

The Youth-Led Troop

DISCUSSION: Briefly discuss leadership in Scouting and the value of the youth-led troop. Empowering youth to be leaders is one of the core principles in Scouting. Scouting is designed to help youth prepare to participate in, and give leadership to, American society. A troop is a small democracy. Within the safety framework provided by the adult leaders, and with the Scoutmaster's direction and mentoring, the Scouts plan and implement the troop program. Scouts serve in positions of responsibility to make that happen.

Patrol leadership and , senior youth leaders must work with, train, and encourage others in the troop to fulfill their roles and practice their own leadership skills.

LEADERSHIP: define leadership. . Topics to emphasize include:

- Teamwork
- Using each other's strengths
- Not trying to do it all yourself
- Doing what you said you'd do
- Being reliable
- Keeping each other informed
- Being responsible
- Caring for each other
- Delegating
- Setting the example

KEEP YOUR WORD. Don't make promises you can't keep.

- **BE FAIR TO ALL.** A good leader shows no favorites. Don't allow friendships to keep you from being fair to all members of your troop or patrol.
- **BE A GOOD COMMUNICATOR.** You don't need a commanding voice to be a good leader, but you must be willing to step out front with an effective "Let's go." A good leader knows how to get and give information so that everyone understands what's happening.
- **BE WILLING TO ACCEPT IDEAS FROM OTHER PEOPLE.** It encourages other youth leaders to offer suggestions and ideas you may not have thought of. Their ideas may help deliver a better program for the troop. When you are open to their ideas and willing to adopt good ones, the other youth leaders will have more ownership of the final plan than if you (or an adult) simply dictate to them what the troop is going to do.
- **BE FLEXIBLE.** Not everything goes as planned. Be prepared to shift to "Plan B" when "Plan A" doesn't work. Think about "Plan C."
- **BE ORGANIZED.** The time you spend planning will be repaid many times over.
- **DELEGATE.** Some leaders assume that the task will not get done unless they do it themselves. Most people like to be challenged with a task. Empower your team members to do things they have never tried, because they want to be trusted to perform their duties.
- **FOLLOW UP.** When people are given assignments, follow up at appropriate times to make sure they haven't forgotten what they are supposed to do and when. This can avoid problems when a critical aspect of an outing hasn't been planned or supplies weren't obtained. However, be careful not to micromanage others to the point that they stop doing things on their own and simply wait for your instructions.

SET AN EXAMPLE. The most important thing you can do is lead by example. Whatever you do, your troop members are likely to do the same. A cheerful attitude can keep everyone's spirits up.

- **BE CONSISTENT.** Nothing is more confusing than a leader who acts one way one moment and another way a short time later. If your troop knows what to expect from you, they will more likely respond

positively to your leadership. If you need to change the plan or change your instructions in light of things you didn't consider earlier, explain this to the troop so they will see the need to follow you.

- **GIVE PRAISE.** The best way to get credit is to give it away. Often a "nice job" is all the praise necessary to make a Scout feel he is contributing to the efforts of the troop.
- **ASK FOR HELP.** Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. You have many resources at your disposal. When confronted with a situation you don't know how to handle, ask someone with more experience for some advice and direction.
- **CRITICIZE IN PRIVATE.** There will be times when you must provide a Scout with critical feedback. Pull the Scout aside and quietly explain what he is doing wrong. Add a suggestion on how it should be done correctly. Criticizing in public will undermine the Scout's self-esteem and may cause him to quit trying. Never criticize a patrol leader in front of his patrol. Doing so will undermine his authority and make it more difficult than ever to carry out his role.
- **ACCEPT CRITICISM AS A GIFT.** You may get criticism from other Scouts and possibly from the adult leaders. If someone tells you that you aren't doing a good job, ask them what they mean and how you might improve. Criticism, when offered and received properly, can give you ideas for performing your role better. Being open to suggestions and adopting those that will benefit your troop are signs of a good leader.
- **HAVE FUN.** Most of all, have fun learning to be a leader. Your joy and enthusiasm will encourage others

Servant Leadership: why Scouts should choose to be leaders. Ideally, the Scoutmaster leads this section. SAY:

What is the relationship between a leader and the team? Many people's first reaction is to state that the team "works" for the leader, performing tasks for one person. Most Scouts will very quickly tell you that they would rather tell people what to do than be told what to do. That is human nature, not just the nature of a Scout. When this happens, the leader isn't simply a leader; he's more like a "boss" or an "owner," and most people don't like being part of such a team. Leadership in the troop is not about the title or even about being the person doing the telling.

It is about a choice to lead. It is about a choice to give rather than to receive. What we need to build into the makeup of our Scout leaders is the concept of servant leadership. In a team led by a servant leader, the leader is one part of the team, and his role isn't necessarily more important than the role of any other member. Being a servant leader means accepting responsibility for the team—its members, objectives, reputation, morale, and more. The servant leader recognizes that he is responsible to the team, not the other way around, and he acts accordingly.

You were selected by your patrol because they trust that you will help them succeed. Asking frequently questions about how to help with advancements and skills, encourage knowledge and involvement by sharing information and participating. Multiple different scouts have missed many meetings call each scout and ask them how come they are not attending let them know they are missed. We have many scouts but every single one of us make up this Troop and we need everyone to work together to keep our Troops success.

Patrol leaders carry out planning, leading, and evaluating **patrol** meetings and activities, and assure **patrols** are prepared to participate in all troop activities. They keep their **patrol** intact so they can work together and share **responsibilities** to get things done.