



## 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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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.





### 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.



### 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.



### 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'll have many opportunities to help fulfill the mission of the Boy Scouts of America—*To prepare young people to make ethical 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.*