

**Scoutmaster Position-Specific Training  
Presented by John Green and Amy Green  
Piedmont Council, Boy Scouts of America**

**GATHERING ACTIVITY**

Helium Stick (or Ring)

Equipment: Dowel Rods, PVC, etc. of 4 to 5 ft in length or use Hula Hoops

Have the class divide into groups of 6 or so, depending on the sticks or hoops. For sticks, have them make two lines and face each other.

The RULES:

Everyone's index fingers MUST remain in contact with the stick at all times, and the stick must rest on top of their fingers at all times (no grabbing, finger curling, etc.)

Have the group extend their index fingers at waist level.

Lay the stick/hoop across the group's fingers.

At that time, the group must work together to lower the stick/hoop to the ground.

Inevitably, the stick rises almost instantly - causing laughter, frustration, or confusion. The rise is caused by small amounts of upward pressure as individuals each try to remain in contact with the stick.

After refocusing, the group may be able to lower the stick/hoop.

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**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Introduce Faculty

Housekeeping: exits, lunch location, bathrooms

Why Are We Here?

- How effectively the Boy Scouts of America influences the lives of youth depends on its leaders and their ability to apply the aims and methods of Scouting.
- Scoutmaster Position-Specific training is the BSA's initial level of training

for the top leaders of Boy Scout troops.

- When Scoutmaster Position-Specific training and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills (IOLS) have both been completed, new Scoutmasters have the tools needed to run an effective Boy Scouting program.

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## **OPENING CEREMONY**

Ask for volunteers to lead the Pledge, Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Outdoor Code

Post colors: pledge, oath, law, outdoor code

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## **PATROLS**

Patrols based on your Folder Color – go sit with your Patrol

Pick a Patrol Name

Make a Patrol Flag

Patrol introductions and show Flags

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## **AIMS AND METHODS OF SCOUTING**

“It’s a game with a purpose.” – Robert Baden Powell

### **The Mission of the Boy Scouts of America**

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is 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.

Have patrols **brainstorm** to name the Aims of Scouting

Make sure they hit on:

- Character Development
- Citizenship Training
- Physical and Mental Fitness

Show slide with three Aims and lead discussion in defining them.

Ask the class to think about Scouts they know.

Now - imagine the same Scouts 10 years in the future:

- what they might be doing
- where they could be living
- how they will be spending their time

What qualities will these young men exhibit in the future that they will gain from their current Scouting experience?

Answers might include:

- Self-motivation
  - High expectations
  - Focus
  - Interest in the outdoors
  - Technical skills
  - Leadership ability
  - Citizenship
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## **METHODS OF BOY SCOUTING**

Have Patrols **brainstorm** on what Methods Scouting uses to achieve the aims of Character Development, Citizenship Training, and Fitness

Show full list slide and talk about:

### Ideals

- Scout Oath and Law
- Must measure up to these ideals
- Must continually try to improve

### Adult Association

- Learn by watching how adults conduct themselves
- Scout leaders can be positive role models
- Listening to them, encouraging them, and taking a sincere interest will make a profound difference in their lives

### Uniform

- Visibility - positive youth image in the community
- Shows commitment to ideals of Scouting

- World brotherhood of Scouting
- Levels the playing field

### Patrols

- Patrol Method = participating citizenship
- Gives responsibility
- Teaches how to accept responsibility

### Outdoors

- Designed to take place outdoors
- Share responsibilities and learn to live with one another
- Learn appreciation for nature

### Personal Growth

- Planning activities and meeting goals
- Good Turn - successfully teaches service to others
- Community service projects
- Religious emblems program
- Conferences and Boards of Review

### Leadership Development

- Both shared and total leadership situations
- Gain understanding of leadership concepts by doing them

### Advancement

- Challenges to conquered
  - Learn steps to overcome obstacles
  - At each Scout's own pace - time management
  - Recognition for hard work
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## **HOW PROGRAMS STRAY**

Have them **brainstorm** potential pitfalls to avoid

Then slide with answers to hit:

- Low expectations for youth leaders
- Treating Boy Scouts like Cubs
- Not following age-appropriate guidelines
- Favoritism
- Multiple standards

- Troop Rules contrary to BSA
  - Inappropriate Fundraising
  - Not conducting the program according to BSA guidelines
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### **AIMS AND METHODS SUMMARY**

Scouting is a program that serves youth from 10 through 17 years old. Scoutmasters must stay true to the aims of Scouting and help youth leaders in troops plan and lead exciting, fun, and safe activities using the methods of the Boy Scouting program.

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### **ROLE OF THE SCOUTMASTER**

What are Qualities of a Scoutmaster? Ask patrols to **brainstorm** and make list on white board or flip chart page.

Discuss Patrol answers

Slide with points to hit:

- Works well with boys
- Cares about Scouts and ensures their safety
- Teaches Scouts how to do things for themselves
- Understands the Scouting program
- Sets a positive example
- Is comfortable in the outdoors
- Develops the other adult leaders
- Communicates well with adults and Scouts

All of the qualities and skills needed to be an effective Scoutmaster can be divided into three categories

What a Scoutmaster must BE, KNOW, and DO

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### **BE, KNOW, DO**

5 minutes to **brainstorm** Be, Know, and Do

Discuss Patrol answers

Go through slides with points to hit for each:

**A Scoutmaster must BE ...**

- A good role model for the leadership skills expected of the boys
- A coach and a guide as the boys grow through Scouting
- An example for the aims of Scouting
  - Exemplary character
  - Model citizen
  - Physically fit, mentally awake, and morally straight
- Approachable
- Respectful
- Trusted

**A Scoutmaster must KNOW ...**

- That Boy Scouting works best when the boys are the leaders
- That the patrol method is the best way to run a troop
- The basic skills that are expected from the boys
- How to use the Guide to Safe Scouting
- The tools and resources available from the district and council
  - Unit commissioners
  - Training opportunities for youth and adults
  - Roundtables and supplemental training opportunities
  - High-adventure opportunities to keep older boys enthusiastic

**A Scoutmaster must DO ...**

- Everything he can to help the boys become confident leaders
- Appropriate modeling so Scouts apply the aims of Scouting in their daily lives
- Needed training to develop assistant Scoutmasters
- His own recurring and supplemental training to improve
- The work needed to partner with the troop committee
- Everything necessary to communicate effectively with boys, parents, and other leaders in the troop
- Everything needed to uphold the standards of the BSA and the chartered organization

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**ROLE OF THE SCOUTMASTER - SUMMARY**

Scoutmasters have important roles to play to ensure a successful Scouting experience for the Scouts and for the chartered organization.

The best Scoutmasters give the Scouts opportunities to learn, practice, and demonstrate good leadership in Scout-led troops.

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**BREAK – 10 minutes**

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## **PATROL METHOD**

Patrol Game – give colored marker to each Patrol – start each on one flipchart page or whiteboard section of:

1. What Is A Patrol?
2. Kinds of Patrols
3. Patrol Leadership
4. Why Have Patrol Meetings?

Give one minute on each to write down answers – but two minutes on last round  
Declare a winning Patrol based on number of answers by color

Go through slides with points to hit for each:

### **What Is a Patrol?**

- Basic unit of a troop
- 6-8 Scouts
- Has a boy leader
- Has a name
- Has a flag
- Has a yell
- Camps together
- Competes as a team
- Leads ceremonies
- Are semi permanent

### **Kinds of Patrols**

- New-Scout patrol
- Traditional patrol
- Older-Scout patrol
- National Honor Patrol (award)

### **Patrol Leadership**

- Patrol leader
- Assistant patrol leader
- Scribe
- Quartermaster
- Troop guide (as coach)

- Patrol advisor (as advisor)

### **Why Patrol Meetings?**

- Plan patrol activities
  - Collect the dues
  - Prepare for outings
  - Clean and repair gear
  - Play games
  - Work on skills
  - Rehearse ceremonies
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### **PATROL METHOD REFLECTION**

Q: What was the point of the game we just played?

A: To model the patrol method, an active way of learning, and have fun

Q: What elements of the patrol method did you observe?

A: Team effort, leadership, competition, camaraderie, developing friendships

Q: How might you use this short example to ensure fun, exciting, and active troop meetings?

A: Teach Scouts to incorporate the games and skill-development activities from *Troop Program Resources* into their troop meeting plans, and encourage Scouts to devise their own ways of making troop meetings fun, exciting, and active.

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### **DIFFERENT KINDS OF PATROLS**

1. New Scout Patrol
2. Traditional Patrol
3. Older Scout Patrol

#### **New Scout Patrol**

- Just joined the troop at the same time
- New to Scouting
- Were probably a Webelos den or group of friends
- Patrol leaders serve shorter terms
- Has an older Scout to assist them (troop guide)
- Has an assistant Scoutmaster to coach them

#### **Traditional Patrol**

- Friends with similar interests and abilities

- Chose to be in the patrol together
- Range of ages  
(no more than three years between oldest and youngest)

### **Older Scout Patrol**

- Experienced Scouts
- 14 years or older
- Participate in higher adventures  
(see age- appropriate guidelines)
- Serve as youth leaders
- Keeps older Scouts engaged and contributing

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## **BALANCING THE PATROLS' NEEDS**

Most patrol activities take place in the context of troop activities, but that doesn't mean that every patrol has to do the same things on every outing.

### **Assign each Patrol an Outing Theme - give handouts for**

- Backpacking
- First Aid
- High Adventure
- Public Service

### **Design programs for each patrol type to fit your theme:**

- New Scout Patrol
- Traditional Patrol
- Older Scout Patrol

After 5 minutes have each patrol present their plans

### **Guidelines for ALL Patrols**

- Scoutmaster and the participants' parents give permission.

- The activity doesn't conflict with the troop calendar.
  - Guide to Safe Scouting policies are followed. (Especially the need for two-deep adult leadership).
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### **PATROL METHOD – Summary**

- The patrol is the primary element in a successful troop.
  - The patrol leaders and youth troop leaders make up the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC) and lead the troop.
  - Your advancement sheets reinforce the importance of the patrol method and the understanding that the patrol is a requirement for Second Class. We will continue to use the patrol method throughout the course.
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### **THE TROOP MEETING**

#### **Brainstorm** on Why have Troop Meetings?

Then slide to hit:

- Motivate Scouts
- Strengthen Patrols
- Promote Patrol Spirit
- Encourage practice of Scouting skills
- Allow Scouts to exercise leadership

#### **Troop Meeting Plan**

Troop Program Features free download or \$8.49 per volume (3 volumes)

Plan involves seven distinct parts:

- Preopening
- Opening

- Skills instruction
- Patrol meetings
- Inter-patrol activity
- Closing
- After the meeting

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

- Offer the senior patrol leader support and guidance.
  - Share a Scoutmaster's Minute at the close of the meeting.
  - Meet with the patrol leaders' council to assess the meeting and review plans for the next troop meeting.
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## **ADVANCEMENT**

Guide to Advancement 2015 is the latest on advancement – READ IT.

In your packet you'll find information sheets on The Scoutmaster Conference and Sample Scoutmaster Conference Questions

### **Four Steps of Advancement**

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

### **Program Resources Available to Scoutmasters:**

- National Outdoor Achievement Awards
- Aquatics awards: Mile Swim, Scuba BSA, Kayaking BSA
- Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops

- Religious awards programs
- Leave No Trace
- Conservation awards: Hornaday, World Conservation Award
- Shooting sports programs
- National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)

### **Piedmont Council NYLT**

Summer NYLT 1:

June 26, 2016 – July 1, 2016

Summer NYLT 2:

July 24, 2016 – July 29, 2016

Fall NYLT:

September 10, 2016

September 23, 2016 – September 25, 2016

October 7, 2016 – October 9, 2016

### **How does leadership training fit into advancement?**

- Leadership is necessary for Star, Life, and Eagle
- Shows Scout spirit (teaching newer Scouts the basic skills)
- Develops character and citizenship
- Improves the patrol's experience (achieve more as a group)

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### **HOW TO GUIDE SCOUTS THROUGH RANKS**

**Brainstorm** - Assign a rank to each patrol, and have them brainstorm different methods of guiding Scouts through advancement.

- Tenderfoot
- Second Class
- First Class

- Star

Then Slide to be sure and hit:

- Skill sessions during Scout meetings
- Campout planning
- Merit badge work and activities
- Patrol meetings
- Merit Badge University
- Outings
- Summer Camp
- High-adventure camps
- National and International Jamborees

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### **Unit Advancement Coordinator**

Troop Committee is responsible for keeping the advancement records.

The Advancement Coordinator keeps the troop's advancement records and maintains the merit badge counselor list.

They also arrange timely boards of review, and obtain the necessary badges and certificates for Courts of Honor.

He or she also will work with youth leadership to track advancement and to help the troop Librarian maintain a library of advancement literature.

### **Scoutmaster Conferences**

- The Scoutmaster conference is intended to be a rewarding opportunity for both the Scoutmaster and the boy to grow in Scouting.
- It is not a test — there is nothing in BSA policy requiring a Scout to “pass” the conference in order to proceed to a board of review.

- It is a way for the Scoutmaster to gauge the health of the troop and ensure each Scout is succeeding.
  - The Guide to Advancement notes that while the Scoutmaster conference is often held “after the other requirements for a rank are met, it is not required that it be the last step before the board of review.”
  - Some Scoutmasters hold more than one conference along the way, and any one of them may count toward the requirement.
  - The ultimate purpose of the Scoutmaster conference is to reinforce the method of positive adult association.
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### **ADVANCEMENT Summary**

- Advancement is a large part of the Boy Scouting program.
  - A Scout troop can have great Scouting without great advancement, but a troop with an active outdoor program will naturally have a strong advancement program.
  - Statistics show that a strong advancement program leads to increased satisfaction and retention of Scouts.
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### **BREAK – 10 minutes**

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### **THE SUPPORT TEAM**

#### **What is a unit committee?**

- Minimum of 3 members, no maximum
- One serves as Committee Chair
- Composed of Chartered Organization members and/or Scout parents

#### **Role of the Unit Committee**

- Recruits and trains quality adult leadership

- Provides adequate meeting facilities
- Advises Scoutmaster on Scouting and chartered organization policies
- Supports youth and adult leaders in carrying out the program
- Responsible for administrative tasks
- Responsible for finances, funding, and budgeting
- Obtains, maintains, and cares for unit property

And

- Serves on boards of review
- Facilitates a camping and outdoor program
- Provides a safe meeting place for the troop
- Supports unit leaders with problems that affect the unit or program
- Provides for special-needs youth as necessary
- Helps with Friends of Scouting campaign
- Assists with youth behavioral problems
- Welcomes new parents

### **Troop Committee Positions**

#### **A three-person committee:**

- Committee chair
- Administration
- Logistics

#### **A large committee:**

- Chartered organization representative
- Committee chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer and fundraising
- Advancement coordinator
- Equipment coordinator
- Membership
- Activities and outdoor program
- Training (youth and adult)

### **4 Functions of Councils & Districts**

- Membership and Relationships
- Finance
- Quality Program
- Unit Service

### **Examples of District & Council Support:**

- District roundtables: units gather for program ideas, supplemental training, fellowship, and information
- District camporees: Troop camping & competitions
- Youth & adult training: NYLT, University of Scouting, Wood Badge
- Summer camp: Highlight of the Scouting year
- Order of the Arrow: Provides leadership training and promotes and supports summer camp, camporees, and council activities
- Recognition: Awards, Eagle dinner, District banquet

#### **Role of Unit Commissioner:**

- Friend of the troop: serves as an advocate to the district for the troop
- Representative: represents the ideals, principles, and policies of the BSA
- Teacher: provides best practices, helps solve challenges, and reinforces training programs
- Counselor: external observer and empathetic coach who identifies opportunities including training, activities, leadership skills, health and safety, and more
- Manager: Charter renewal process

#### **Challenges of Unit Commissioner:**

- Poor youth retention
- No youth recruiting
- Stagnant or no program
- Poor quality or no troop meetings
- Uninvolved parents
- Shortage of active adults
- Untrained youth and adult leadership
- Chartered organization's dissatisfaction with the troop

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#### **THE SUPPORT TEAM – Summary**

- The troop committee is important to the success of a unit's program.
- It handles support functions in order for the unit leadership to focus on the Scouts.
- The relationship between the Scoutmaster and the troop committee should be one of friendship and trust.
- When difficulties arise, the Scoutmaster should be able to turn to the committee at any time for assistance, support, and encouragement.
- The Troop Committee Challenge is an online training program that all committee members should take. (Required for JTE).

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#### **ANNUAL PLANNING**

**An Annual Program Plan will:**

- Attract more families
- Improve Retention
- Improve variety of activities
- Be Scout led

**Two forms of planning:**

- Annual long-range planning
- Monthly short-term planning

**The Five Steps of Annual Troop Program Planning**

1. Do your homework.
2. Get patrol input.
3. Hold a planning conference.
4. Consult with the troop committee.
5. Announce the plan.

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**Do Your Homework**

Brainstorm on Priorities for the Year

Then slide to hit:

**Priorities for the Year**

- Summer Camp
- Monthly Outdoor Activity
- Community Service
- Fundraising Activity
- Courts of Honor
- High Adventure (may require more than a year advance planning)

## **Get Patrol Input**

### **Here is one scenario:**

- SPL shares an outline of the annual program plan, with options, with the PLC.
- Each patrol leader presents the plan to his patrol for discussion.
- Patrol members can discuss, make changes, or add ideas.
- SPL presents monthly themes to troop for discussion and vote.
- PLC enacts plan based on input from patrols.

## **Hold a Troop Program Planning Conference**

- The troop program planning conference is at the heart of determining a troop's activities for the coming six months or year.
- Members of the PLC, the Scoutmaster, and the assistant Scoutmasters should attend.

## **Consult With the Troop Committee**

- SPL and Scoutmaster present the proposed troop program to the troop committee and ask for their support.
- If the committee believes the plan should be revised, the SPL will return to the PLC for revision.
- Upon acceptance, the committee provides necessary support.
- The committee has the right of refusal if it feels the program plan is unsafe or unwise for the troop.
- Scoutmaster delegates parts of the plan to assistant Scoutmasters to provide the necessary adult guidance and accountability.

## **Announce the Troop's Annual Plan**

### **Distribute copies of the final plan to:**

- troop members
- the parent or guardian of each Scout
- members of the troop committee
- representatives of the chartered organization

### **Publicize through a variety of outlets:**

- Troop website
- Handouts
- Social Media
- Post in scout meeting place
- Email
- Newsletter

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## **Annual Planning - Summary**

An annual plan makes the Scoutmaster's job easier by involving the troop in the planning process.

It helps distribute responsibilities to troop leadership and adult volunteers.

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## **Thank You for Attending Today**

- Thanks
- Troop Leader Guidebook Vol. 1 - \$12.99
- Appendix PDF available online
- Continue your training: [piedmontscouting.org](http://piedmontscouting.org)
- Today's slides online

**Any Questions?**