person is well on the way to successfully fulfilling the role of a Scoutmaster.



Session 1, slide 5



### **WHAT A SCOUTMASTER MUST BE**

- Be a good role model living by the Scout Oath and Law. The example you set is your most powerful teaching tool.
- Be a friend to the boys while working with them and guiding them through the Scouting program.
- Be a good example by wearing the Scoutmaster uniform properly and proudly.

Session 1, slide 6



### **WHAT A SCOUTMASTER MUST KNOW**

- Know that the Boy Scout program comes to life when boys are given the responsibility for being the leaders of their troop.
- Know that the best way to operate a troop is by the patrol method, with leadership responsibilities given to the boys.
- Know that you have the skill to deliver the promise of Scouting to the members of your troop.
- Know that there are valuable resources, especially other adult Scout leaders, training opportunities, and the literature of the Boy Scouts of America, to assist you every step of the way.

Session 1, slide 7



### **WHAT A SCOUTMASTER MUST DO**

- Do help boys develop into confident leaders by directing, coaching, supporting, and empowering them to operate their own troop.
- Do enjoy yourself. Having fun and finding satisfaction in Scouting is contagious. The Scouts in your troop will reflect your positive attitudes and infuse meetings and activities with their own good energy and joy.

### ***The Bottom Line***

To fulfill the role of a Scoutmaster, you must be, know, and do certain things, but they are well within your abilities. They are all aspects of caring for others, of drawing on available resources, and of using your own common sense. Of course, there are endless ways for Scoutmasters to fulfill their roles—ways as numerous as there are Scout leaders and boys interested in Scouting.

As a Scoutmaster, you can keep alive the flame of Scouting and see to it that a troop does its best to deliver the promise of Scouting to boys, to their parents, and to the troop's chartered organization. Along the way, you will have many opportunities to help fulfill the mission of the Boy Scouts of America—*To prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the*

values of the Scout Oath and Law, and know that you can do this through an active, well-rounded Scouting program.

In the presentations that follow this one, we will examine the structure of a boy-led troop and specific ways you can successfully deliver the promise of Scouting. Before moving on, let's open the discussion for your questions and comments about the role of the Scoutmaster.

**Open the discussion to questions and comments relating specifically to the material covered in this presentation.**

#### **Instructors' Note**

*This is a good opportunity for participants to raise questions and concerns about what is expected of them as Scoutmasters and how they can fulfill those expectations. Take the time to answer questions that relate directly to the material presented up to this point in Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. Write questions that require more in-depth discussion on a flipchart and post them on the meeting room walls. Assure participants that the answers to those questions will come later in this training.*

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## Session One

# Troop Organization

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### Time Allowed

15 minutes

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### Teaching Objectives

- Lay out the structure of a Boy Scout troop.
  - Describe the roles of a troop's key boy leaders.
  - Explain the supportive functions of the troop's adult leaders, including the Scoutmaster and assistant Scoutmasters and the members of committees and of district and council staffs.
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### Materials Needed

- *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009B
  - *The Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 33105
  - PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
  - Flipchart, chalkboard, or other format for writing and displaying notes
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### Recommended Facility Layout

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
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### Delivery Method

- Instructor-led discussion
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## Presentation Procedure

Ask participants to turn in their *Scoutmaster Handbooks* to the opening page of Chapter 3, "The Boy-Led Troop." Ask a participant to read aloud the sentences highlighted in the box:

One of your most important challenges as Scoutmaster is to train boy leaders to run the troop by providing direction, coaching, and support. They will make mistakes now and then and will rely upon you to guide them. But only through real hands-on experience as leaders can boys learn to lead.

— *The Scoutmaster Handbook*,  
Chapter 3, "The Boy-Led Troop"

Explain that frequent reference has been made during this training to the idea of a boy-led troop. Among the roles of a Scoutmaster, we discussed the fact that a Scoutmaster should allow boys the freedom and the guidance to assume leadership of their own troop. Throughout the rest of this training, we will often make reference to *the boy-led troop*. Let's take the time now to figure out exactly what that means, beginning with the structure of a Boy Scout troop.

### **Structure of a Boy Scout Troop**

#### **Instructors' Note**

Session 1, slide 8

Ask participants to turn to the chart titled "Sample Junior Leader Organizational Chart for a Small Troop" at the end of Chapter 3 in *The Scoutmaster Handbook*.

During the discussion of troop structure, recreate the chart using a flipchart or other visual aid. By highlighting the chart for a small troop, instructors can more easily lay out the basic organization of a troop. With that established, they can then reference the "Sample Junior Leader Organizational Chart for a Large Troop" on the facing page to illustrate how the structure of a troop can expand to accommodate more members.

The basic structure of a Boy Scout troop has served Scouting well since 1910. Its success and longevity can be traced to a variety of factors:

- It provides a place for every troop member to feel a sense of belonging.
- It offers a framework for boys to take on leadership roles that are appropriate for their skills and experience.
- It encourages boys to lead the troop with the guidance and support of adults.

The building blocks of a Scout troop are its patrols.

### **Patrols**

A patrol is the basic organizational unit of a Scout troop. Composed of up to eight boys, it is a good size for Scouts to plan and carry out projects, to hike and camp together, to take part in troop games and events, and to practice leadership on a manageable scale.

There are three kinds of patrols:

- *New-Scout patrols* (for youth just joining the troop)
- *Regular patrols* (usually for boys who have earned at least the First Class award)
- *Venture patrols* (made up of older Scouts)

The number and the kinds of patrols a troop has depends upon the age of the Scouts, their interests, and their needs. Patrols are also sometimes organized according to the neighborhoods in which boys live.

### **Instructors' Note**

*Draw the framework of a troop on a flipchart or present it via PowerPoint®, overhead projections, or a felt board. The sample troop should have one new-Scout patrol, two regular patrols, and one Venture patrol. Explain that, for the sake of clarity, the example you have chosen is of a small troop with a simple structure. As the discussion of troop structure continues, add the subsequent troop leaders to the chart.*

### **Descriptions of Patrols**

Ask participants to turn to the discussion of patrols in *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, Chapter 4, "The Boy-Led Patrol." Summarize the descriptions and answer any questions participants may have about patrols.

## REGULAR PATROLS

*Regular patrols* are usually composed of Scouts who have completed the First Class requirements or who are in at least the seventh grade. They are made up of boys similar in age, achievement, and interests. Most of the boys have been around Scouting long enough to be comfortable with patrol and troop routines, and they are well versed in camping, hiking, cooking, and Scouting's other basic skills. On the other hand, lots of troops have regular patrols composed of boys of various ages.

## NEW-SCOUT PATROLS

Many troops have a *new-Scout patrol* for 11-year-old boys who are just joining. The new Scouts function together as a patrol during their first year in the troop, working toward their goal of completing the requirements for the First Class rank. Some troops phase their new Scouts into regular patrols after three to six months. (A new-Scout patrol may hold frequent patrol leader elections so that each boy has the opportunity to serve for one or two months.)

An older, experienced Scout will be appointed by the senior patrol leader, with the advice of the Scoutmaster, to serve as troop guide for the new-Scout patrol. The guide helps new Scouts through the early challenges of troop membership. An assistant Scoutmaster should work closely with the troop guide and the new-Scout patrol to ensure that each Scout has every opportunity to succeed right from the start.

## VENTURE PATROLS

A *Venture patrol* is an *optional* older-boy patrol within a troop. These boys (ages 13 through 17) have the maturity and experience to plan and take part in more challenging high-adventure outings and sports activities. An assistant Scoutmaster assigned to the Venture patrol can help the Venture patrol leader and other patrol members transform their plans into action.

A Venture patrol can be instrumental in keeping older boys interested and active in Scouting. About half of all troops currently incorporate one or more Venture patrols in their programs. Every troop with older boys should strongly consider establishing a Venture patrol.

## ***Patrol Leaders***

Each patrol in a troop elects a patrol leader. The patrol leader takes a leading role in planning and conducting patrol meetings and activities, and represents the patrol at meetings of the patrol leaders' council. Each patrol leader can appoint an assistant patrol leader to serve with him.

(Participants can find more information on patrol leaders in *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, Chapter 4, "The Boy-Led Patrol.")

### **SENIOR PATROL LEADER**

The senior patrol leader assumes the most leadership responsibility of any Scout in the troop. Elected by all troop members, the senior patrol leader does not belong to a patrol, but rather provides leadership for everyone in the troop. Depending on the size and needs of the troop, the senior patrol leader can appoint one or more assistant senior patrol leaders to take on some of the obligations of troop leadership.

The senior patrol leader is the troop member with whom the Scoutmaster works most directly. By helping the senior patrol leader prepare to lead troop meetings and activities, and by being on the sidelines to coach and support the senior patrol leader during those events, a Scoutmaster can ensure that the senior patrol leader succeeds, has fun, acquires leadership skills, and enables the troop to be boy-led.

### ***Patrol Leaders' Council***

The patrol leaders' council is the primary leadership body of the troop. It is composed of the senior patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, the patrol leaders, and any troop guides.

Important functions of the patrol leaders' council are planning the troop's overall program, leading the preparations for troop meetings and campouts, and ensuring that all troop events are efficient, interesting, and well run.

(The responsibilities and activities of the patrol leaders' council will be discussed more fully at the end of Session One.)

### ***Other Troop Leadership Positions***

As a troop grows in size, the Scoutmaster may expand the organizational chart to include other positions of leadership—quartermaster, scribe, historian, librarian, instructor, chaplain aide, and junior assistant Scoutmaster. Den chiefs and Webelos den chiefs may also be appointed to provide leadership opportunities and to strengthen the relationship between a Cub Scout pack and the troop.

Adding some or all of these positions can open up leadership opportunities to more Scouts and can spread the tasks of the troop among a larger number of its members.

### ***Troop Elections***

Elections for patrol leaders and senior patrol leader are conducted by many troops once every six months. This calendar allows boys time to learn their new roles and to develop as

leaders in the troop. Other troop leadership posts are appointed positions that can be used to offer other Scouts leadership opportunities that match their current skills and potential.

### ***Adult Leadership Positions in a Scout Troop***

So far in this presentation, we've discussed the troop leadership positions held by the Scouts themselves. There's a good reason for this. We always want to keep the idea of a boy-run troop in the forefront of our consideration of the job of a Scoutmaster. It is through the troop structure and through the boy leaders themselves that we can most effectively deliver the promise of Scouting.

Of course adults have vital roles to play in the continued growth and success of a Boy Scout troop. However, adults' roles are designed to allow the boys to learn and practice effective leadership skills, and to have the satisfaction of knowing that with the guidance, coaching, and support of adults, they did it themselves.

The adults most immediately involved with a troop are the Scoutmaster, assistant Scoutmaster, and troop committee.

### **SCOUTMASTER AND ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTERS**

We've already discussed the role of Scoutmaster. Here we will continue to explore the ways in which a Scoutmaster can succeed.

Assistant Scoutmasters are adult troop leaders who assist the Scoutmaster in providing supportive, coaching guidance to Scouts in a troop. An assistant Scoutmaster can also step in if the Scoutmaster must be absent from a meeting or troop activity.

Ideally, an assistant Scoutmaster can be assigned primary responsibility for the troop's new-Scout patrol while another assistant Scoutmaster takes on a similar role with the troop's Venture patrol. Assistant Scoutmasters may also be assigned primary responsibility for coaching and supporting boys holding other troop leadership positions—quartermaster, scribe, etc.

The presence of one or more assistant Scoutmasters at troop meetings and Scouting events can enrich these experiences for troop members and other adult leaders. Their presence can also fulfill the BSA's safety standard of two-deep adult leadership at all Scouting activities.

Session 1, slide 9

### ***Troop Committee***

The troop committee is an important part of a troop's support team. The committee may be seen as the "board of directors"



of a troop. Members are often parents of boys in the troop and chartered organization members who are interested in youth programs. The committee is composed of a minimum of three members, one who serves as committee chair. There is no maximum number of committee members.

The relationship between the Scoutmaster and the troop committee should be one of friendship and trust. Difficult issues are sure to confront troop leaders now and then. The Scoutmaster should be able to turn to the committee at any time for assistance, support, and encouragement.

Troop committee members new to their positions attend the Troop Committee Challenge, a three-hour training course. Scoutmasters are encouraged to go through that training, too, especially in the company of members of their own troops' committee members. The training is designed to help the committee become a team that effectively supports the troop and the Scoutmaster.

(For a listing of some of the responsibilities of a troop committee, see *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, Chapter 16, "Chartered Organizations and Troop Committees.")

Scoutmasters should never feel that they must go it alone. The troop committee is there to shoulder much of the weight of making a troop a success, freeing Scoutmasters to invest their time and energy in areas of leadership where they can be most effective.

### ***Where Boy Scouts Come From and Where They Go***

Many boys joining a Boy Scout troop have had good experiences as members of Cub Scout packs and Webelos dens. When they are old enough, the transition into a Boy Scout troop can be a natural step in their progression through the Scouting program.

Older Boy Scouts can maintain their interest in a troop's program by forming a Venture patrol that will allow them to embark on high-adventure activities designed to recognize their levels of skill and maturity.

Where these units exist, older Scouts may make the transition from a Scout troop into a Varsity team or a Venturing crew.

### **Varsity Scouting**

Varsity Scouting is an exciting program of the Boy Scouts of America for boys ages 14 to 17. Unlike a Venture patrol, which is part of a Boy Scout troop, a Varsity Scout team stands alone, meeting and conducting activities apart from any troop. The chartered organization sponsoring a Varsity team may also sponsor a Cub Scout pack and a Boy Scout

troop, allowing boys to move up through the units as they become older. Using the formats of participatory sports and high adventure pursuits, Varsity Scouting is structured around five areas of emphasis:

- Advancement
- High Adventure/Sports
- Personal Development
- Service
- Special Programs and Events

### **VENTURING**

Venturing is the BSA's youth development program for young men and women ages 14 to 20 who subscribe to the Venturing Code.

Many Venturing crews focus their attention on activities that encourage members to learn and practice advanced outdoor skills. Whitewater kayaking, rock climbing, sailing, scuba diving—the list is as long as the imaginations and dedication of the Venturers themselves. A Venturing crew may be formed by and for older members in a Scout troop or Varsity team who are seeking further Scouting opportunities and challenges.

### **Summary**

The organization of a Boy Scout troop provides a framework in which members can achieve the most possible from the Scouting program. It gives boys opportunities to learn and grow, and it offers a variety of challenges that can match their interests and their stages of development. It also involves adults in support of Scoutmasters, freeing them to do what they do best—help Scouts become effective troop leaders.

Scoutmasters fully utilizing the troop structure will find it to be an effective vehicle for delivering the promise of Scouting. They will also find that the driving force behind that structure are the concepts of the boy-led patrol and the boy-led troop.

The next presentation of this session will detail the troop meeting—one of the most visible ways that boys can plan and carry out the program of their troop.

**Open the discussion to questions and comments relating specifically to the material covered in this presentation.**

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**Announce a five-minute break.**

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## Session One

# Troop Meetings

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### Time Allowed

35 minutes

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### Teaching Objectives

- Explore the purposes of troop meetings.
  - Discuss the value of using the troop meeting plan.
  - Explain the importance of allowing a troop meeting to be planned, conducted, and reviewed by the boys themselves.
  - Review the vital role a Scoutmaster plays by providing coaching, support, and leadership to Scouts.
- 

### Materials Needed

- *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009B
  - Troop Meeting Planning Sheet (from *The Scoutmaster Handbook*)
  - *Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training* video, No. AV02V015
  - PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
  - Flipchart or other means of writing discussion notes
  - Posters
  - Video projection equipment
- 

### Recommended Facility Layout

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
-

## **Delivery Method**

- Instructor-led discussion supported by video clips
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## **Presentation Procedure**

Do boys join Scouting just to attend troop meetings? The answer is probably no. Ask them and they'll say they joined to have fun, set out on adventures, make friends, learn new skills, and explore the outdoors.

Troop meetings can be the catalyst that makes all of that possible for boys, but for that to happen, the meetings must be fast-paced, interesting, and varied. They need to lead toward exciting troop activities in the outdoors. They need to be the glue that holds a troop together.

They can be all of that and more. During this presentation, we'll talk about what a Scoutmaster can do to ensure the success of troop meetings.

### ***Why Have Troop Meetings?***

Troop meetings serve many purposes, including these:

- Motivating boys
- Strengthening patrols
- Promoting patrol spirit
- Encouraging Scouts to learn and practice Scouting skills
- Allowing Scouts to exercise leadership

As a tool for delivering the promise of Scouting, Troop meetings are especially effective because they are planned, organized, and carried out by the boys themselves. Scouts take ownership in the meetings and are empowered to lead the events that make up each meeting.

Of course, Scouting gives boys the resources they need to make their troop meetings successful. As adult leaders, you can provide the support and guidance that will allow them to make the most of those resources.

Perhaps the most important resource for helping boys develop effective troop meetings is the tried-and-true method called the troop meeting plan.

## USING THE TROOP MEETING PLAN

### Instructors' Note

*Ask participants to open their Scoutmaster Handbooks to the blank Troop Meeting Plan form in Chapter 5, "Troop Meetings." They can use this as a reference during the discussion that follows.*

The troop meeting plan is a format that has developed over many years of Scouting experience. It presents Scouts with a very effective way to put together troop meetings that are enjoyable, productive, and meaningful, and that stay within a reasonable timeframe.

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The meeting plan involves seven distinct steps:

- Preopening
- Opening
- Skills Instruction
- Patrol Meetings
- Interpatrol Activity
- Closing
- After the Meeting

### Instructors' Note

*In discussing the essential elements of a troop meeting, the following descriptions will be useful. Participants can also find this information in The Scoutmaster Handbook chapter on "Troop Meetings."*

#### 1. Preopening

As boys begin to arrive for a troop meeting, the senior patrol leader or an older Scout assigned by the senior patrol leader should get them involved in a game or project designed so that additional Scouts can join in as they show up. The preopening is often well-suited for the outdoors. The person in charge of the preopening activity should be ready to start at least 15 minutes before the scheduled beginning of the meeting. An assistant Scoutmaster may be assigned to coach and support the Scout leading the preopening. To keep meetings fresh, the preopening activity should not be the same every week.

## Instructors' Note

*Point out that participants have already taken part in a pre-opening activity—the get-acquainted game at the beginning of Session One. Instructors can use that example to highlight ways to ensure that a preopening is effective, enjoyable, and timely.*

### 2. Opening—5 minutes

The senior patrol leader calls the meeting to order at the appointed time, instructing Scouts to line up in formation by patrols. A patrol responsible for the opening might conduct a flag ceremony and then lead troop members in reciting the Scout Oath and Law.

## Instructors' Note

*Take this opportunity to model an opening ceremony. Ask one of the patrols to serve as a color guard. As the color guard conducts the ceremony, guide them through the steps and explain to the group as a whole what is happening and how it can most effectively be done by Scouts in a troop. A typical ceremony can follow these guidelines: An instructor in the role of senior patrol leader directs, "Color guard, raise the colors." The patrol leader of the color guard takes charge, calling the members of the troop to attention, asking them to make the Scout salute, then instructing the color guard to advance and present the colors. After the flag has been placed in the flagpole holder at the front of the room (the color guard may also present a troop flag), the patrol leader leads the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the Scout Oath and Law, then directs the color guard to retire. Variations on the opening ceremony may include other meaningful activities such as singing a patriotic song or presenting an historic American flag and explaining its history.*

### 3. Skills Instruction—15 to 20 minutes

Skills instruction might focus on skills Scouts will need to fully participate in an upcoming activity or skills they must acquire for advancement. A troop with boys of about the same experience level could separate into patrols so that groups will be of a size that maximizes learning experiences. Troops with Scouts of various ages and expertise may organize instruction at three levels—basic information for the new-Scout patrol, more advanced instruction for regular patrols, and the most challenging level for the Venture patrol.



Instruction should be hands-on learning rather than lecturing. Those leading the sessions will be Scouts serving as troop instructors with expertise in a particular area (they should be well-prepared ahead of time), adult Scout leaders, or outside authorities willing to share their knowledge with the troop.

#### **4. Patrol Meetings—5 to 20 minutes**

After skills instruction, the senior patrol leader will announce that it is time for each patrol to go to its designated meeting area, usually in the same room (or outdoor area) as the troop meeting. Each patrol leader takes charge of his patrol's meeting.

Matters to be handled during a patrol meeting include taking attendance, collecting dues, planning the patrol's involvement in upcoming troop activities, selecting menus for hikes and campouts, assigning patrol members to specific tasks, and working out any other details for the smooth operation of the patrol. The length of the patrol meetings will depend upon how much business the patrols must handle.

#### **5. Interpatrol Activity—15 to 20 minutes**

Led by the senior patrol leader or an assistant senior patrol leader, this part of the meeting allows all the patrols to interact with one another in a competition or in a cooperative effort. The activity could be a game that tests the skills Scouts are learning for an upcoming event—a race by each patrol to set up a tent properly, for example, or for patrol members to tie a set of knots correctly. Games involving teamwork and ethical decision making may also be appropriate.

#### **6. Closing—5 minutes**

The closing is the Scoutmaster's portion of the meeting. The Scouts should be paying attention. It may help to dim the lights and have everyone seated. Deal with any outstanding business first—reminders for upcoming meetings, outings, etc. Congratulate any Scouts who have advanced since the last meeting. This is also a good time to praise Scouts for Good Turns, positive ethical decisions, and jobs well done.

The heart of the closing is the Scoutmaster's Minute—your opportunity to share a story based on Scouting's values. Use a personal experience if you can, or one of the many Scoutmaster's Minutes found in the "Ready References" chapter of *The Scoutmaster Handbook*. The story should contain a thought for the Scouts to carry home with them. The closing may also include a simple ceremony, a song, or a prayer.

## 7. After the Meeting

At the end of the meeting, the service patrol for the week puts away any troop equipment and returns the room to its original condition.

Meanwhile, the senior patrol leader should meet briefly with members of the patrol leaders' council and the Scoutmaster to review the meeting, make plans for the next meeting, and decide which patrol will be the upcoming service patrol.

### ***Troop Meeting Plan Resources***

*The Scoutmaster Handbook* contains suggested troop meeting plans to fulfill some specific situations:

- **The New Troop's First Month**  
Getting a new troop organized and under way requires more hands-on involvement by adult leaders than does a veteran troop with experienced youth leaders. The four troop meeting plans designed for a new troop will guide its Scoutmaster through the first month of meetings.
- **Program Features**  
Later in Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training, we'll talk about long-range program planning for a troop. Chapter 6, "Program Features," of *The Scoutmaster Handbook* includes troop meeting plans for monthlong activities built around specific features—hiking, citizenship, first aid, and camping.

In three volumes, the BSA publication *Troop Program Features* contains guidelines for Scout involvement in an additional 36 exciting activities. Each feature includes the troop meeting plans to support that activity through a month of meetings and troop events.

Planning the troop's program for six months to a year in advance is an important part of offering an exciting, meaningful Scouting experience to boys. That aspect of troop leadership will be discussed more fully in Session Three of this training.

### ***The Scoutmaster's Role in Troop Meetings***

A troop meeting should be planned, organized, and run by the senior patrol leader, the patrol leaders, and other members of the troop. In fact, a Scoutmaster takes a prominent role in a troop meeting only three times:

- Offering the senior patrol leader support and guidance as the meeting begins.
- Sharing the Scoutmaster's Minute at the close of the meeting.

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- Meeting with the senior patrol leader and members of the patrol leaders' council to assess the meeting and review plans for the next meeting of the troop.

At first glance that may not seem to be much involvement for the primary adult leader of a Scout troop. The fact is, though, that troop meetings operating this way are an indication that the Scoutmaster has utilized time and energy where it is most effective—in preparing young people to take on the leadership of their troop and of its meetings.

One of the times when the Scoutmaster's input is most appropriate is during the planning that occurs before a meeting. During Session Three of this training we will explore the long-range planning that the patrol leaders' council, with the guidance of the Scoutmaster, uses to develop a troop's monthly and annual program. For now, though, let's look in on a Scoutmaster meeting with a senior patrol leader to review the plans for a troop meeting that is about to begin.

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### **Video No. 1—Before the Meeting**

This video shows a Scoutmaster meeting with a senior patrol leader as a troop meeting begins. Scouts in the background are taking part in the meeting's preopening activity. The Scoutmaster and senior patrol leader review the troop meeting plan, outlined on a page held by the senior patrol leader. The senior patrol leader assures the Scoutmaster that each step is prepared and that those responsible for each step are versed in what they will do.

Key to this video is the obvious supportive, coaching role of the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster allows the senior patrol leader to accept responsibility for the upcoming meeting. The Scoutmaster may have a suggestion or two that will aid the senior patrol leader in assuring the success of the meeting, but the Scoutmaster remains in a supportive, rather than directive, role. This is a boy-run troop; the Scoutmaster is at ease in allowing the senior patrol leader (and other youth members of the troop) to carry out the meeting plan.

### **DISCUSSION OF VIDEO NO. 1**

Lead participants in a discussion of what they have just seen, using their questions and observations to reinforce the importance of giving boy leaders the tools they need and the supportive guidance to plan and conduct their own

meetings. Among questions that may be helpful in this discussion are these:

- What is the role is the Scoutmaster playing?
- What is the role of the senior patrol leader?
- How is the Scoutmaster relating to the senior patrol leader?
- What expectations does the Scoutmaster have of the youth leaders of the troop? In what ways will the meeting be a success?

Of course, no meeting will be perfect. Even with careful adherence to the troop meeting plan, there will be portions of some meetings that are not very successful.

The important thing to keep in mind, though, is that Scouts who are given the responsibility, resources, and support to plan and run their own troop meetings are learning extremely important lessons in leadership. Their growing confidence and advancing leadership abilities are a direct result of the efforts of their Scoutmaster to provide support and guidance and then, for the most part, staying behind the scenes.

### ***Assessing a Troop Meeting***

The review process that occurs immediately after a troop meeting offers a Scoutmaster a valuable opportunity to interact with the troop's youth leaders to assess their performance and to refine plans for the next troop gathering. Let's see how this happens in one troop.

## **Video No. 2—After the Meeting**

The Scoutmaster supports the senior patrol leader as the senior patrol leader leads the group in a review of the just-completed troop meeting.

- They discuss what went well during the meeting, what could have been better, and how they can improve in the future.
- They also go over the troop plan for the next meeting to ensure that preparations have been made or will be made, and that at least one person is taking responsibility for the success of each portion of the upcoming meeting.
- They note which Scouts were missing from the meeting and make a plan for contacting each one to discover why the absence occurred. (This will be referenced during the discussion on membership in Session Three.)
- As the debriefing concludes, the senior patrol leader tells the Scoutmaster that he will call later in the week to bring the Scoutmaster up-to-date on preparations for the upcoming troop meeting.

The Scoutmaster's role in this video clip is, again, supportive. The boys themselves conduct the debriefing. The Scoutmaster can offer coaching, guidance, and encouragement but does not overstate his authority.

### **DISCUSSION OF VIDEO NO. 2**

What was the role of the Scoutmaster in this scene? What was the role of the Scouts?

Ask participants to consider and comment on this question: How do you know if a troop meeting was successful? (Allow participants time to respond. Whenever possible, use their responses to lead toward the following ideas.)

By visiting informally with the patrol leaders' council after a troop meeting, a Scoutmaster can help the senior patrol leader guide the others in considering these points:

- Did we accomplish a purpose?
- Was the meeting fast-paced and fun?
- Did we do something new and different?
- What worked well that we can do again?
- Where do we stand in regard to next week's meeting?

The answers to these questions will help the troop's junior leaders as they refine the plans for future meetings and review the assignments to be sure that each portion of the next meeting will be fully prepared and presented.

At the conclusion of the assessment, the Scoutmaster offered positive reinforcement to the troop's youth leaders and let them know that their efforts were valuable and their skill as leaders was growing.

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### **Video No. 3—Teaching the Senior Patrol Leader**

Scoutmaster and senior patrol leader get together at the senior patrol leader's home—family members are in view. The session occurs some days before the first troop meeting that the senior patrol leader will lead. The Scoutmaster is discussing with the senior patrol leader the ways in which he can conduct the various parts of the meeting. The Scoutmaster will be in the background during the troop meeting but will always be ready to help the senior patrol leader succeed. It is clear in the video that the Scoutmaster has great confidence in the senior patrol leader and is quite willing to remain on the sidelines while the senior patrol leader leads.

#### **DISCUSSION OF VIDEO NO. 3**

What is the role of the Scoutmaster in this scene? The role of the senior patrol leader?

Scoutmasters want their troop meetings to be successful, but they also want boys to succeed as leaders. What steps can Scoutmasters take to be sure that they are helping Scouts lead rather than taking too much of the lead themselves?

Note that the Scoutmaster did not meet privately with the senior patrol leader, but rather at the senior patrol leader's home with his parents present.

### ***Presentation Summary***

The framework offered by the troop meeting plan is a tool that helps shape a successful troop. It is most effective when adults remember that the BSA program is for boys. The best meetings are planned by its youth members, led by them, and assessed by them.

In the next presentation, we'll touch on some specific ways that Scoutmasters can work with boys, adjusting leadership styles to match various needs of individual boys and of the patrols and the troop acting as teams.

The key to successful troop meetings, though, and to delivering the Scouting program to boys, is to do all you can to empower Scouts to be the leaders of their patrols and their troop. Give them the direction and coaching they need to succeed, offer them opportunities to lead, then step back and allow them to learn leadership through hands-on experience. Supportive guidance and positive reinforcement on your part will do the rest.

*The Scoutmaster Handbook* chapter on "The Boy-Led Troop" includes a quote from the Chinese philosopher Sun-Tsu:

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"A leader is best when people barely know he exists; not so good when people obey and acclaim him; worse when they despise him. But a good leader who talks little when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, 'We did it ourselves.'"

—Sun-Tsu

By using the troop meeting plan and by focusing energy on helping boys prepare themselves to organize and lead their own patrols and troop, a Scoutmaster can experience the greatest satisfaction of all—giving young people the confidence, the abilities, and the successes to proclaim that "we did it ourselves."

**Open the discussion to questions and comments relating specifically to the material covered in this presentation.**

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## **Announce a five-minute break.**

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## **Session One**

### **Working With Boy Leaders/ The Patrol Method**

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#### **Time Allowed**

25 minutes

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#### **Teaching Objectives**

- Show how to establish an environment that is safe both physically and emotionally in which Scouts can learn, grow, and enjoy Scouting to the fullest.
  - Explain that listening well is the first step in using appropriate leadership styles.
  - Show how positive reinforcement is among the most valuable contributions adults can bring to the lives of young people.
  - Employ various supportive leadership styles, matching them to the needs of each Scout and to the patrols and troop as a whole. Among the most effective styles are *directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating*.
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#### **Materials Needed**

- *Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training* video, No. AV02V015
  - Equipment for showing videos
  - PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
  - Flipchart or other means of taking notes
  - Wall posters
-

## Recommended Facility Layout

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
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## Delivery Method

- Instructor-led discussion illustrated with video clips
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## Presentation Procedure

"The patrol method is not *a* way to operate a Boy Scout troop, it is the *only* way. Unless the patrol method is in operation you don't really have a Boy Scout troop."

—Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting

During the New Leader Essentials training, you were introduced to the basics of safe Scouting. Within a Scout troop, that means that meetings, activities, and all other Scouting events strive to be physically and emotionally safe for everyone taking part. In Session Two of this training, during our discussions of the outdoor program, we will discuss at length what you can do as Scoutmasters strive to establish and maintain that safe environment.

By your own example and by insisting on high standards from others, you can steer Scouts away from vulgar jokes, disrespectful comments, bullying and inappropriate teasing, and any other forms of inappropriate behavior that can diminish the Scouting experience or cast a negative light on the BSA. Every boy should feel welcomed into the troop, and every boy should have a feeling of security and opportunity once he has joined.

You as Scoutmaster set the tone of a troop by the ways in which you support and inspire Scouts and trust them with positions of leadership. You also have ultimate authority to deal with behavior that will not be tolerated in the troop. It is essential that you establish and maintain an environment that strives to be safe for Scouts both physically and psychologically.

Within that safe environment, there are tremendous opportunities for Scouts to grow and to thrive on the Scouting experience. There are a variety of ways that Scoutmasters can make that experience as rewarding as possible for Scouts and for themselves. Let's talk for a few minutes about working with boys.

**Open up the discussion of working with boys by asking participants this question: When it comes to working with boys, what are your greatest concerns?**

Write the responses on a flipchart and post the pages. Among the answers you may receive are that leaders may lose control, that Scouts won't have fun, that older troop members may tease younger boys, etc. (In a large group, this activity may be done by patrols.)

#### **Instructors' Note**

*If answers to this question are not forthcoming, instructors can generate discussion by sharing some of their own experiences. Other ways to give meaning to this discussion is to write the questions on flipchart pages, then cross out each question as the group discusses a satisfactory answer.*

Ask participants to turn in *The Scoutmaster Handbook* to the opening of Chapter 3, "The Boy-Led Troop." Invite someone to read aloud the sentences in the box at the end of the first paragraph:

One of your most important challenges as Scoutmaster is to train boy leaders to run the troop by providing direction, coaching, and support. They will make mistakes now and then and will rely upon you to guide them. But only through real hands-on experience as leaders can boys learn to lead.

— *The Scoutmaster Handbook*,  
Chapter 3, "The Boy-Led Troop."

Much of our discussion to this point in Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training has focused on the framework and mechanics of a Scout troop—how a troop is organized, how meetings are planned and run, where Scoutmasters can find written resources and other adults to help make a troop a success.

Throughout those discussions, we have made many references to the fact that a troop should be *boy-led*. We have emphasized that a boy-led troop offers the richest experiences for troop members and, in the long run, for adult leaders, too.

Now let's talk about some of the specific skills that you can use to work with boys, skills that will strive to ensure a safe environment for Scouting and that can empower boys to have the greatest success in planning and leading the programs of their troops.

### ***A Key to Troop Leadership***

Here's a basic fact of being a Scoutmaster: *Leadership is often a matter of providing what is missing.*

Let's say that again. *Leadership is often a matter of providing what is missing.*

Imagine a Scout troop lost in the woods. What do they need from a leader? Solicit responses from the participants and use their answers to guide the discussion, touching upon these ideas:

- Perhaps the Scouts need to be directed to go a certain way. If there is a storm coming or night is falling and their safety is at stake, a Scoutmaster's best course of action may be to step to the front of the line and get everyone quickly to shelter.
- Perhaps the Scouts need to be coached in using their maps and their compasses to figure out where they are and to chart their own course back to a known location.
- Perhaps the Scouts simply need to be supported in determining their own solution to the problem and then carrying it out.
- With some groups, a Scoutmaster may find it best to delegate to the senior patrol leader or other boy leaders the responsibility for managing the situation, then staying in the background ready to offer positive reinforcement or further guidance in the form of coaching or support.

In each of these situations, something was missing from the group. It might have been a lack of skill on the part of the Scouts or an inability to understand how to apply the skills they did possess. It may have been a lack of clear direction from the boy leaders of the troop to address the situation, or perhaps simply the need for encouragement to motivate them to draw upon the strengths they already possess.

Whatever the case, you as Scoutmasters can be most effective by adjusting your leadership styles to match the needs of your troop. Rather than taking the lead yourself in situations where the boys are capable of finding their own way, you can coach and support them in providing their own leadership. And when they do need more hands-on direction from you to teach them a skill, to set a boundary, or to move them to a new level of their development, you can do that, too.

In other words, you are providing your Scouts with what is missing.

But how do you discover what the missing elements are? The easiest way is also the most essential ... by being a good listener.

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### ***Listening***

One of your most powerful tools as a Scoutmaster is also one of the simplest—be a good listener. Why? What is it about listening that is so important to leadership?

Many of your most effective moments as a leader will occur when you are simply paying close attention to the words and actions of your Scouts.

- One value of listening is that it lets boys know that you care. You are valuing their thoughts. You are giving weight to their ideas. You are opening lines of communication that can lead to fresh ways of doing things. For many boys, having an adult pay attention to them through careful listening is a tremendously important experience.
- A second value of listening is that it will give you information about the current status of each boy in your troop. It can help you understand the stage of development of the troop itself.

Listen to the Scouts in your troop. Make yourself available to them during Scoutmaster conferences, on hikes and campouts, and on other occasions when they want to talk. Often they will simply be eager to share the excitement of a moment or the pride of having learned a new skill or completed a requirement. At other times they may have concerns about something happening in the troop or in their lives. Train yourself to pay attention to what they are saying and to listen without passing judgment. When you are willing to hear what they want to share, you can address issues in ways that are coherent, meaningful, and effective.

— *The Scoutmaster Handbook*,  
Chapter 11, "Working with Boys"

### ***Positive Reinforcement***

It is impossible to underestimate the effects of positive reinforcement. Seek out opportunities to "catch Scouts doing something good" and then praise them for it. Help them realize when they have done worthwhile deeds, and acknowledge their acts of kindness, good will, and sincere effort.

The role of positive reinforcement is itself reinforced through the BSA's advancement program, recognizing Scouts who have achieved specific goals along the trail to Eagle. Just as important, though, is the sincere support that adults can offer young people throughout their experience within and beyond Scouting.

Another way to look at positive reinforcement is to consider its place in the larger context of Scouting. A Scout is Friendly. A Scout is Kind. A Scout is Trustworthy. In the way we treat others, be they boys in a troop, fellow adult leaders, or individuals with no connection to the BSA, our pledge to conduct our lives according to the Scout Law provides us with the guidance to offer the best possible support to those around us.

### ***Matching Leadership Styles to the Needs of Scouts, Patrols, and Troops***

By listening well and by paying attention to other clues provided by Scouts, a Scoutmaster can get a sense of the style of leadership needed in a given situation by a boy, by a patrol, and by a troop.

One way to think about approaches to leadership is this progression of styles:

- Directing
- Coaching
- Supporting
- Delegating

Each fills a particular need. Each can supply what is missing in a given situation or to an individual or team at a certain point in their development.

#### **DIRECTING**

For a boy new to Scouting, for a Scout taking on a new leadership position, or for a troop undertaking a fresh challenge, what is often missing is a sense of structure and an understanding of what Scouts are supposed to do. A Scoutmaster can fill that need through **directing**—that is, giving clear guidelines. Telling Scouts, "Have the members of your patrol use buckets of water to put out the campfire, and then we can remove any traces that it was here," is one example of directing.

#### **COACHING**

As Scouts, patrols, and a troop are becoming more comfortable with their new roles and activities, a Scoutmaster can begin step to the sidelines and allow boys to assume more responsibilities. Through **coaching**, the Scoutmaster contin-

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ues to provide guidance and praise, but also gives Scouts more room to initiate action, exercise their own judgment, and learn from their own mistakes.

Here's one way coaching works. A Scoutmaster shows a Scout how to do a skill, then the Scout demonstrates his growing mastery of the skill by demonstrating it to the Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster can provide feedback that encourages learning, ensures that the Scout understands the skill, and helps him understand why some things are done a certain way. In simple terms, coaching can often be a form of "show and do."

### **SUPPORTING**

Over time, the youth leaders of the troop should become efficient, confident, and independent. That growth will be reflected in patrols and a troop that are developing into more productive teams. A Scoutmaster's leadership recognizes this evolution by shifting from coaching to **supporting**—providing Scouts with the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, then stepping out of the way to let them thrive. Whenever necessary, the Scoutmaster provides supportive guidance, suggests alternative ways of doing things, and offers positive reinforcement, but he or she also makes it clear that the boys themselves are in charge and that the responsibility for much of what happens in the troop is up to them.

### **DELEGATING**

As individuals and as a team, members of a Scout troop can reach a stage of high productivity. Youth leaders plan and carry out worthwhile troop meetings that lead to exciting outdoor adventures and other troop events, and have the sense that "we did it ourselves." A Scoutmaster who has helped a troop reach this stage can again shift leadership styles, this time to **delegating**. The Scoutmaster is shifting most of the responsibility for the success of the troop to the boy leaders.

## Video No. 4—Leadership Styles

The video gives brief illustrations of a Scoutmaster using four styles of leadership:

- Directing
- Coaching
- Supporting
- Delegating

These are presented with four mini-scenarios in which Scouts have a few sentences to suggest the stage of development of their team (i.e., patrol or troop), followed by the Scoutmaster's response using the appropriate leadership style.

### DISCUSSION OF VIDEO NO. 4

Lead participants in a discussion of what they have just seen, using their questions and observations to reinforce the idea of matching leadership styles to the needs and developmental stages of individuals, patrols, and the troop.

A Scoutmaster will be continually challenged to provide the appropriate leadership style for the situation. By listening carefully and observing the actions and attitudes of Scouts, a Scoutmaster will have the greatest possibility of using a leadership style that is appropriate for the situation and effective in advancing the development of individuals and of patrols and the troop.

Note that a Scoutmaster's leadership styles will not always follow a steady progression from directing to coaching to supporting to delegating. New boys will always be joining the troop. Scouts should regularly be assuming new leadership positions. Unexpected challenges both within and outside of Scouting can have significant effects on the boys in a troop. Scoutmasters should not be surprised to find themselves moving forward and backward through the progression of leadership styles.



### ***What Scouting Can Provide a Boy***

In bringing this presentation to a close, let's turn to *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, Chapter 11, "Working With Boys," and the passage titled "What Scouting Can Provide a Boy."

As we discuss leadership skills and Scoutmaster responsibilities and all the rest, it's important to remind ourselves now and then that our efforts to do the best we can as leaders



have great rewards. Among the most important are what Scouting can provide a boy.

(Ask a participant to read this passage aloud.)

### **What Scouting Can Provide a Boy**

- The sense of belonging to a group
- Achievement and recognition
- Self-esteem
- Confidence in himself
- Self-discipline
- Self-reliance
- Healthy interactions with others
- Importance and effectiveness of teamwork

— *The Scoutmaster Handbook*,  
Chapter 11, "Working With Boys"

There are many approaches that Scoutmasters can use to help Scouting provide the most for boys. Listening well is the beginning. Providing an appropriate style of leadership is valuable, as well. But underlying it all is the willingness to seek out good in young people and to support them with positive reinforcement.

**Open the discussion to questions and comments relating specifically to the material covered in this presentation.**

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## **Session One**

### **Patrol Leaders' Council**

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#### **Time Allowed**

20 minutes

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#### **Teaching Objectives**

- Understand the purpose for and importance of the patrol leaders' council.
  - Explore ways in which a Scoutmaster can support and guide the patrol leaders' council as it plans the troop's program and activities.
  - See how the patrol leaders' council and the Scoutmaster can work together when Scout events or meetings do not go well.
  - Review the key points of Session One.
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#### **Materials Needed**

- *Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training* video, No. AV02V015
  - Equipment for video presentation
  - PowerPoint® slides or overheads from CD, if desired
  - Wall posters
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#### **Recommended Facility Layout**

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
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## Delivery Method

- Instructor-led discussion illustrated by several video clips

## Presentation Procedure

This is the last presentation of this first session of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. In pulling together the various threads that have been presented so far, it seems appropriate to make the patrol leaders' council the subject of this discussion, for it is the vehicle through which a Scoutmaster can ensure that a troop is, in fact, boy-run and uses the patrol method.

Considering what you know already about how a troop is structured and how it offers opportunities for boys to determine what will happen and then lead those activities, several points should be clear:

- Planning is critical to the success of a troop and its program. We have already seen several examples of planning including the Scoutmaster meeting with the senior patrol leader days before a meeting and a subsequent discussion with the senior patrol leader as a troop meeting is beginning.
- The commitment of the boys to the troop and the program is also critical. One way to ensure that commitment is to give them the responsibility for doing the planning.
- Meetings of the patrol leaders' council are opportunities for longer-range planning. The boy leaders of the troop can determine the activities of a troop for weeks and months to come, and they can determine who will make them happen and how.

Session 1, slide 21



### ***The Patrol Leaders' Council***

The patrol leaders' council allows the senior patrol leader, patrol leaders, and troop guides to plan the troop's program for the coming month and to assess the progress of the current month's program. It is also an opportunity for patrol leaders to present the ideas and concerns of patrol members to the troop's leadership. The senior patrol leader conducts the meeting with the guidance and support of the Scoutmaster. Members of the patrol leaders' council recognize that their decisions are subject to final approval by the Scoutmaster and the troop committee.

Let's look in on a patrol leaders' council meeting that's already in session. This meeting takes place in the middle of a month. The patrol leaders' council is refining plans for an upcoming meeting and the month's big event, and is

beginning to plan for the meetings to support the troop's program for the following month.

Session 1, slide 22

### **Video No. 5—Patrol Leaders' Council**

The video opens midway through the meeting. The senior patrol leader finishes the congratulations, says that the previous bullet points are all covered, and continues on to the heart of the meeting.

- The senior patrol leader announces that the theme for the following month (perhaps camping).
- The patrol leaders' council reviews in detail the meetings of the upcoming month and determines which patrol will be responsible for each section. (Spend considerable time on the first week, less on succeeding weeks.)
- The patrol leaders' council reviews the current month's big event, walking through the schedule and ensuring that everything is being prepared (transportation, Scout participation, patrol assignments, food, equipment, transportation, foul-weather plans, etc.).
- The senior patrol leader reviews the rest of the meetings for the current month.
- The Scoutmaster closes the meeting with praise and support of the troop's leadership for a job well done.

### **DISCUSSION OF VIDEO NO. 5**

Lead participants in a discussion of what they have just seen, using their questions and observations to reinforce the importance of giving boy leaders the tools they need and the supportive guidance to plan and conduct their own meetings. Among questions that may be helpful in this discussion are these:

- What is the role is the Scoutmaster playing?
- What is the role of the senior patrol leader?
- How is the Scoutmaster relating to the senior patrol leader?
- What expectations does the Scoutmaster have of the youth leaders of the troop? In what ways will the meeting be a success?

Conclude by turning the discussion toward the fact that not every Scouting event, no matter how well planned, will be a success. What should a Scoutmaster do then? The next video explores just such a situation.

### **Video No. 6—Activity Review**

The setting is a patrol leaders' council meeting after a service project that didn't go well. The patrol leaders' council members are discouraged. What should a Scoutmaster do when the best-laid plans fall through?

The Scoutmaster listens to the boys and stays in a supportive, coaching role. He does not assign blame, but rather helps the senior patrol leader lead other council members to examine the situation, figure out what went wrong, and seek out solutions. Scouts have much to learn from experiences that don't go as expected. Dealing with adversity is an important aspect of BSA leadership training.

#### **DISCUSSION OF VIDEO NO. 6**

Lead participants in a discussion of what they have just seen, using their questions and observations to reinforce the challenges that can face a patrol leaders' council and the ways in which Scoutmasters can help the patrol leaders' council overcome adversity, learn from disappointment, and become better leaders. Among questions that may be helpful in this discussion are these:

- What is the role is the Scoutmaster playing?
- What is the role of the senior patrol leader?
- How is the Scoutmaster relating to the senior patrol leader?
- What expectations does the Scoutmaster have of the youth leaders of the troop? In what ways could the meeting be a success?

Of course, no meeting will be perfect. Even with careful adherence to the troop meeting plan, there will be portions of some meetings that are not very successful.

The important thing to keep in mind, though, is that Scouts who are given the responsibility, resources, and support to plan and run their own troop meetings are learning extremely important lessons in leadership. Their growing confidence and advancing leadership abilities are a direct result of the efforts of their Scoutmaster to provide support and guidance and then, for the most part, staying behind the scenes.



### **Summary of Session One**

The discussion we've just had about the patrol leaders' council and the Scoutmaster's role in supporting and guiding the boy leaders of a troop sums up much of what we have covered during Session One of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training.

Among the most important points we've covered are these:

- The role of a Scoutmaster brings with it high expectations and requires a willingness on the part of a Scoutmaster to be, know, and do certain things.
- The troop is organized with patrols as its building blocks and with members of the patrol leaders' council deeply involved in planning the troop's program and making it a reality.
- Troop meetings are the glue that holds a troop together. They should be fun, fast-paced, productive, and meaningful.
- Through careful listening, Scoutmasters can determine the development level of individual Scouts and of each patrol and the troop as a whole. Depending on the needs of the Scouts, Scoutmasters can use the most appropriate style of leadership—directing, coaching, supporting, or delegating.
- The patrol leaders' council is the engine that powers the boy-led troop. It provides Scouts with a structure in which to learn and practice leadership skills as they plan the troop's program and figure out how to bring it to life.

### **Instructors' Note**

*As you close Session One, leave participants with one last reminder. Everything covered in Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training is explained in detail in The Scoutmaster Handbook. Even more important to remember is that every Scout leader has the support of a wide range of volunteer and professional Scouters. All of them will be there when participants need them. All of them are eager to help every Scoutmaster succeed.*

***Summary Assignment***

Ask participants to take several minutes to write down two of the most important points they have learned during Session One of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training, and note how they intend to use these points with their own troops. They are to keep this piece of writing with them, adding to it at the end of each of the three sessions. There will be no follow-up; the information they write down and the guidance it provides is for them alone.

**Announce a break before the beginning of Session Two. (For training scheduled over several evenings, confirm the time and location for the commencement of Session Two.)**

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## Session Two

### Preopening Activity

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#### Time Allowed

15 minutes

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#### Teaching Objectives

- Model an effective, enjoyable preopening activity that Scout leaders can use with their own troops.
  - Encourage participants to work together to succeed as a team.
  - Lay the foundation for the upcoming discussion of the four steps to advancement.
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#### Materials Needed

- A 3-foot length of soft rope or nylon cord, suitable for tying knots, for each participant and each instructor
  - The *Boy Scout Handbook*, No. 33105 (Participants should have their own copies. The preopening activity requires at least one copy of the manual for every group of six to eight participants.)
  - Posters on the wall
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#### Recommended Facility Layout

- An open area of the Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training meeting room or an outdoor setting near the meeting room
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#### Delivery Method

- Participant-driven activity and team competition guided by instructors
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## Presentation Procedure

Scoutmaster and  
Assistant Scoutmaster  
Leader Specific  
Training—Session 2  
PowerPoint® slides  
Slide 1



As participants arrive for the opening of Session Two, provide each person with a 3-foot length of knot-tying rope and present the challenge that everyone learn how to tie a selected knot. Point out that instructions for tying the knot can be found in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. Encourage participants to help one another.

### Instructors' Note

**The knot to be tied should be one of the six knots required for the ranks of Tenderfoot through First Class. All of these knots are illustrated and described in The Boy Scout Handbook.**

- Square knot
- Double half-hitch
- Bowline
- Clove hitch
- Sheet bend
- Timber hitch

**Base the choice of knot on what you know of the participants' skill levels. Ideally, the knot will prove to be somewhat of a challenge for most participants and will offer opportunities for them to help fellow team members figure out how to tie the knot. For a group of new Scoutmasters with few Scouting skills, the square knot may be just right. Scouters who are a bit more savvy in the ways of the woods may be better served with the bowline or sheet bend.**

Session 2, slide 2

When all the participants feel confident in their ability to tie the knot, organize a knot-tying relay. Each team of six to eight participants (united by sitting together at the same table, divided into teams by an instructor, or grouped by some other means) sends its members across the room one at a time to tie the knot to the satisfaction of instructors serving as judges. A participant successfully tying the knot runs back to tag the next member of the team who, in turn, crosses the room to tie the knot.

As all the members of each team correctly tie the knot and return to the starting point, that team is declared a winner. The relay ends when every team has succeeded and all have been declared winners.

At the conclusion of the competition, debrief the activity. In the discussion with participants, bring out the following concepts:

- The event that participants have just experienced is a model of preopenings they can use with their own troops. Many Scouting skills can be used as the focus of a pre-opening activity. Some are most appropriate as challenges for individuals (for example, applying a first aid bandage, loading gear into a backpack, or lighting a fire by friction), while others are better done by teams of participants (pitching a tent, putting up a dining fly, etc.).
- Competitions conducted in BSA settings should be designed so that participants are challenging themselves against a standard where every patrol can win and all participants can feel as though they have achieved.
- An important goal of competitions in Scout settings is to ensure that everyone has fun. Ideally, everyone can also learn something new.
- Participants were engaged during this activity in one of the most basic concepts of Scouting—the four-step process of advancement. These will be discussed more fully later in this session. For now, it is enough to direct participants to the appropriate wall poster featuring the four steps to Scout advancement.

### **The Four Steps to Scout Advancement**

1. A Scout learns.
2. A Scout is tested.
3. A Scout is reviewed.
4. A Scout is recognized.

## Delivery Method

- Instructor-led discussion

## Presentation Procedure

### Instructors' Note

*The degree of detail required for this presentation depends upon whether the three sessions of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training are being offered on separate evenings or over the course of a single day.*

- Instructors of sessions occurring on separate evenings can use the introduction to remind participants what has occurred in the session leading up to this one and to focus the group's attention on the presentations to come.*
- Participants completing all the sessions in a single day may need little in the way of review. Instructors can point out connections between the course structure and the methods of Scouting, then offer a brief preview of Session Two.*

Remind participants that the New Leader Essentials training they have completed, and that the three sessions of Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training they are currently engaged in, are an exploration of the eight methods of Scouting.

Session 2, slide 3



### The Methods of Scouting

### Covered In:

- |                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1. The Ideals              | All Sessions  |
| 2. The Patrol Method       | Session One   |
| 3. The Outdoors            | Session Two   |
| 4. Advancement             | Session Two   |
| 5. Association With Adults | All Sessions  |
| 6. Personal Growth         | All Sessions  |
| 7. Leadership Development  | All Sessions  |
| 8. The Uniform             | Session Three |

### Review of Session One

A brief review of the topics covered up to this point may be helpful, especially in training formatted to occur over a number of evenings rather than compressed into a single day. During the course overview of Session One, participants received a course schedule. Instructors can refer participants

to that handout to reinforce this review. It may also be effective to have the schedule of Session One written on a flipchart or displayed on the walls of the meeting room.

The review should not take up much time. In fact, simply pointing out the titles of the presentations and establishing a transition into Session Two will probably be sufficient.

### **Session One**

#### **Getting Started: The Role of the Scoutmaster in a Boy-Led Troop**

1. Welcome and Participant Introductions
2. Course Overview
3. The Role of a Scoutmaster
4. Troop Organization
5. Troop Meetings
6. Working With Boy Leaders/The Patrol Method
7. Patrol Leaders' Council

### ***Preview of Session Two***

The preview of Session Two should also be brief. Session Two touches on all of the eight methods of Scouting but devotes the most attention to two of those methods—the outdoors and advancement.

### **Session Two**

#### **Lighting the Fire: The Outdoor Program and the Advancement Program**

1. Preopening Activity
2. Sizzle of the Outdoor Program
3. Nuts and Bolts of the Outdoor Program
4. Outdoor Program Patrol/Group Activity
5. Reflection
6. Advancement Program

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