

What It Takes to Be a Leader (For Junior Leaders)



Based on surveys of more than 15,000 which of these traits do you think was selected as the key to effective Leadership?

- Being fair-minded?
- Being cooperative?
- Being honest?
- Being imaginative?

Do you tend to hide your mistakes?

If you guessed "honest," you get a high mark. It scored far above any of the in a list of 20. In fact, the top four characteristics of admired leaders and the percentage of people who selected them is:

- Being honest - 87%
- Being forward-looking - 71%
- Being inspirational - 68%
- Being competent - 58%
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"If these qualities alone were running for office," say the authors of *Credibility*, They are the Ones that would achieve consensus and victory."

Source: *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It*, by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, Jossey-Bass - Inc., Publishers, 380 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104.

I 'm In Charge! ... Now What?

Sharing Leadership

There are lots of ways to be a "leader." In different situations you will properly use them all. Here are five general styles of leadership:

1. The **Dictator** uses a "telling" or "ordering" style. He alone identifies the problems, makes the decisions, and directs the activities. He may or may not ask the opinions of the patrol.
2. The **Persuader** is a salesman. He still makes the decisions, but needs to "sell" them to the group to get cooperation.
3. The **Delegator** controls with rules. He identifies the problem, sets guidelines, and then turns the problem over to the patrol or one of its members. He accepts the resulting decision if it is within the guidelines.
4. The **Democrat** goes by majority rule. The group discusses the issues and provides ideas and

opinions. He may suggest a plan and get the group's reaction. He makes the final decision, usually based on what the majority wants.

High credibility leaders foster such things as greater pride in the organization, a stronger spirit of cooperation and teamwork, and more feelings of people, ownership and personal responsibility.

What are some of the other characteristics of credible leaders?

- They do what they say they will do. They keep their promises and follow through on their commitments.
- Their actions are consistent with the wishes of the people they lead. They have a clear idea of what others value and what they do.
- They believe in the inherent self-worth of others. And they learn. "How to discover and communicate the shared values and visions that can form a common ground on which all can stand."
- They are capable of making a difference in the lives of others- and liberating the leader in everyone.
- They admit their mistakes, they realize that attempting to hide mistakes is much more damaging and erodes credibility. But when they admit to making a mistake, they do something about it.
- They arouse optimistic feeling and enable their people to hold positive thoughts about the possibilities- of success.
- They create a climate for learning characterized by trust and openness.

5. The **Participator** steps down as leader and joins the group. He decides or agrees in advance to abide by the group's decision. Before using this style, you must consider the resources of the group and, if necessary, change to a more direct style.

And then there is. The **Abdicator**, who does nothing and has no leadership style, and who is a leader only by title.

No single leadership style is best. Selecting the right style of leadership is itself an act of leadership, based on the situation and the ability and experience of the group. As leadership styles move from telling to joining, your authority appears to lessen, and the group's participation

increases. Leadership is a dynamic process, varying from situation to situation with changes in leaders, followers, goals, and circumstances.

Regardless of style, the leader always accepts responsibility. He may delegate or share his authority, but never his responsibility.

But They Won't Do What I Say!

Controlling Patrol Performance

Controlling patrol performance is an important but often-misunderstood leadership job. To many people, "control" means that a whip-cracking boss is in charge. Good control is much more smooth, and much less obvious.

A patrol needs control to keep everyone moving in the same direction. If a plan is to be properly carried out, someone must be in charge. Controlling is a job that the patrol consciously or unconsciously assigns to the leader, to get the job done.

Control involves six basic operations:

1. **Observing.** Be in a position to see the patrol, and communicate with it, but don't try to dominate. Praise good work. Give suggestions, NOT orders, for improvements.
2. **Instructing.** You might need to give instructions as the work proceeds and the situation changes. Apply the skill of effective teaching (see also *These Guys Don't Know ANYTHING! - Effective Teaching*). Allow the patrol members to use their own initiative. If the work is going well, don't intrude.
3. **Helping.** You must help the patrol to be successful. Participate in the work. You must do

your best personally, take a positive approach and give a helping hand when needed. "Want any help?" is a good way to ask without being critical.

4. **Inspecting.** You, and the patrol, need to know what the finished work should look like. You should know the plan, and the skills involved. A written checklist sometimes helps. If the work is not correct, you can make suggestions or demonstrate. Again, a positive approach is very important.
5. **Reacting.** Praise the effort if the work is good, but you have to mean it. If the work is not right, Praise the parts that were done well and accept responsibility yourself for the parts that aren't so hot. You might say, "Gosh, I guess I didn't explain it very well" - it won't hurt you, but it makes the others feel good about corrections that are suggested. React to the total job - do not focus on just the weak points.
6. **Setting the example.** The most effective way to control patrol performance is your personal example. How you observe, instruct help, inspect, and react is the key.

Walking The Talk

Setting the Example

The absolutely, positively most effective leadership skill is your personal example. A good leader sets a positive example in these ways:

- **Follow instructions.** Following rules and doing tasks the right way highlights for others that rules and procedures are important. How can you lead, if you won't follow?
- **Try hard.** You must work as hard, -or harder, than any other patrol member. Leadership by direction doesn't work without leadership by example.
- **Show initiative.** You must do what has to be done without waiting to be told or forced to act. You should also respect the good suggestions of the patrol members, and praise them when they show initiative.
- **Act with maturity.** Show good judgment. The patrol members will see that your behavior is

directed toward getting the job done, not horsing around.

- **Know the job.** You should be good at the skills your patrol must use. When you are not, you must know and use the resources of the patrol - step back, and ask a more skilled patrol member to take the lead.
- **Keep a positive attitude.** Enthusiasm is contagious. You will sometimes be discouraged, but don't let it show.

Scouts copy the actions and behaviors of leaders they like and admire. Scouts will literally walk, talk, and act as the example set by the youth leaders of the troop.

I've Got A Problem

Counseling

Counseling is something you do all the time as you work with members of your patrol, giving encouragement or praise, or when you help someone solve a specific problem.

There are six keys to good counseling:

1. **Listen carefully.** Give your full attention to The Scout.
2. **Ask yourself,** "Do I understand what this Scout is trying to say?"
3. **Summarize frequently.** "Okay let's see - first (.) Happened, then (.) Happened, and now you are worried about (...), right? "
4. Sometimes he only needs more information. The Scout might not have all the facts, or might not know all of the resources available. Give the information or suggest where he might find it.
5. Encourage the Scout to of different ways of handling the problem. He has the problem, has thought about it more than you, and might have a solution. He may only need your confirmation or **encouragement.**
6. You must not give advice. The objective of counseling is to help the Scout find his own solution.

A general rule is to keep the Scout talking. Don't try to arrive at a solution before he has finished telling the problem.

These Guys Don't Know ANYTHING!

Effective Teaching

Effective teaching is a process for helping people learn. There are five elements:

1. **Objectives.** What should the Scouts be able to do at the end?
2. **Discovery.** A discovery is any event with these three results:
 - o Scouts discover what they DO know. Until then they might not have been sure.
 - o Scouts discover that they DO NOT know something they must know if they are to be successful in what they want to do.
 - o Scouts discover a desire to learn more.

Sometimes a discovery just happens. An alert leader can turn this into a learning experience. This is "opportunity teaching" Often, through an instructor will "set up" a discovery as the introduction to a learning activity. A discovery can be simply a leading question, such as "What is this tool good for?"

Use "trigger words" to keep the Scout talking – "What did you do then?" or how did that make you feel?" Can bring out more details. Words of sympathy or understanding such as "Wow," "Oh my," or "that's a shame" can help.

We're SO Disorganized!

Effective planning and problem solving is usually the result of seven specific steps:

1. **Consider the task.** What is the problem? What's our goal? What has to be done? Who does what, when, and how?
2. **Consider the resources.** How much time does we. What are the skills of the group? What equipment supplies are needed (and available)? What else do need?
3. **Consider alternatives.** Stop and think. Pros and cons? Happens if something goes wrong? What's the alternate plan (Plan B)? Is Plan B better than the original plan?
4. **Decide.** Who has the responsibility to decide? Is a bad decision better than no decision? Is no decision a decision? Is a group decision best?
5. **Write down the plan.** Writing down a plan will often make it better, or at least make it dearer to everyone.
6. **ACT.** All too often, great plans are formed but not followed. Make sure everyone knows his or her part.
7. **Evaluate.** How did it go? Did we reach our goal? Did we give our best effort? What might have worked better? Look at the entire problem-solving process to get a better plan next time.

3. **Teaching-learning.** When a discovery shows what the Scout already knows, the instructor has three choices to make:
 - o The Scout knows the skill - the objective has been met;
 - o The Scout knows part of the skill - concentrate on the part still missing; or give the- full instruction session.

We learn from hearing (lecture, discussion conversation), seeing (reading displays, demonstrations), and doing (trial and error, copying others). Learning is actually a series of discoveries. Each step should lead to some success - keep the Scout encouraged that he is making progress.

4. **Application.** If possible, each Scout should have an immediate chance to try what he has learned.
5. **Evaluation.** Review to see if the objective was met. Sometimes the review itself is another discovery.

The five elements are not a lockstep, process to march through. They are a mix of factors that can be used to plan a learning experience.

What Do We Need?

Understanding the Needs of Your Patrol Members

The characteristics and needs of Scouts are different from one to the next. They often depend on the Scout's background in his home, school, church, and other organizations, as well as the particular situation at the moment.

Each person has some important needs. At the basic level is the need for food, water, shelter, and warmth.

The next level involves the need for safety and security. After this is the need for friends, order, and a feeling of belonging.

At the fourth level, needs include recognition, self-respect, and independence.

The final level is the need for confidence, achievement, and growth to full potential.

What Do We Have To Work With?

Knowing and Using Resources

For a patrol to get anything done, it must know what resources it can use, from outside the patrol and from its own members.

For a Scout troop or patrol, "outside" resources can be handbooks or leaflets, parents and friends of members, local businesses, community organizations, and local Scouting organizations such as the National Capital Area Council and the George Washington District.

Troop 612 has a "Resource Center" where we keep many kinds of written Scouting resources. We have other resources, such as the Troop's equipment, and a list of parents' skills.

But often the resources of the troop and patrol members themselves are greater than any individual member can see. These resources are the total of all the members' educations, Scouting careers, and other life experiences.

They're Not Gone Like This. .

Representing the Patrol

To represent your patrol at the Patrol Leaders' Council (PLC), you must know your patrol members, know their resources and capabilities, and know their likes and dislikes.

Before representing your patrol, you must,

- Get all of the available facts
- Decide on the situation
- Determine the patrol's reaction
- Make written notes

When representing your patrol at the PLC:

recognizing these needs and how well they are met will often explain the apparent attitudes and behaviors of Scouts. If one level of needs has been met, the next levels of needs become more important. For instance, a boy from an unstable family in a poverty stricken neighborhood, who is afraid to go out of his house after 6 pm, may

respond quite differently than one from a stable and loving middle income family, living in a safe suburb.

But sometimes the characteristics you observe may not tell the true story. The confident, self-assured boy might just be playing a role to feel important. Or, the quiet and reserved person might be so self-confident that he sees no need to attract attention

It is important for members of the patrol to share basic facts about themselves and their skills and interests, in writing if possible (perhaps through a questionnaire that the PL can summarize and share). Patrol members should also share, in discussion, what they consider to be "meaningful experiences" - things they have done that would be considered successes. The patrol members look for resources in the successes each has experienced. All discussions must be positive - no negative statements are allowed.

As Scouts learn the resources available to the patrol and from within the patrol, they gain a better understanding of each other, and the potential for what the patrol can achieve. And when challenges arise, the patrol is better prepared to meet them, and more confident of success

- Give the facts
- Give your patrol's reaction, feeling and position
- Respect the opinions of other patrols
- Consider personality problems
- Make written notes

Then, you must switch hats, because you now must represent the PLC to your patrol. The PLC's decisions, attitude, or actions must be communicated back to the patrol. Again, present the facts, explain the decisions, and fairly represent the PLC's attitude and opinions.

Huh?

Communicating

Communication is the exchange of information. It involves receiving, storing, retrieving, giving, and interpreting information. A patrol's success depends on how well its Scouts communicate with each other, and with those outside the patrol

We receive information by hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling - the five senses. We receive information by reading what is written, or listening to what is said. We also receive powerful messages through facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and appearance.

Most people store information in their memories. Your memory can be supported with notes.

Retrieving information is closely related to how the information is stored. People known for outstanding memories have simply developed an effective storage and retrieval system. This can include repeating the information as it is received, taking notes, or remembering simply where to find the information.

Giving information involves the same five senses. Speaking and writing clearly, using pictures, watching and

Roses And Thorns

Evaluating and Reflecting

An evaluation is a review of an activity. You want to know what went well (what gets the roses?) and not so well (where were the thorns?). Six simple questions can be used to evaluate almost any activity. The first three questions are about the activity, while the last three questions are about the participants:

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?

A reflection is a 10-minute evaluation that. Might be done right after an activity such as a weekend campout, or a shorter activity such as an inter-patrol competition. Reflection helps ensure that the values of the experience come through to the participants.

Ground Rules - Participants sit so they can see each other, and must agree not to interrupt or make fun of each other. They are free to keep silent if they wish.

If you are leading, try not to talk about your own experiences. Help start the discussion, then let the participants take over with only a few questions now and then from you. Be positive. Have fun with the activity and

being sensitive to the receivers, asking for feedback, and summarizing are ways to Help give information effectively.

We constantly interpret the value of information. Many times, information is exchanged, but communication does not take place. This might happen when:

- One person doesn't think the information is important
- Two messages don't agree
- Your own background or prejudices cause you not to accept what is said
- You dislike the other person so you filter out what he or she says
- Something else is on your mind or something distracts you
- You think you already know all about it

Most people learn 10 percent of what they know by listening, but 80 percent by seeing (observing and reading). People remember 20 percent of what they hear but 50 percent of what they both hear and see. It's useful to make notes both when you are receiving information, and when you are giving it.

with the session. The more you do it, the easier it becomes for both you and the participants.

Open-ended questions prevent yes and no answers - What was the purpose of the game? "What did you learn about yourself?"

Feeling questions ask how they feel about what they did "How did it feel when you started to pull together?"

Judgment questions ask them to make decisions about things what was the -best part?" "Was it a good idea?"

Guiding questions keep the discussion focused "What got you all going the right direction?"

Closing questions help participants draw conclusions and end the discussion "**What** did you learn?" "What would you do differently?".

Bao-Vinh Nguyen
(Jr. Assistant Scoutmaster Troop 162BSA)