

The 4 T's of Scout Leadership



*A*s the “Activity Program” of the Aaronic Priesthood, Scouting provides tools to help in achieving the purpose of the priesthood. *It's the only program...*

The purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood are to:

- *Become converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ and live its teachings*
- *Serve faithfully in priesthood callings, and fulfill my responsibilities*
- *Give meaningful service*
- *Prepare and live worthily to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood*
- *Prepare to serve an honorable full-time mission*
- *Obtain as much education as possible*
- *Prepare to become a worthy husband and father*
- *Give proper respect to women, girls, and children*

It has been said that there are “Four T's” of successful Scout leaders who wish to help young men achieve these goals. They are:

Time, Training, Tenure, Testimony

Let's start with this as our foundation:

Elder Mark E. Peterson simply stated, that *“Scout work IS Church work!”*

As leaders in the Young Men's organization we have been counseled that we can become better leaders and help the young men achieve their goals by implementing the Four T's of Scouting leadership first put forth by Bishop Vaughn Featherstone.

Both leaders as well as the YM Presidencies and Bishoprics need to focus on these 4 T's. It is a team effort. Only you can put in the Time and get Trained for your position. Only the Bishop can give you Tenure in your calling. If you will do these three things, you will gain both a Testimony of the Scouting program as well as a strengthening of your testimony of the Gospel.

Some time ago a Stake President dropped by the home of his Ward's Scoutmaster. He and the son were working together repairing the boy's bicycle. He stood and talked to them for a few minutes and then left. Several hours later he returned and the father and son were still working on the bike together. President Porter said, "Glen, with the wages you make per hour you could have bought a new bike, considering the time you have spent repairing this old one!"

Glen stood up and said, "President, I'm not repairing a bike, I'm training a boy!"

That year twenty-one boys achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in Glen's troop...

Impact teachers do not teach lessons, they teach boys.

To be an "impact" teacher it takes a commitment of TIME!

President Ezra T. Benson described Scouting as

"...a builder of character, not only in the boys, but also in the men who provide the leadership."

President Harold B. Lee said,

"One's love is measured by how much he gives, not how much he gets."

and President Thomas Monson said

"I commend you leaders of boys, for you demonstrate by your lives that the greatest gift a man can give a boy is his 'willingness to share a part of his life with him' "

When Bishops call people to these callings, they should discover if:

They have sufficient time to devote to this important calling? This is not a personal quality, but it is an essential ingredient for success in Scouting. If the calling involves outdoor activities, will his working conditions allow him the time that he needs (for example, to attend summer camp)? For young leaders, will the time-involvement create family problems at home?

Is the individual willing to be trained, including attending roundtables? THIS IS ESSENTIAL. A Scout leader who is not willing to be trained rarely operates a good program.

Does the individual have good rapport with boys? Except for the those who work mainly, or only, with adults (as some committee members might), this quality is essential.

"Boys need heroes close by. They need to know some man of towering strength and basic integrity, personally. They need to meet them on the street, to hike and camp with them, to see them in close-to-home, everyday, down-to-earth situations; to feel close enough to them to ask questions and to talk things over man-to-man with them." Spencer W. Kimball

Put in the time and stick with it!

Einstein said, "It's not that I'm so smart; it's just that I stick with the problem longer."

"The most important object in Boy Scout training is to educate, not instruct."

Sir Robert Baden-Powell

BASIC TRAINING. To be effective in your calling and to give the boys you serve the best Scouting has to offer, You Need To Be Trained. Your ward should have a training program for new leaders. Inquire as to how your training will proceed, and schedule yourself for the next training opportunities. Scout leaders training should be attended by bishoprics, Young Men presidencies (quorum advisers), Primary presidencies, and committee members as well as all Scout leaders. BSA training will be part of your training program. Basic training courses are given several times each year and you can go to any one that is convenient for you.

A typical schedule might be: All leaders take **Fast Start** training and then **New Leader Essentials**. They then take **Leader Specific Training** courses which vary by what Scouting position they are being trained for. **Only after completion of these three courses are you considered to be “trained” in your Scouting position.**

Next comes, an **Introduction to Outdoor Skills** training. This is important because although you may know a lot about the out of doors, you don't necessarily have the ability *to teach others these skills*. This training will help you learn skills you may not have as well as how to teach them to boys. **HALTT** (High Adventure Leadership Training) is training that teaches advanced outdoor skills such as canoeing, climbing, survival, etc. If you want to take your boys on a High Adventure, you must be HALTT trained for the boys to be recognized and to get the awards.

[For more training information see handout on Scout Leader Training](#)

ROUNDTABLES. Roundtable is Scouting's correlation and teacher development meeting rolled into one. Its held by the district monthly. It is important to attend so you know what is going on in your local district and council, and to get program materials and information. Varsity leaders have council VALT every other odd numbered month and Venturing leaders have a quarterly Venturing Roundtable.

COMMITTEE MEETING. Each Scout unit should have a monthly planning meeting. This meeting is conducted by the committee chairperson and attended by the Scout unit committee members and Scout unit leaders. This is where boy needs, program plans, and support requirements are discussed. The committee supports the Scout leader's program plans with transportation, administrative paperwork, volunteers, advancement boards of review, procurement of awards, advancement tracking, award ceremonies, finance and fund raising, membership registrations and annual re-chartering, summer program attendance and support, communications with parents and publicity, unit training materials, unit equipment maintenance and accountability, etc.

WOODBADGE and POWDERHORN. These courses are advanced leadership training programs for leaders with a minimum of three years' tenure and experience as a Scout leader.

If you think you don't need any training and that you already know it all, then why not volunteer to help teach the rest of us who are still learning? There are very few LDS Scouters who help out at the District or Council level. This reflects poorly on our commitment to Scouting... Didn't someone we know, once say, *“When thou art converted, strengthen they brethren.”*?

TENURE IS IMPORTANT!

Vaughn Featherstone

"Short tenure if they don't enjoy the work and are not willing to put in the time necessary, and long tenure if they love the young men and want to serve them with all their hearts and souls."

If you have not participated in Scouting as an adult, but only as a boy, you may not appreciate the technical nature of Scouting. A person with a modest knowledge of the gospel can often step into a classroom and within a short time be teaching well. However, before a new Scout leader can consider himself competent, he must learn (or re-learn) many things related to Scouting: filling out a variety of forms such as advancement reports, merit badge cards, transfer forms, and tour permits; knowing Scout policies on a wide number of issues; understanding advancement rules and requirements; knowing merit badge requirements and procedures; knowing how to conduct various ceremonies; developing many outdoor skills as well as teach skills in a totally new environment; etc. All this while keeping the kids safe, entertained and progressing.

Training can teach a leader these skills, but until he has done it, and he is familiar with it, he will be a novice -- and ward Scout programs are better when they are run by seasoned Scouters and not by novices. *Vince Lombardi*, longtime Packers Coach said, *"The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of will."* We must have the desire to keep our good Scout leaders in Scouting callings for as long as possible. Change for change sake only hurts the program, which hurts the boys.

If Scout leaders are switched in and out every couple of years (or less), you will always be working with novices. Scouting is among the most technical callings in the Church -- it requires considerable experience. How well your Scouting program performs depends not only upon whether your leaders are trained, but also upon whether they are experienced -- and they will be experienced only if you leave them in position long enough.

Neal Maxwell said, that *"God does not begin by asking us about our ability, but only about our availability, and if we then prove our dependability, He will increase our capability."* I think the key phrase there is ... our availability...

If leaders are released short of five years, the unit never really reaches its stride. It must constantly rebuild, and the new leaders must begin their climb up the learning curve all over again. Unfortunately, boys in the pack, troop, team, or crew are shortchanged.

BSA recognizes this fact by basing most adult awards on having tenure of at least three years -- and for good reason. It takes a year for a Scout leader to experience the entire year's program and understand what it's all about. During the second year he begins to apply and experiment with what he learned the first year. Usually, it is not until his third year that he is running an adequate Scouting program. Now is when he is of **most** value. Leave him in and reap the rewards of a good program for as long as possible.

Aim for ten years or more but never for less than five years.

Elder Robert Backman said,

"I hope our bishops will call mature men to these positions and let them serve for a few years."

The First Presidency recently stated, *“We desire all young men to strive to earn the Eagle Scout and Duty to God Awards. As youth work on these goals, they will develop skills and attributes that will lead them to the temple and prepare them for a lifetime of service to their families and the Lord”*

Scout leaders should have a testimony, and be striving to live gospel principles. This is important for every Church member in order to assure their personal salvation, but it is especially important for Scouters because of the impact that they can have on a boy's life. Often they become a model for a boy, or fill a void for boy who has no father. Because they draw near to boys by associating with them in the things that boys enjoy doing, their friendship often leads a boy to share their ideals and imitate their actions. What a Scout leader does not only affects his own salvation, but it can also affects the salvation of many young men as well.

But it doesn't end there!

Part of our stewardship as Scout leaders is to help a testimony of the Gospel germinate in the heart of the boys.

Elder Boyd Packer said, "A young man who understands and is fully committed to the great principles of the Scout Law has his feet firmly planted on a path that can lead to a happy and constructive life. He will qualify for his own self-respect, and he will very likely form wholesome relationships with others and will establish an honorable family. Being true to Scout principles will help him in forming a companionship with his Heavenly Father that will strengthen all the other relationships and aspects of life."

The flip side of the coin is having a testimony of Scouting. A leader who devotes his time, talents and energy to his calling as a Scout leader, gets trained, and serves as long as possible will see the fruits of his labor and know that our leaders were and ARE inspired to adopt and use Scouting program for our young men.

Elder Thomas Monson said, “Much has been said in the media of late regarding Scouting. Let me affirm that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has not diminished in any way its support of the Scouting movement. [The prophet] has declared that the Church endorses Scouting “and will seek to provide leadership which will help boys keep close to their families and close to the Church as they develop the qualities of citizenship and character and fitness which Scouting represents. ...

“We’ve remained strong and firm in our support of this great movement for boys and the Oath and the Law which are at its center.”

... if ever there were a time when the principles of Scouting were vitally needed—that time is now. If ever there were a generation who would benefit by keeping physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight—that generation is the present generation.”

We are building a foundation for future fathers and leaders with ethics and ideals.

<http://www.scouting.org/boyscouts>

The Aims (or objectives) of Scouting are:

To build character
Foster citizenship &
Develop personal fitness

The Methods used in Scouting to achieve these “Aims” are: (but in no particular order)

Advancement: Learning new skills, achievement, & recognition

Ideals: such as the Scout Oath – Law – Motto & Slogan

Patrol Method: Learning to follow & to lead in an organization

Outdoor Program: Having fun in and learning to respect the out of doors

Uniform: Developing respect, group association & character

Association with Adults: Role model, example & adult image

Personal Growth: Developing good mannerisms and habits

Leadership Development: Learning leadership skills, citizenship

*These three methods
more important at
as boys grow older*

This is why Scouting is important! *President Benson* aptly said, "Give me a young man who has kept himself morally clean and has faithfully attended his Church meetings. Give me a young man who has magnified his priesthood and has earned the Duty to God Award and is an Eagle Scout. Give me a young man who is a seminary graduate and has a burning testimony of the Book of Mormon. Give me such a young man, and I will give you a young man who can perform miracles for the Lord in the mission field and throughout his life"

Lastly, some people joke that are really 5 T's and that the fifth **"T"** stands for Truck...

Although it's nice, owning a truck is not a requirement, but this jokingly refers to the fact that leaders have to give so much of themselves. Yet Scouting is one of those things that the more you put into it, the more you get out... If you have never seen the movie **Follow Me, Boys!** with Fred McMurray, or if it has been a long time, go and rent it and watch it again. You will be taught some valuable leadership principles. Someone once said, "*There is no Scouting without **Outing***". Get out with the boys monthly on some adventure or another. Learn to love God's creation and bounty and have joy in teaching this to your boys.

We cannot say enough about those who remain home tending to the many details of home and family, while the Scout leaders are off with the Boys. We owe them a big, big thank you! *President Eldon Tanner* said, "*I want to say that this Scout movement helps build the kingdom of God, it helps us with the priesthood program. Scouters, through the Scout program, can go out and reach boys that cannot be reached otherwise. The President of the Church recognizes that. That is one of the reasons the program was officially recognized and accepted as a part of the Church program. And when we realize that, brethren, **let us go out and save those boys!***"

Let me close with my humble testimony of thankfulness for my Scoutmaster, Fred Ericson, who selflessly served over 30 years and made a big impact upon my life. I have a testimony both of the Gospel and of the Scouting program. I have quoted a number of church authorities, past and present and now I would like to close with a favorite quote of mine by *Will Rogers*, who said:

“There's only one thing wrong with Boy Scouts... there aren't enough of 'em....”
May we be fully engaged in this great work is my prayer...