



HABITS OF SUCCESSFUL TROOPS

Scouting America.
Black Swamp Area Council



LEAVE A LEGACY

HABITS OF SUCCESSFUL TROOPS

Over the years, the most successful units have shown a number of common elements. Not every unit does every one of these items or perhaps not exactly as mentioned here. However, most of these habits are present in some form for any unit which has a great program and good parent support.



1. Annual Program Calendar

- A. Have a calendar for the year which tells Scouts & parents when unit functions are:
- B. Plan the calendar with unit leaders (if a Pack: Have Den leaders present to avoid overlapping schedules or numerous back-to-back events) more people means a better chance of avoiding conflicts such as: District/council events, Chartered organization events, home football games, PTO meetings, parent/teacher night, and community events like Balloon Fest. Opening weekend of hunting season may be a conflict
- C. Include monthly summer fun events
These events are necessary to keep Spring recruits and keep unit members in contact, avoiding a start from a dead stop in the Fall. (For Packs, use day camp as one month's function. A cookout with old fashioned picnic games or elective Adventures Olympics, bike rodeo, a family night at a baseball game, rain gutter regatta with other family activities, afternoon ice cream social, Pack campfire with Den skit competition/ camping overnighiter, lock in/ overnighiter at church gym with some advancement, day trip to zoo, State House, etc.....)
- D. Use district/council events to provide a bang. Good advancement opportunities & activity planning is done for you. Fall Family Fun Days, Spooktacular, Camporees, Day Camp, Scouting for Food, and other council events are there for you.
- E. Hand out the calendar / post it to the unit website/Facebook page
- F. Revisit the calendar throughout the year for unavoidable adjustments

2. Communicate with parents frequently - in methods that works

- A. Unit website - use a template from a site like Google to make this simple
- B. Facebook - many younger parents use this instead of email
- C. Paper announcements/short term calendar of events handed out at unit functions a piece of paper on the fridge is still great & lasting communication
- D. Unit email account such as UnitX@yahoo.com or Gmail to do announcements. Do coordinate blasts to avoid overloading parent inboxes
- E. Texting is great for last minute, unavoidable changes - different room at church, power outage at meeting spot group texting of details is tricky, perhaps a note to check the website for details on an activity would work better than trying to squeeze it into the available field

3. Respect Everyone's Time

- A. Start/end on time
- B. Schedule with other big events in mind - don't expect anyone to show on school open house night
- C. Include everyone – Court of Honor or Den rank ups are not necessarily fun for everyone.
- D. Avoid numerous back-to-back events (ex: Den meeting, Pack meeting & weekend event in one week is tough)

4. Volunteers

- A. Many hands make light work - tell everyone that if X number of parents work the event for __ minutes each, everyone will get to enjoy time with their Scout(s)

When you tell parents ___ minutes of work, stick to ___ minutes. Many parents will willingly volunteer when they realize they will not be made to work the whole event

- B. Use the BSA “Family Talent Survey Sheet” or a customized unit version of one (find one at: <https://www.blackswampbsa.org/resources/membership-hub/75884>)

Listing numerous small volunteering roles sounds less intimidating and more effective than just asking who can volunteer big roles like a derby chairman.

- C. Provide training info to leaders - on-line training links, a unit training afternoon, council/district training events
- D. Support Volunteers - have a set of previous year meeting plans on hand when you have the Sign-Up Scouting Night to show parents you are asking be leaders that it is not as difficult as they fear. Maintain a Unit X drawer file cabinet with meeting ideas/plans/calendars by rank. If you have a unit supply closet, materials like soccer cones, balls, rope, sacks of marbles, etc....can be reused by units. Let them know about district/council round tables & training opportunities
- E. Thank volunteers at unit events, on the website and in emails news
- F. If you are a Pack, ask your Scout Troop for help. Den chiefs can be invaluable assistance running a Den game or teaching a skill. A Troop may send Scouts to help run a derby or assist with some other Pack event.

5. Use Council Fundraisers to Avoid Constantly Asking for Money

- A. Popcorn & Coffee can fund many unit expenses such as: a handbook, Scouts Life subscription, awards & advancements, derby kits, unit supplies for events, camp expenses, registration Packet, and t-shirts. This reduces the work necessary to collect money and keep track of who has paid or not.

INSTRUCTIONS

GOOD SUCCESSION PLANNING ENSURES THAT THE UNIT DOESN'T FAIL SIMPLY BECAUSE SOMEONE HAD TO MOVE.

THIS WORK SHEET SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND UPDATED BY THE UNIT KEY 3.

COMPLETE THIS FORM ANNUALLY WHEN DOING PROGRAM AND BUDGET PLANNING.

EVERY PACK MUST HAVE A CHARTER ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE, SCOUTMASTER, COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND TWO OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

OTHER POSITIONS LISTED ON THIS WORKSHEET ARE RECOMMENDED.

UPDATE AFTER FALL RECRUITING TO ADD NEW PARENTS/LEADERS BASED ON RESULTS OF INTEREST SURVEYS.

UPDATE AFTER ANY CHANGE IN ADULT LEADERSHIP.

LIST ADDITIONAL POSITIONS THAT REPRESENT SHORT-TERM TASKS THAT CAN BE USED TO ORIENT NEW PARENTS TO UNIT OPERATIONS.

PLANNING OR COORDINATING A PARTICULAR ACTIVITY OR EVENT IS A GOOD LEADERSHIP ROLE TO ASSIGN A NEW PARENT.

THE PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING IS THE FIRST STEP ON THE TRAIL TO BRINGING NEW ADULT LEADERS TO THE UNIT.

TROOP SUCCESSION PLANNING WORKSHEET

POSITION	CURRENT	NEXT	NEXT	COMMENT
CHARTER ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE				
SCOUTMASTER ASSISTANT				
SCOUTMASTER ASSISTANT				
SCOUTMASTER				
COMMITTEE CHAIR				
SECRETARY				
TREASURER				
ADVANCEMENT				
MEMBERSHIP OR RECRUITING				
QUARTERMASTER				
COMMITTEE MEMBER				
COMMITTEE MEMBER				
COMMITTEE MEMBER				