

Qualities of a Leader

Eleven Characteristics of a Good Leader. A Good Leader is:

1. Understanding of the Needs and Characteristics
2. Knowing and Using Resources
3. Communicating
4. Representing the Group
5. Effective Teaching
6. Evaluating
7. Counseling
8. Sharing Leadership
9. Planning
10. Controlling Group Performance
11. Setting the Example

Eleven Skills of Leadership

One of the principal purposes of being a leader is to show Scouts how to use the skills of leadership. Therefore, it is important that the leaders set the best possible example in using those skills. Here are some suggestions.

Understanding Needs and Characteristics

The leader must be prepared to accept each Scout as he is, then help him to improve his leadership abilities. Recognizing a scout's needs and how well they are met will often explain the characteristics within the group. A Personal Resource Questionnaire is sent to each Scout as soon as he registers for membership. The information he returns can be helpful in knowing his background and experience and in determining how he can be helped. The Personal Resource Questionnaires should be reviewed with particular attention by the troop guides/patrol counselors.

Each Scout is asked to wear the proper uniform. His rank, position, badges, and emblems will tell much about him. He is proud of what he has earned. Also, his uniform will be "read" by his fellow patrol and troop members. This helps establish his status and credibility.

Knowing and Using Resources

To establish a group, you must know what you have to work with. Two types of resources can be used -- those within the group and those available to the group.

Resources available to a Scouting group can come from books, members of the chartered organization, parents and friends of members, local business, community organizations and services, and programs of the local Scouting council and its districts. An inventory of these outside resources is a valuable tool, but the same results often can be obtained by simply asking the question, "What do I need and where can I get it?"

A wealth of resources is available to leaders. Leaders should be alert to the resources of the Troop and its members. (Much of this information can usually be obtained from the Personal Resource Questionnaire filled out by each member.) If it is discovered that a Scout has an area of expertise, he certainly should be used as a consultant or resource for an activity.

Communicating

Good training must involve good communications. The leaders should strive for total communication. People are fearful and unsure when they don't know what is happening and what's going to happen. Send a one-page program schedule to each Scout before an event, and post the daily schedule on the troop bulletin board. Scouts can understand the need to change a schedule, but they won't understand why the leaders are treating what's going to happen as some sort of secret.

Attempting to pass all information only through the patrol leader at the Patrol Leaders' Council meeting is poor communication. The patrol leader, of course, must be the principal source of information to his patrol, but announcements and instructions given to the Patrol Leaders' Council should be reinforced through public announcements and reminders.

Leaders should never use initials or acronyms. They are a poor means of communication. You will note that except for this paragraph, they are used rarely in this leadership guide. Scouting terms and titles are self-descriptive; say the words. For brevity, of course, there is no problem writing “SPL” on a chalkboard, but never refer to what you wrote as the *ess-pee-ell*. He is the *Senior Patrol Leader*.

Representing the Group

Each Scout will be representing his home Troop. As such, he may have many valuable program ideas to contribute. Scouts should be encouraged to share their good suggestions with others.

Troop guides/patrol counselors represent the concepts, programs, and procedures of the Troop to patrol members. Troop guides/patrol counselors also should provide feedback from the patrols to the Troop’s leaders. It must be remembered that the principal representative of the patrol is the Patrol Leader. The troop guide/patrol counselor must reinforce this.

Effective Teaching

It is vital that the learner become involved in his own learning. It is not necessary for the participant to know that he is having a “discovery” experience. It is important that he discovers what he now knows, needs to know, and wants to know. Instructors sometimes become so involved in the process that they forget the product -- a trained, enthusiastic participant.

The effective teacher creates, seeks, and finds opportunities for learning. Strive to be a leader who teaches effectively, sets the example, communicates, evaluates, and uses all the other leadership skills. This may be a new concept for some experienced trainers. But careful evaluation of how leadership skills are actually applied has indicated this is the best route to effective results.

Evaluating

Effective trainers constantly evaluate their performance, the change in the participant, and what improvements are needed. Each patrol will be evaluated by the troop leadership. It is important that all evaluations shared with the patrol be positive and suggest how the situation could be improved and why. “The patrol’s tents are droopy” is negative. “If your tent ropes are tightened daily, your campsite would look sharp,” or “A good, trim tent resists rain and wind” is more desirable.

Counseling

The purpose of counseling is to help a Scout find a solution to his problem, not solve it for him. When counseling give information, not advice.

The troop guide/patrol counselor will be in the key position to help Scouts with their problems or concerns. The troop guide/counselor must recognize that he might not be the best person to counsel a Scout -- the chemistry might not be right. He should always offer to arrange a meeting with another appropriate Troop leader.

Behavior problems should be handled as a counseling situation. The only major rules for Scouting are the Scout Oath or Promise, the Scout Law, the motto, the slogan, and the Outdoor Code. When a Scout breaks these rules, the leader should be disappointed, but never angry. For some Scouts, these rules are truly hard to follow. Leaders must recognize this and offer help and understanding rather than punishment. Hint: self-imposed discipline is the most effective.

Sharing Leadership

As year progresses, more and more leadership is given to the patrols. Troop guides/patrol counselors should monitor how patrol members respond. Counseling and evaluation may be needed.

The leaders should strive to ensure that every activity results in some form of success. If necessary, a senior leader may have to actually assume the duties of a junior leader. If so, this should always be treated as a teaching/learning situation rather than as a takeover of the leadership role.

Planning

Several manufacturing firms use the phrase “zero defects.” “Zero goofs” could be a slogan for the Troop leadership. Using the six steps on a planning sheet when planning for each activity or presentation will ensure a smooth performance. Remember, also, the technique of living the activity in advance.

When goofs occur -- and they will -- don't panic. Ignore it if you can, admit it, and apologize if you must, but don't make a big fuss over a problem. Remember Thistlewaite's Theorem: “When you discover that you don't really know what you're doing, act like you do. Most people won't know the difference.”

Controlling the Group

All leaders have their own areas of control. Good control should be included in the planning of each presentation and activity. Schedule periods when instructing, helping, inspecting, and reacting can occur as a natural part of the event. And, remember the example of the leader is the most effective control technique.

Setting the Example

Every member is under almost constant scrutiny by fellow troop members. It is not unusual for a Scout to adopt the walk, gestures, and speech habits of a leader. It is simply “hero worship.” So, the example of the leader is the most powerful instructional technique.

The leader's example must begin with consideration for the members. Follow the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Learn participants' names and call them by name. Greet each with a cheerful word as you encounter him in camp or on the trail. Never use terms like “scrubs,” “rookies,” “wimps,” “peanuts,” etc. to refer to the newer members. They are “Scouts,” “junior leaders,” “patrol members,” or “participants.”

Leadership Skills Highlights

1. Knowing and Using the Resources of the Group

The resources of the group are the tools necessary for the group to accomplish tasks and to be prepared to accept new challenges.

- ▶ Resources include all those things necessary to do a job: tools and equipment, camping gear, Scouting literature, etc.
- ▶ Resources also include people, because people have knowledge and skills.
 - **Knowledge** is what a person learns through familiarity or experience. It's what you know.
 - **Skill** is the ability to use what you know.
- ▶ The leader also is a resource because he can use his knowledge of the group's resources to organize work. He can select the right tools for the job and draw on the knowledge and skills of group members to get things done.
- ▶ To serve as a resource, a leader must know his own resources and those of other members of the group. Also, he must know the other resources available to the group.
- ▶ When the leader uses the knowledge and skills of group members to get a job done, they gain experience and improve their skills. They develop a positive attitude toward using a skill.
 - **Attitude** includes the desire to do something (motivation) and the belief that you can do it (confidence).
- ▶ Knowing the resources of the group develops understanding among members of the group. They learn about each other's abilities.
- ▶ Knowing the resources of the group helps point out strengths and weaknesses in the group's knowledge and skills. It helps the leader set learning objectives for effective teaching to enhance the group's resources.

Knowing and using the resources of the group is an important skill in forming a group. It is a starting point for understanding.

Leadership Skills Highlights

2. Communicating

Communicating is the skill of getting and receiving information. Communicating is an important skill of leadership -- not only what you communicate, but how.

There are four elements of communicating: Receiving, Giving, Retrieving, and Interpreting.

A. **Receiving.** We receive information through our five senses:

- ◆ Hearing
- ◆ Seeing
- ◆ Feeling
- ◆ Tasting
- ◆ Smelling

Asking questions, seeking clarification, and summarizing what you have received are useful in making the communication process two-way. The methods of giving information are equally important in getting information.

B. **Giving.** We send, or give, information effectively by:

- ◆ Using the five senses
- ◆ Speaking clearly
- ◆ Writing clearly
- ◆ Using visuals
- ◆ Eyeballing the group
- ◆ Using feedback
- ◆ Summarizing

C. **Retrieving.** We retrieve or recall information in many way:

- ◆ Memorizing
- ◆ Memory-joggers
- ◆ Abbreviations
- ◆ Repeating

Note-taking is the best retrieval method. It provides a permanent record.

D. **Interpreting.** How information is interpreted, or filtered, can cause a lack of communication. Information filters between the sender and the receiver include:

- ◆ Motivation
- ◆ Conflict
- ◆ Experience
- ◆ Distractions
- ◆ Attitude

Leadership Skills Highlights

People learn 11 percent of what they know by listening, but they learn 83 percent of what they know by seeing (observation or reading).

What do people remember? They remember 20 percent of what they heard. But they can recall 50 percent of what they both heard and saw.

That is why we use these documents and visual aid in our presentation to you. I hope you've been taking notes, too.

Communicating is an important skill in forming a group. By getting and giving information, group members learn about each other, pass information back and forth, and learn what really is going on. Effective two-way communication is critical to the use of all the skills of leadership.

Leadership Skills Highlights

3. Understanding the Needs and Characteristics of the Group

Definitions:

- ▶ Characteristic --- a trait, quality, or property distinguishing an individual, group, or type.
- ▶ Need --- a want, a requirement, feeling the lack of something that would be useful.

Each individual member of the group has certain needs and characteristics. They help identify who the person is, what he is like, what he likes to do, and what his needs are.

- ▶ A leader should understand his own needs and characteristics. This helps him understand his own motivation and suggests ideas for personal growth.
- ▶ A leader should understand the needs and characteristics of each member in the group. This helps the leader deal with each person as an individual, treat him with respect, and help him grow.
- ▶ The characteristics and needs of youth can vary widely from one person to the next. They often depend on the person's background in the home, school, church, and other organizations as well as the situation at the moment.
- ▶ Each Scout has some important needs. At the basic level is the need for food, water, shelter, and warmth. Next is the need for safety and security, then friends, interpersonal relationships, order, and a feeling of belonging. At the fourth level, needs include recognition, self-respect, independence, and self-esteem. The final level involves the need for fulfillment, confidence, achievement, and growth to the individual's full potential.
- ▶ Recognizing these needs and how well they are met will often explain the characteristics of the members of the group.
- ▶ Understanding needs and characteristics provides help in program planning and in getting things done. By matching challenges to each individual's needs and characteristics, the leader involves group members and increases their motivation to do a good job.
- ▶ Understanding needs and characteristics, being sensitive to the feelings of each individual in the group, creates trust and builds confidence in their leader by the group.

Understanding the needs and characteristics of the group is an important skill in forming the group. Recognizing the needs and characteristics of others helps to bring the group together.

Leadership Skills Highlights

4. Representing the Group

When a leader represents the group, he must know its resources and understand the needs and characteristics of its members. Are they ready, willing and able to do the job? Do they have the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary? How will they feel about the leader’s decisions when he is representing them?

The leader represents the group in two situations:

- ◆ **Without consultation** -- when he doesn’t have the opportunity to consult the group about a decision.
- ◆ **With consultation** -- when he can meet with the group and talk things over.

The leader can represent the group in two ways:

- ◆ He must represent the group’s decision exactly.
- ◆ He uses his own judgment with the permission of the group.

He must always balance the group’s decision with his own. The “Reaction Scale” is a useful guide to recognizing the feelings of the group. The “What Would You Do?” chart is helpful in seeing the balance between the group’s decision and the leader’s view.

REACTION SCALE				
YES		MAYBE	NO	
ENTHUSIASM	COMPLIANCE	INDIFFERENCE	RESISTANCE	REFUSAL
All right! Great! Cool! Awesome!	Okay. Yes. Sure. Why not?	Don’t know. Perhaps. Maybe. Yeah.	No. Negative. Not. Uh-uh.	Never! Absolutely not! No way! Not a chance!

Leadership Skills Highlights

What Would You Do? How would you as a Leader react to these six situations?			
<i>Your patrol is</i>	<i>Other patrols are</i>	<i>Your position is</i>	<i>Your action is</i>
Enthusiastically for	Decidedly against	Committed	?
Decidedly against	Indifferent	Committed	?
Indifferent	Enthusiastically for	Uncommitted	?
Enthusiastically for	Indifferent	Committed	?
Resistant	Indifferent	Uncommitted	?
Compliant	Decidedly against	Uncommitted	?

The leader wears two hats:

- ◆ *He represents the views of the group to others* -- such as a Patrol Leader to the Patrol Leaders' Council.
- ◆ *He represents the views of others to the group* -- such as a member of the Patrol Leaders' Council to the Patrol, or as Senior Patrol Leader representing the decisions of the Scoutmaster and Troop Committee to the Patrol Leaders' Council.

With a knowledge of resources, skill in communicating, and an understanding of the needs and characteristics of the group, the leader is prepared to represent the group. Representing the group links a Patrol to the Troop and the Troop with the Patrol, through the Patrol Leaders' Council. It is a practical example of democracy in action. The group has both rights and responsibilities. Reaching decisions between different viewpoints and representing the group helps the group work together and improves both understanding and fun for all.

Leadership Skills Highlights

5. Effective Teaching.

Effective teaching is a process to increase the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the group and its members.

Definitions:

- ◆ **Knowledge** is what a person learns through familiarity or experience. It's what you know.
- ◆ **Skill** is the ability to use what you know.
- ◆ **Attitude** includes the desire to do something (*motivation*) and the belief that you can do it (*confidence*).

The focus is on learning, not teaching. **For teaching to be effective, learning must take place.**

The steps of effective teaching include:

- ◆ **Learning objectives.** Decide what to teach. Knowing the resources of the group and reviewing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the group can suggest subjects. Understanding the needs and characteristics of the group can suggest ways to teach.

Set specific objectives of what the participant should be able to do when the presentation, demonstration, or session is over.

- ◆ **Discovery.** Help the participant find out what he really knows. Help him find out what he doesn't know and give him a reason to want to learn. Determine how much of the subject you need to cover.

Make it as interesting as you can. Get his attention.

- ◆ **Teaching-Learning.** The participant learns by **hearing, seeing, and doing**. Tell him, show him, and then let him try it. Good communication skills are vital. Keep it two-way to be effective.

- ◆ **Application.** Make the learning real. Let the participant practice the skill on his own.

- ◆ **Evaluation.** Check the application. How did he do? How did you do? Did learning take place?

Use the six questions of evaluating while you are presenting the subject to measure the participant's progress and your own.

If learning is not complete, recycle the process. Use the techniques of teaching-learning and application to help get the skill across.

Leadership Skills Highlights

Be on the alert for **minidiscoveries**. As you use effective teaching, there are many little discoveries. Each time you and the participant realize that something is worth teaching and learning, a discovery takes place. These are sometimes called “a-ha!” moments. That’s when the light bulb goes on. Use them, and apply the techniques of effective teaching to make sure that learning takes place.

The steps of effective teaching do not always follow in precise order. Be flexible. Remember, learning will involve many discoveries, continuous evaluation, teaching-learning in several steps, and frequent applications -- which will be evaluated, lead to further discovery, and so on.

Effective teaching is a skill critical in improving the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the group and its members through a learning process. By effective teaching, a leader helps a group develop real ability to work together and to get the job done.

Leadership Skills Highlights

6. Evaluating.

Evaluating helps measure the performance of a group in getting the job done and working together. It suggests way in which the group can improve its performance. There are six basic questions to ask in evaluating:

A. Getting the Job Done

1. Was the job done?
2. Was the job done correctly?
3. Was the job done on time?

B. Keeping the Group Together

1. Did everyone take part?
2. Did they enjoy themselves?
3. Are they ready for more?

Evaluating also checks for the balance between the job and the group. It helps the leader to focus on how to work toward the objectives of getting the job done and keeping the group together.

The objectives are met by **working together**.

- ◆ Working together creates an awareness of one another.
- ◆ As group members work together to get a job done, they realize that they need each other to do a good job.
- ◆ That awareness helps bring them together.

Working together is also important because:

- ◆ It helps us to get the job done.
- ◆ It strengthens the group.
- ◆ It helps us keep the group together.

Evaluating is an important skill in measuring and improving the group's performance. By examining the balance between the group and the job, a leader can learn how to help the group work together.

Leadership Skills Highlights

7. Counseling.

Counseling is an important skill to:

- ◆ Help people solve problems.
- ◆ Encourage or measure people.
- ◆ Help a Scout reach his potential.

You cannot really solve a problem *for* another person. You can only help him reach his *own* decision.

Counseling can be effective when a person is:

- ◆ Undecided. (He can't or won't make a decision.)
- ◆ Confused. (He hasn't enough facts or he has more facts than he can deal with.)
- ◆ Uninformed. (He knows no solution.)
- ◆ Locked in. (He know no alternative way to go.)

Sometimes the person only thinks he has a problem. Counseling may help him discover this. It may clarify the true nature of the problem.

Counseling can be effective when a person has made a hasty decision and it's too late to change.

- ◆ He's worried about the decision. (Was it right?)
- ◆ He's worried about the consequences. (What will happen?)
- ◆ He didn't consider all the facts.
- ◆ He misinterpreted the facts.
- ◆ He didn't consider the alternatives.

Counseling may give the person a chance to reconsider and decide what to do.

Counseling is often like *first aid*. It relieves minor aches and pains. It's what you do "until the doctor comes." The patient tells you "where it hurts." You can then get a more experienced counselor involved. It's important to remember that leaders are often approached with problems or they may spot problems. You have to help. You can't just let them suffer.

How do you know if there really is a problem?

- ◆ If someone comes to you, there is a problem. It may be big or small, but there is a problem.
- ◆ If *you* think there might be a problem, ask. Do it in such a way that the person will feel you may be willing and able to help.

Remember to use the first-aid approach. If the problem is bigger than you can handle, refer it to a more experienced leader.

Leadership Skills Highlights

Create a climate for counseling.

- ◆ Take the person aside, but don't make it obvious to the other members of the group. Aim for privacy and a feeling of confidence.
- ◆ Help him relax and take it easy. Perhaps he can't get started or he can't stop talking. No two people or problems are exactly alike.
- ◆ Wait and see what this problem looks like.

Know and use the **six basics of counseling**:

1. Listen carefully.
2. Ask yourself, "Do I understand?"
3. Summarize.
4. Add facts.
5. Check alternatives.
6. Do not give advice.

Know the **five ways to respond**:

1. Restate his words in your own words.
2. Ask about his feelings on the matter.
3. Show that you are listening.
4. Ask a question now and then, but do not cross-examine.
5. Encourage him to continue talking.

Remember to use the first-aid approach. If the problem is bigger than you can handle, refer it to a more experienced leader.

Counseling is a useful and important skill to help solve problems, to reassure members of the group, and to help each member of the group reach his full potential. Members of the group grow in both confidence and trust, and the group's capability will be strengthened.

Leadership Skills Highlights

8. Sharing Leadership.

Four styles of leadership generally are recognized:

1. **Telling (or ordering).** The leader alone identifies the problem, makes the decisions, and directs the activities. The leader might or might not involve the opinions of group members.
2. **Persuading (or selling).** The decision is still made by the leader. Having made the decision, the leader must “sell it” to the group to get cooperation.
3. **Consulting.** Group members participate and provide input. The leader may suggest a tentative decision or plan and get the group’s reaction. Having consulted the group, the leader still makes the final decision, usually based on the group consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, the group is encouraged to note and follow the desires of the majority.
4. **Delegating.** The leader identifies the problem; sets certain guidelines, boundaries, or 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 the leader’s authority may be delegated, the responsibility must remain with the leader.

While any style may work for leading a group, groups are usually more responsive and accepting of a leader who accepts their input and *shares* leadership with them.

Leadership Skills Highlights

9. Planning.

Planning is needed in almost everything we do. For simple tasks, planning is simple, and we do it almost unconsciously. For more complicated jobs, careful planning helps guarantee success.

There are six steps in planning:

- a. Consider the task.
- b. Consider the resources.
- c. Consider the alternatives.
- d. Write the plan down.
- e. Put the plan into action. (Do it.)
- f. Evaluate.

Decisions are made after each step.

The “Planning Guide” provides step-by-step details of the planning process.

Planning is an important skill in helping the group to work together. The leader involves the group members in decisions, gains their commitment, and helps guarantee success by “living the experience in advance.” In planning, the leader considers resources and looks for learning opportunities to help improve the knowledge, skills, and attitude of the group.

Planning Guide

1. **Consider the task.** What is the job?
 - ▶ Exactly what is the task?
 - ▶ Does everyone understand it?
 - ▶ Does everybody agree to go along with it?

Make decisions:

- ▶ **What?** What must be done?
- ▶ **When?** Is there a special time?
- ▶ **Who?** The whole patrol or just certain members?
- ▶ **Where?** Is there any special place?
- ▶ **Why?** Is there some reason that will make a difference in the planning?

2. **Consider the resources.** What do you have to work with?
 - ▶ What are the resources of the group?
 - ▶ Remember: People are resources because they have knowledge and skills.
 - ▶ Who has experience? Who has done this before?
 - ▶ What equipment, supplies, and money will be needed?
 - ▶ Time is a resource.
 - a. How much do we have?
 - b. Can we do the task in the time available?
 - c. Can we get more time or reduce the task to fit the time?

Make a decision: Do you have what you need to proceed with the plan and the job?

3. **Consider the alternatives.** What could happen to cause you to change the plan?
 - ▶ Think of what could happen before it happens.
 - ▶ Try to anticipate problems.
 - ▶ Develop a “plan B” approach.
 - ▶ Consider the possibilities and write them into the plan.

Make a decision: What alternatives can be used if the plan must be changed?

4. **Write down the plan.** This is the most important step.
 - ▶ Include all the steps needed to carry out the task.
 - ▶ Include the “plan B” alternatives you have developed.
 - ▶ Review and revise the plan before you start.
 - ▶ Formalize the group decision. Put it in writing!
 - ▶ Make a checklist to follow when doing the job.
 - ▶ Commit the members of the group to the plan.
 - ▶ Make a copy for everyone.
 - ▶ If appropriate, file the plan with whomever is in charge.

Make a decision: Let's go!

5. **Put the plan into action.** Carry out the plan.
- ▶ Follow the plan as closely as possible.
 - ▶ If something happens and the plan must be changed, go to the alternatives you have considered.
 - ▶ Keep the task in sight. That's what the group is working toward.
 - ▶ Do not depart from the plan unless there is a good reason.

Make a decision: "How did we do?" This leads to the final step.

6. **Evaluate.** Ask yourselves the following questions about the job and the group:

Getting the Job Done.

- ▶ Was the job done?
- ▶ Was the job done on time?
- ▶ Was the job done correctly?

Keeping the Group Together

- ▶ Did everyone help?
- ▶ Are they pleased with the effort?
- ▶ Are they eager for the next job?

Reflect on the experience.

- ▶ What did we learn from this job?
- ▶ What was the best part of this task?
- ▶ What was the most difficult?
- ▶ What can we do better next time?

Leadership Skills Highlights

10. Controlling Group Performance

A leader influences the performance of the group and of individual members through his actions.

- Control is needed.
 - ▶ A group needs control like an engine needs a throttle -- to keep it from running itself into the ground.
 - ▶ A group works together best when everybody is heading in the same direction.
 - ▶ If a plan is to be properly carried out, someone must lead the effort.
- Control is a function that the group assigns to the leader in order to get the job done.
- A leader should use his influence and his example to control the group performance all the time, in whatever the group is doing.
- A leader should concentrate his attention
 - ▶ On the entire group, being sure to recognize every individual's efforts.
 - ▶ On certain members, those unfamiliar with the skills or those needing improvement in work habits.
 - ▶ (In controlling more than one group,) on the largest group or the group with the more important job.

A leader controls:

- ▶ the work schedule,
- ▶ the quality of the work,
- ▶ the delegation of tasks to others,
- ▶ himself. Is he doing his job of leading as well as he knows how?

Six actions a leader takes to control the performance of the group are:

1. **Observing**

The leader should be in a position to see the group, communicate with its members, and be available (but not appear to dominate).

2. **Instructing**

The leader must often give instructions as the work proceeds and the situation changes. The leader must communicate well, apply the skill of effective teaching, and allow members to use their own initiative. As long as the work is progressing well, the leader should not intrude. Suggestions, rather than orders, are given for improvements.

Leadership Skills Highlights

3. **Helping**

When a group has decided that it wants to perform a task, the leader must help the members be successful. The leader does a good job personally, take a positive approach, and gives a helping hand when needed. Care is taken to see that an offer to help is not implied criticism.

4. **Inspecting**

The leader must know what to expect to see. The leader should know the plan and the skills involved. A checklist is valuable. If the work is not correct, the worker is led to the proper performance of the task. Again, a positive approach with helpful suggestions for improvement is vital.

5. **Reacting**

How the leader reacts to the efforts of the group is important. Good work is praised. Praise the person if the work is good, but the praise must be sincere. If the work is not correct, praise the parts that were done well and accept responsibility for work not done well. A reaction such as "Gosh, I guess I didn't explain it very well" doesn't hurt the leader but makes the person feel good about the corrections that are suggested. React to the total job -- do not focus on obvious weak points.

6. **Setting the example**

The most effective way of controlling group performance is the personal example of the leader. How the leader observes, instructs, helps, inspects, and reacts is vital.

Controlling the group is an important way to increase the group's effectiveness in working together and getting a job done. By his actions and by his example, a leader influences the performance of the group. In the process, he helps group members learn. He considers the resources and the needs of each individual as well as the needs and resources of the group. By his own example, he sets the standards for performance.

Leadership Skills Highlights

11. Setting the Example.

Setting the example is the most important leadership skill. By setting the example, you show others the way. You lead by saying, “follow me.”

Six things you can do to set the example are:

1. **Follow instructions.** Do things the Scouting way. Following instructions, obeying the law, and completing tasks in the recommended manner demonstrates that rules and procedures are important. Be guided by the Scout Oath and the Scout Law in everything you do.
2. **Try hard.** The leader must work as hard as -- if not harder than -- any member of the group. Do more than follow instructions. Leadership by direction is not as effective as leadership by example. Always try to do your best.
3. **Show initiative.** A good leader must do what has to be done without waiting to be told or forced to act. An effective leader respects the good suggestions of group members and encourages each person to show initiative. President Theodore Roosevelt, one of America’s most dynamic leaders, had a motto that serves a leader well: “Do the best you can, with what you have, where you are -- and do it now.”
4. **Act maturely.** There is a time for business and a time for fun. A good leader knows the difference. An effective leader shows good judgment. The group members see that the leader’s personal behavior is directed toward accomplishing the task. Using good judgment helps you gain the respect of others.
5. **Know your 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. Have the “big picture” of the job in mind, but be sure you know how to do the little details. Learn the skills of Scoutcraft and the skills of leadership. Work at them. Attend trainings. Use the skills of leadership. Apply what you have learned. Evaluate how you are doing. Always look for ways to improve.
6. **Attitude, attitude, attitude.** A positive attitude is vital as an example to group members. If your attitude is positive, your group will be positive. Enthusiasm is contagious. If you’re gloomy, your group will always see the dark side of things. Even when (or especially when) things are difficult, your mood can make all the difference to the group. The leader’s personal frustration or discouragement should never be apparent. Failure should be considered a potential learning experience. Your opinion has a real impact.

Styles of Leadership

Four styles of leadership generally are recognized:

1. **Telling (or ordering).** The leader alone identifies the problem, makes the decisions, and directs the activities. The leader might or might not involve the opinions of group members.
2. **Persuading (or selling).** The decision is still made by the leader. Having made the decision, the leader must “sell it” to the group to get cooperation.
3. **Consulting.** Group members participate and provide input. The leader may suggest a tentative decision or plan and get the group’s reaction. Having consulted the group, the leader still makes the final decision, usually based on the group consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached, the group is encouraged to note and follow the desires of the majority.
4. **Delegating.** The leader identifies the problem; sets certain guidelines, boundaries, or 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 the leader’s authority may be delegated, the responsibility must remain with the leader.

While any style may work for leading a group, groups are usually more responsive and accepting of a leader who accepts their input and *shares* leadership with them.

Description of Job Positions

Review