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Foreword

Leadership Yarn

The first morning at summer camp was rainy and new Scout Brian Smith had not slept well. His sleeping bag had slid halfway down his cot so the bottom half was outside the tent, soaking up the rain. One sock, a flashlight, two boots, a Scout neckerchief and a few other possessions lay on the wet ground behind the tent. Brian's Patrol Leader (who was also his tent mate) tried to get Brian to clean up, but Brian seemed to have no idea where to begin.

Brian's advancement schedule was just as disorganized as his tent. He had lost the blue merit badge cards Scoutmaster Kramer had signed, and the Archery and Leatherworking Merit Badge counselors were complaining. The Archery counselor, concerned about range safety, asked Scoutmaster Kramer whether Brian suffered from ADHD. Brian's Patrol Leader offered to accompany Brian to his classes and hand deliver a new set of cards directly to the counselors.

Despite his organizational challenges, by the end of the week Brian had completed all of his Tenderfoot requirements and now sat in uniform before his Board of Review. The Board members asked a few substantive questions and were pleasantly surprised at Brian's depth of knowledge.

"You've done well so far, Brian. What do you hope to accomplish in Scouting?" asked a Board member.

"I want to be an Eagle Scout," Brian replied.

"Why do you want to be an Eagle Scout?"

"Because I want to make a difference," said Brian, looking up at the canopy of leaves above him and fidgeting in his seat.

A pause. "Why will being an Eagle Scout help you make a difference?" asked another Board member, expecting an answer like "It will help me to get into college" or "because then I'll be able to boss the other kids around."

"Because Eagle Scouts make a difference," answered Brian. "If I become an Eagle Scout, I will be able to make more of a difference."

The Board members looked at one another in astonishment. From the mouth of this disorganized 11-year-old had come one of the most insightful comments they had ever heard from any Scout at any Board of Review.

We wrote this book to explore how Scout leaders can use Baden-Powell's Patrol Method to train Scouts to lead. We do not have all the answers. But we wanted to share practical lessons we have learned in our Scouting experiences in hopes that they may prove useful to other Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters, Venture Advisors and other adult leaders.

The Boy Scouts of America is America's most successful youth program. Our shared vision as Scout Leaders is to:

Offer young people responsible fun and adventure; Instill in young people lifetime values and develop in them ethical character as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law; Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership; Serve America's communities and families with its quality, values-based program.

— BSA Vision Statement

The BSA carefully chose the language “Train young people in citizenship, service, and leadership.” Not teach. Not encourage. Train.

Training and mentoring our Scouts in leadership may seem less important than “fun and adventure,” “lifetime values,” “ethical character,” “citizenship” and “service.” In the “business” of running an active Scout Troop, it is easy to let leadership training play second fiddle or even slip through the cracks. A Scoutmaster has strong incentives to favor orderliness and efficiency over leadership training. However, leadership training is part of our shared mission and has been central to Scouting since Baden-Powell created Scouting more than a century ago. It is more important now than ever.

Leadership training: aren't we doing that all the time? Not necessarily. Even if we are doing everything else right, training our Scouts to lead does not automatically follow. We need to do more than set a good example and be a good role model.

Leadership training and mentoring in a Scout troop is actually very simple. Any Scoutmaster who puts his mind to it can do it. Trust and respect your Scouts. Use the Patrol Method. Give your Scouts real responsibility. Mentor. Motivate. Recognize results.

While the basics are simple, the devil is in the details. In addition to understanding what to do, we also need practical tools and techniques to get the job done. A self-evaluation of our own leadership training efforts brought us back to the roots of Scouting: B-P's own life and writings. In B-P we found a practical man who had great insights that are still mostly valid today, a century after he first formulated them. We are convinced that B-P's ideas for the first Boy Scout Camp at Brownsea Island in the summer of 1907 are difficult to improve upon.

Our modest goal in writing this guide was to help bring ourselves and our fellow Scouters back to practicing Lord Baden-Powell's basic "game with a purpose" for leadership training. We offer the guideposts that have been most useful to us over the years: practical guidance from Baden-Powell himself. Just as B-P did, we illustrate practical techniques through storytelling—"Leadership Yarns."

We wrote this book for modern American Scout leaders. You can buy B-P's *Scouting for Boys* at your local BSA Scout Shop. Reprints of B-P's *Aids to Scoutmastership* are available at Amazon.com. B-P's books are wonderful and definitive, but can be tough going for modern American readers. In addition, while human beings have not changed much since B-P's time, certain practical techniques that worked for British boys of the early 1900's may need some re-positioning for modern American teenagers.

This guide is just a starting point. You probably have leadership experience from other contexts, although you may find that not everything you do at work or in the armed forces will directly translate into leading a Scout Troop. Talk to experienced Scoutmasters in your district. Go to your district's Scoutmaster training courses. Please attend your council's Wood Badge training course and earn your beads.

There is no substitute for experience. We think of Scouting as a laboratory for leadership training. A unit's weekend campouts and hikes, the important week or two at summer camp, the Patrol Leaders Council's Court of Honor planning session — everything a unit does, in fact — is a perfect opportunity for leadership training. In the outdoor laboratory that is Scouting, it's just you, at least one other uniformed leader or other adult, and your Scouts.

This book might get you thinking more about your own leadership training efforts. Reading it may give you some new ideas or a new perspective. It may help you to confirm what you already know works. Some of your practical solutions may be better than ours. Beyond B-P's basic Patrol Method precepts, there is no one right way of Scout leadership training. The important thing is to think

about what we are doing and why we are doing it. Through focus and experience, you will soon develop instincts. Trust them.

If you have comments, insights, criticisms, or an experience to share, please drop us a line. We would love to hear from you. We know we will benefit from what you have to say.

Good luck in your Scouting adventures. You are a major participant in the greatest, most exciting, most effective youth program and movement ever created. We are a worldwide brotherhood whose defining characteristic is the Patrol Method — a mechanism Baden-Powell adopted to train youth to become effective, ethical, unselfish, dedicated leaders. This is exactly what America needs today. You can make it happen if you set your mind to it.



Introduction

We Are Often Distracted from Effective Scout Leadership Training and Mentoring

Any good Scoutmaster can tell you that running a Scout Troop is hard work. Volunteers are constantly “forgetting” to do the things they say they are going to do — or doing them only at the last minute when there is little margin for error. Logistics of organizing Troop events can be challenging. Scouts do not get together every day and may attend different schools, making communication and coordination difficult.

With 21st century achievement-oriented parents and their children demanding increasingly well organized and well-run, action-packed, entertaining programs, many Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters and Crew Advisors have chosen to rely heavily on capable adults to get things done efficiently, timely and correctly. After all, Scouts usually do not have the planning, organization and logistical skills to carry out complex Troop activities. If you want to have something done right, delegate it to someone who has done it before and has all the requisite skills. That’s good leadership, right?

Consider our mission: to train Scouts to lead. If our Troop Committee and adult leaders do most of the planning and decision-making, the Scouts will have little responsibility. But Scouts can’t learn how to lead just by following or watching. Learning to be a leader requires practice. In Scouting, achieving perfection is not nearly so important as letting the Scouts do it themselves.

It Takes Discipline and Focus to Be Effective

While nearly all Scoutmasters say they want to develop leadership qualities in their Scouts, far fewer seem to have spent much time thinking through how to actually do it. Even fewer are disciplined and focused enough to do an effective job of training Scouts to lead other Scouts.

Many believe leadership training automatically flows from other Scouting methods such as good advancement, or by having Scouts in uniform be “up front” conducting opening and closing ceremonies, or by sending one or two Scouts to council-run leadership training courses. Those things are necessary, but they are not enough.

A Scout Troop Is the Perfect Place to Mold and Mentor Leaders

The BSA is dedicated to training Scouts to be leaders. It offers Council-level, regional and National Scout leadership training programs. These programs are excellent. They can transform Scouts who go through them.

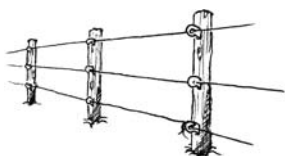
A Scoutmaster should encourage his Scouts to attend BSA leadership training courses. But he needs to do more. We unit leaders should not just sit back and let specialists at other levels of the Scouting organization take care of what is perhaps the most critical part of the mission. B-P intended *you* to train your Scouts to lead.

Leadership training is for all Scouts — not just the few who will attend council-level training programs. Baden-Powell believed leadership training should pervade the entire Scouting program. He created Patrols to offer leadership opportunities to as many Scouts as possible. That can happen only in a natural Scout Troop such as yours.

Nearly everything a Scout Troop does is an opportunity to train Scouts to lead. We Scoutmasters and Assistant Scoutmasters have a lot of time with our Scouts — at least a weekend each month, a night each week and a week at camp each summer. We know our Scouts better than any District or Council level leader ever will. The BSA has given us a mission: train Scouts to lead. We need to exercise careful focus, dedication and discipline if our unit's program is going to effectively train young leaders.

Leadership Training and Mentoring Is Hands-On, Not Theoretical

The only real way to learn how to lead is by doing it. Will Rogers once quipped,



“There are three kinds of men: The ones that learn by reading; The few who learn by observation; The rest of us have to pee on the electric fence and find out for ourselves.”

People are more complex than electric fences. Figuring out how to motivate people and get them to follow you is the quest of a lifetime. How does a teenager get the opportunity to learn how to do that? By joining a Scout Troop! Scouting provides many opportunities for Scouts to learn how to lead by finding out for themselves — but only if Scoutmasters and other adult leaders make it happen.

Will Rogers was also saying that you probably will not learn how to train Scouts to lead simply by reading this or any other book. We have tried to keep this book very practical, but there is no substitute for experience. Your next Troop campout is the perfect opportunity to try out a new approach. Be patient with yourself. Keep trying. If you have the vision, focus and dedication, you cannot fail.

The Patrol Method Is the Recipe for Scout Leadership Training

Baden-Powell's Patrol Method is the recipe for youth leadership training. Weekend camping trips and weeklong treks or summer camps are concentrated leadership opportunities. There are many logistical, planning and other interesting leadership challenges to putting together a fun, active outdoor program. The younger boys instantly recognize the authority of the older boys because of the difference in ages and experience. Outdoor activities tend to provide immediate and direct feedback about what works and what does not.

Many Scouts Will Not Lead Without Encouragement from Their Scoutmasters

Many 21st century teenagers are perfectly willing to sit back and let adults take care of all the headaches. After all, in America's increasingly suburbanized lives, that is what most parents do with their teenagers — take care of all their problems and make all their decisions for them.

In a Scout Troop, the Scoutmaster sets the standard for leadership. Effective youth leadership training begins with the Scoutmaster.

We use the term leadership *training* throughout this book to differentiate it from “teaching” leadership or “instilling” leadership or “encouraging” Scouts to lead. Leadership training is not about using a whiteboard to conduct management classes. Training a Scout to lead is much more active. It requires lots of individualized attention, mentoring, guiding, pushing and prodding. Even more importantly, it takes judgment and experience to know when and how to intervene in a way that will not undercut leadership.

Leadership training is also a gradual process that takes time and patience. One can think of it as tending a garden. The gardener can prepare the ground, plant the seeds, weed regularly and even guide the way the plant stems are headed. But ultimately, it is up to the plants themselves to grow strong and tall.

Sometimes, too much or the wrong kind of intervention can actually hurt the growing plants.

Are You Prepared to Train and Mentor Tomorrow's Leaders?

Here are some interesting questions we ask ourselves from time to time:

- ♣ Do we believe ethical, effective leadership is important to America and the world?
- ♣ Are we committed to helping our Scouts become effective leaders?
- ♣ Are we willing to give our Scouts the opportunity to lead?
- ♣ Are we prepared to focus on applying the Patrol Method?
- ♣ Can we trust teenagers to lead “our” unit?
- ♣ Can we allow teenagers to learn from their own mistakes without trying to solve all their problems?
- ♣ Are we prepared to be the patient mentor and counselor — sitting in the back of the room rather than standing up in front?
- ♣ Do we have the time, commitment and dedication to give our Scouts the training and tools they need to lead effectively?

The Best Scoutmasters Are Stage Directors



Baden-Powell taught us that the best Scoutmasters are the ones who can retire to a corner of the meeting room or campsite and watch the activities move forward under the leadership of the Scouts themselves. This does not mean that the Scoutmaster's role is unimportant or minimized. Far from it! To the contrary, putting the Scouts out in front to make decisions and lead other Scouts is the highest credit to any Scoutmaster.

The best Scoutmasters we have seen spend most of their time behind the scenes — mentoring and guiding young leaders, educating parents and running interference to prevent other adults from taking responsibility away from Scouts. They train their Scouts to lead and then trust them with the responsibility of self-governance. Of course, any Scoutmaster occasionally needs to take charge and exercise authority — after all, boys will be boys. But the best Scoutmasters

are careful about how and why they intervene. In this book you may find some pointers so you don't have to learn all your lessons the hard way.

How This Guide Is Organized

Section 1 “Understanding and Telling ‘The Why’ ” describes a basic approach of logic and explanation in leadership and leadership training. American boys are more willing to be led when they understand the reason why they are being asked or told to do something.

Section 2 “ ‘The Why’ of Scout Leadership Training” provides historical perspective on how B-P designed Scouting to train leaders. If you are new to Scouting, you may learn a lot from Section 2. If you already know all about Brownsea Island, you can skip to Section 3.

Sections 3 and 4 on “The Patrol Method” are the heart of this guide. These sections provide practical advice and guidance on how to use B-P's basic Patrol organizational structure and method to train Scouts how to lead other Scouts. If you read nothing else in this guide, you may want to spend some time with these sections.

Section 5 “Striving for Excellence: Doing Your Best” provides some inspirational explanation about the importance of doing our best along with techniques for motivating Scouts to do their best.

Section 6 “Caring Leadership” discusses the role of ethical decision-making in training Scouts to become leaders. Ethical servant leadership is the starting point for the “Be-Know-Do” principles underlying modern Scout leadership training. Unethical or immoral leadership is far worse than no leadership at all. We can show our Scouts through our example what it means to act ethically. We can make ethical considerations a part of every important decision.

Section 7 “Planning: How to Facilitate Without Taking Over” provides practical guidance on how to get inexperienced planners to plan more effectively and accomplish goals. Planning is a life skill. It is also an essential part of modern Scout leadership training. Effective leadership cannot take place without it. Planning is usually where Scoutmasters have the most difficulty when they are trying to create a Scout-run Troop. The typical fifteen-year old has no idea how to plan, and yet is expected in a Scout-run Troop to plan for many other people including adults.

Section 8 “Shared Leadership” explores delegating, situational leadership and other ways to share leadership.

Section 9 “Techniques that Support the Patrol Method” is a series of special topics we have found useful in training leaders.

Section 10 “Create Your Personal Legacy of Leadership” steps back and gives a long-term perspective.

The Appendix includes information that may be useful to you, including some ideas for Troop Leadership Training weekend experiences.



Look for “leadership compass bearings” to help you orient yourself on your journey.

Each section contains quotations from Baden-Powell’s original source materials as well as additional quotations we have found helpful or inspirational.

You will also find storytelling “Leadership Yarns.” Baden-Powell knew that storytelling is one of the most effective ways to communicate ideas. Our “Leadership Yarn” stories are fictional but are loosely based on composite observations we have made along the way or heard from other Scout leaders. Any resemblance of the fictional characters in our “Leadership Yarns” to real people is purely coincidental.

In our experience, the best way to train Scouts how to lead is out in the field, not in a classroom. Scouts get more than enough classroom time in school. We cannot imagine B-P telling a group of Scouts to sit down in front of a chalkboard or even a television set for a presentation on effective personnel management. He used campouts, hikes, patrol meetings and campfires as practical opportunities to train Scouts how to lead. In our experience, it is highly effective to teach Scouts leadership on a practical as-needed basis when they need a particular technique or realization to solve a problem. If we are doing our Scoutmaster job correctly, our Scouts will constantly present us with “teaching moments” we can use to advance leadership training.

If you have completed Wood Badge for the 21st Century, you may notice that this guide is sparse on the memory tips of the BSA’s current Youth Leadership

Training Continuum. This guide is closely aligned with the spirit of National Youth Leadership Training and complements NYLT's detailed methods, skills, tools and philosophy. However, we are starting from a somewhat more traditional perspective: our founder, B-P's, own writings. For in-depth discussion of modern BSA leadership theory and practice, we encourage you to read your BSA Scoutmaster's Handbook and other excellent course and leadership training materials the BSA offers — or even better, enroll in your council's next Wood Badge for the 21st Century course. Just remember B-P's admonition: if you follow the Patrol Method and do your best, you cannot fail!

For more information and other resources, point your web browser to our website www.Scoutleadership.com. It offers helpful links, additional materials and other resources.

Most of all, have fun! You are an important part of the most successful youth organization the world has ever known. We are all fortunate to be Scout Leaders in 21st century America.



Difficulties in Working the Patrol Method

Excerpted from:

Capt. Roland E. Philipps, "The Patrol System"

(C. Arthur Pearson Ltd. Tower House London 1917)

It is possible that having read up to this point, a Scoutmaster may be thinking to himself, "I quite agree that the Patrol System is the best way in which a Troop can be organised and conducted, and am fully aware that many of the best Troops in the country are run entirely upon these lines, but in view of the exceptional circumstances in which I am placed it is quite impracticable to adopt Patrol Training in my own Troop." One Scoutmaster puts forward the peculiarity of his boys - their exceptional fickleness or their surprising solidity - another speaks of their scattered homes and of long distances to be traversed on dark winter nights. One Scoutmaster finds that in his Troop there are peculiar difficulties with regard to the older boys, while another discovers that he is singularly situated with regard to the younger ones. One man cannot work his Troop in Patrols because he has got no Assistant Scoutmaster, and another finds it impossible because he has a wife and three children and has to work late at the office.

The point to remember, however, is that there is no Troop, either in town or in country, which will not be all the better for working on the Founder's lines. Let it be at once admitted that there is hardly a Scoutmaster in the Brotherhood who is not an exceptional man working with extraordinary boys under unusual conditions with peculiar difficulties! That is the whole charm of it. The Movement itself is peculiar - peculiarly inspiring - and to make it a success one requires peculiarly helpful and original methods of training and organisation. Such methods are summed up under the heading - "The Patrol System." Again, a Scoutmaster may say, "I believe in this system of training, but I have run my Troop on other lines for two or three years and it is not possible now to make a change. If I could start again it would be different." May it, therefore, be stated here beyond any impossibility of ambiguity or misunderstanding that the Patrol System is no cut-and-dried plan, but arises from a special attitude of mind - a belief that the character training and education of a boy should be evolved from within rather than imposed from without. The boys, in fact, must make themselves into Scouts - nobody else can do it for them. The shirt and shorts may be imposed from without, but it is only out of the heart and mind of the boy him-

self that the Scouting spirit can be successfully evolved. This attitude of mind does not take years to produce. It comes within a week by re-reading “Scouting for Boys” from the boy’s point of view.

The way to start the Patrol System is by having a preliminary talk with the boys about the idea of the Patrol as a self-contained unit, and then without any waste of time by establishing the Court of Honour [our Patrol Leaders Council] and the Patrol Competition as two permanent Troop institutions. The other developments will come by themselves.

Roland Philipps was killed in action in the Battle of the Somme on 7 July 1916 as he led his men to attack enemy trenches.

