

Sharing the load to build a quality program – Recruiting quality leaders and building adult participation

Bob's rules of growing your leadership team

1. Building a successful leadership team begins with you. You are the cornerstone of the new team. Your positive attitude is essential. Set the example that you want others to follow.
2. Leadership should be both rewarding to the soul and FUN.
3. Scouting operates on the principle of shared leadership. Everyone is a leader for some things and a follower for the others.
4. Your parents have been trained to participate as they are. Changing behaviors will require new training. It may even take a couple of years to bring in new parents who are ready to help.
5. Examine your own behavior and practices to see if they are barriers to others helping you—are you a control freak? Are you too critical of others? Do you communicate your plan?
6. Leadership transitions are a normal part of scouting. They happen and should be planned for openly. Training people in advance of taking the position helps get people up to speed quickly.
7. If a key leader departs suddenly, don't panic. Keep the program going for the boys. Then use the six steps below to select a replacement.
8. Willingness is not competence. Key positions require different qualities and skills.
9. The diversity of our volunteers is our strength. Each of us brings talents, skills, and resources to the table. Put people in positions that take advantage of their strengths to get the job done, and where weaknesses don't impact keeping the group together.
10. Scouting is not a "free-time" activity. Treat each volunteer's time as priceless.
11. Training is essential. How can you deliver the program if you don't know what it is?
12. Uniforming is essential. Uniforming influences the behavior of the person inside. It also sets the example for the boys.
13. Delegate, delegate, delegate! Don't be afraid to ask people to perform specific tasks.
14. Show sincere public appreciation to your leaders.

The six sure steps to quality leader recruiting for key positions:

1. Call a meeting of the knowledgeable¹. Remember that the chartered organization must be involved in the selection and approval of all leaders.
2. Discuss the qualities and characteristics needed for the position. Discuss possible candidates.
3. Establish a committee to identify, screen, qualify, and rank candidates.
4. Appoint a subcommittee to ask the candidate to take the position. Try to include someone who the candidate can't say "no" to. (i.e., a spouse, pastor, boss, good friend, etc.)
5. Make an appointment with the candidate.
6. Ask the candidate to take the position. Explain the vision for the program, roles and responsibilities and expectations.

¹ (For scoutmasters and varsity coaches, BSA policy suggests that a professional brief the chartered organization on their responsibilities, and that the IH be involved in the decisionmaking.)