

Leadership Skills

The following are leadership skills that a scout needs to know for his rank.

- ◆ He needs to know 4 for Star
- ◆ He needs to know 5 for Life
- ◆ He needs to know 6 for Eagle

Skill # I - Communicating

Communication involves several factors:

- ◆ receiving information,
- ◆ storing information,
- ◆ retrieving information,
- ◆ giving information, and
- ◆ interpreting information.

Information is received through hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling.

- ◆ The more ways we use to gather information, the better the information is received, understood, and put to use.

Information is stored in your memories.

- ◆ The memory can be supported with notes, sketches, and similar techniques.

Information is retrieved or recalled.

- ◆ Recall is very important.
- ◆ Recall can be helped by:
 - memorizing using memory joggers,
 - repeating the information as it is received, and
 - taking notes.

Information is given.

- ◆ Giving information involves the same five senses used to receive it.
- ◆ Effective Giving involves speaking or writing clearly, using visual methods, watching and being sensitive to the group, asking for feedback, and summarizing what has been given.

Information is interpreted.

◆ Information was given and received, but somehow communication did not result.

Blocks to communication include:

motivation (one of the two parties didn't think the information was important),

conflict (two messages didn't agree),

experience (your own background or prejudices cause you not to accept what is said),

personal dislike (you dislike the other person so you filter out what he or she says),

distractions (you don't receive because something else is on your mind or something distracts you), and

attitude (you think you already know all about the topic).

Most people learn about 11% of what they know by listening, but 83% of what they know by seeing (observing and reading). People recall 20% of what they heard but can recall 50 percent of what they both heard and saw.

Clear communication is essential.

◆ Members of a group must communicate freely with each other.

◆ Information is most often "exchanged" between members ("**With** one another")

◆ Talking **at** one another is not real communication and information is **not exchanged**.

The success of a group will depend a lot on how well they communicate with each other and with others outside the group.

Skill #2 – Planning

Developing a plan is a type of problem solving. Effective planning involves seven steps

1. Consider the task.

◆ "What has to be done, who does what, when, where, and how."

2. Consider the resources.

◆ What time is available?

◆ What are the skills of the group?

◆ What equipment and supplies are needed and available?

◆ What other items should be considered?

3. Consider alternatives.

◆ What happens if something goes wrong?

◆ What are the emergency procedures?

◆ What is the alternate plan?

◆ Could the alternate plan be better than the original plan?

4. Reach a decision. A decision usually is needed at every step in the process.

◆ Who has the responsibility?

- ◆ Is a poor decision better than no decision?
- ◆ Is no decision a decision?
- ◆ Is a group decision best?

5. Write down the plan.

6. Put the plan into action.

7. Evaluate.

- ◆ Evaluate each step is taken to ensure you are still on task.

Try "*Verbal Rehearsal*" when faced with a specific project to complete or a problem to solve. Here the members of the group "talk it up" as they decide how to approach the project or problem. As in classic problem-solving, seven steps are involved.

1. What is the problem?

- ◆ A clear understanding of the problem. is needed before the group can set a goal.

2. What's our goal?

- ◆ A goal redefines the problem into a positive statement that answers the question, "What do we want?"

3. Stop and think.

- ◆ Stop talking and allow each person to examine the problem and goal before continuing to the next step.

4. Make a plan.

- ◆ Looking for options.
- ◆ Once the alternatives and consequences have been discussed, a decision is made on a start-to-finish plan.

5. Do it.

- ◆ Each member must know how to proceed.

6. Keep at it.

- ◆ "If at first you don't succeed, try try again."
- ◆ Sometimes only a small adjustment in the plan is required to make it work.

7. Evaluate it.

- ◆ How did it go? Was the goal attained? Did we give our best effort? What might have been changed?
- ◆ It is important to evaluate each step so that the result will be a better plan next time.

Skill #3 - Effective Teaching

Effective teaching is controlling the learning of an individual or a group. Five elements are involved, but these are not necessarily steps in a sequence.

1. Learning objectives.

- ◆ Before attempting to teach, it is important to know what is to be taught.
- ◆ To determine learning objectives ask "What should the participants be able to do by the end of the session?".
- ◆ Learning objective should clearly state what someone should be able to do at the end of the session.
- ◆ The learning objectives should be written down as guidelines to the instructor.
- ◆ The objectives usually will determine the content of the instruction.

2. Discovery.

- ◆ In a "discovery" one of three things happens:
 1. People discover that they do know something.
 2. People discover that they need to know something.
 3. People discover that they desire to learn more about something.
- ◆ Sometimes a discovery just happens. An alert leader can turn this happening into a learning experience referred to as "opportunity teaching."
- ◆ An instructor often will set up a discovery as the introduction to a learning activity. A discovery can be simply a leading question, or more complicated as in dramatic role-playing.

3. Teaching-learning.

- ◆ Once the discovery has shown what they already know, the instructor has choices to make.
 1. No further teaching is needed - the person knows and can do what is desired.
 2. Some teaching is needed - subtract what they know from what is desired and work on what they need to know.
 3. Give the full instruction session. They will learn what they need to know and will review what they already known.
- ◆ Teaching involves a variety of communication techniques. We learn principally from hearing (lecture, discussion, conversation, dramatization), seeing (reading, displays, visual aids, demonstrations), and doing (trial and error, experimenting, copying the acts of others).
- ◆ Learning is actually a series of discoveries.
- ◆ As each task, skill, or idea is broken down into simple steps, the learner can see:
 1. What they already know,
 2. What they need to know, and
 3. What they want to know.
- ◆ Each step should lead to some success--it is important to keep them encouraged that progress is being made.

4. Application.

- ◆ They should have a chance to apply what has been learned.
- ◆ Application may lead to another discovery.

5. Evaluation.

- ◆ Evaluation is a review of what happened to see if the learning objectives were met.
 - "Did it work?"
 - "Do I understand?"
 - "What do I do next?"
- ◆ Evaluation itself often becomes another discovery.

6. Recycling (if needed).

- ◆ Teach it again.
- ◆ If evaluation shows that the person has not learned what was to be taught, there is a need to recycle .

Learning works best when a student is really involved in his own teaching.

- ◆ The more a person is involved in their own learning, the more they will learn and the longer they will remember it.
- ◆ Teach from the point of view of the student--not the teacher.
- ◆ Move from what is known to what is unknown, from what is simple to what is more complex.

Skill #4 - Evaluating

When a program or project has been completed, it is important to find out how well the objectives were met and if improvements can be made for the future.

An evaluation should reflect

- ◆ the effect on the total group and
- ◆ the effect on each individual member.

Six simple questions can be used to evaluate almost any project or program.

- ◆ The first three questions relate to the group's success in carrying out the project.
- ◆ The second three questions relate to individual group members.

1. Did the job get done?
2. Was it done right?
3. Was it done on time?
4. Did everybody take part?
5. Did they enjoy themselves?
6. Do they want more?

Evaluations should be done both

- ◆ immediately at the end of an event and
- ◆ a few weeks later.

Evaluation is a continual process as a project is under way.

- ◆ For an evaluation of a work in progress, the six questions are changed somewhat.

- 1. Are we getting the job done?**
- 2. Are we doing it right?**
- 3. Are we on schedule?**
- 4. Is everybody involved?**
- 5. Are they working well and satisfied with what they're doing?**
- 6. Do they want to continue?**

- ◆ If the answer to any of these questions is no, or if there is any doubt, the leader needs to take some action.

Skill #5 - Sharing Leadership

Five styles of leadership are:

1. Telling (or ordering).

- ◆ The leader alone identifies the problem, makes the decisions, and directs the activities.
- ◆ The style may or may not involve the opinions of the group members.

2. Persuading (or selling).

- ◆ The decision still is made by the leader.
- ◆ The leader must "sell" the decision to the group to get cooperation.

3. Consulting.

- ◆ Group members participate and provide input.
- ◆ The leader still makes the final decision, usually based on group suggestion.

4. Delegating.

- ◆ The leader identifies the problem, sets rules, and then turns the problem over to the group or one of its members.
- ◆ The leader accepts the decision of the group if it falls within the boundaries and guidelines established.
- ◆ While authority may be delegated, the responsibility must remain with the leader.

5. Joining.

- ◆ The leader steps down as leader and joins the group.
- ◆ The leader agrees in advance to abide by the group's decisions.

No single leadership style is "best."

- ◆ Each style depends on the situation, experience of the group members, and tasks to be done.
- ◆ As leadership styles move from telling to joining, the leader's authority decreases and the group's participation increases.
- ◆ Selecting the appropriate style of leadership is an act of leadership based on the nature of the situation and the ability and experience of the group members.

Skill #6 - Setting the Example

The most persuasive Leadership skill is the personal example of the leader. A good leader sets a positive example in these ways:

1. Following instructions.

2. Trying hard.

- ◆ The leader must work as hard as--if not harder than--any member of the group.

3. Showing initiative.

- ◆ A good leader must do what has to be done without waiting to be told or forced to act.

4. Acting with maturity.

- ◆ An effective leader shows good judgment.

5. Knowing the job.

- ◆ Generally, a leader should have a mastery of the skills to be used.
- ◆ If not, the leader must apply the resources of the group toward achieving the task.

6. Keeping a positive attitude.

- ◆ A positive attitude is very important.
- ◆ Enthusiasm is contagious.

Role models are an important method in Boy Scouting.

- ◆ Boys often will copy the actions and behaviors of leaders they like and admire.
- ◆ Boys will literally walk, talk, and act as the example set by the leaders of the troop.