Question: What is the Scoutmaster’s most important job?

Training Youth Leaders

“Training boy leaders to run their troop is the Scoutmaster’s most important job.”

“Train Scouts to do a job, then let them do it.”

“Never do anything a boy can do.”

—Robert Baden-Powell

BLTUPM

• ... is an abbreviation for what?

BLTUPM

• Scoutmaster Handbook

THE BOY-LED PATROL

“The patrol method is not a way to operate a Boy Scout troop, it is the only way. Unless the patrol method is in operation you don’t really have a Boy Scout troop.”

—Robert Baden-Powell
Frogs

- Andy’s Rule No. 76: You can tell some Scoutmasters there are four billion stars in the universe and he believes you, but tell him the Senior Patrol Leader is supposed to be running the troop meeting and he looks at you like you’ve just had frogs leap out of your mouth.
- http://netcommissioner.com/askandy

Outline

- Levels of Youth Participation
- Measure Empowerment
- Propose Play
- Describe Resources

Authentic Youth Participation

- Shared decision making with adults
- Collaboration with adults
  - Adults serve as resources and mentors
Ladder of Youth Participation

1. Manipulation
   - Adults using young people to promote a cause
   - Youth don’t understand the cause

2. Decoration
   - Youth “perform” to promote an adult agenda
   - Aim: an emotional response from adults

3. Tokenism
   - A youth is scripted to speak to adults
   - Supposedly representing youth

4. Assigned but informed
   - Youth participation is decided for them
   - Understand: Aims
   - Understand: Why they were chosen

5. Consulted and informed
   - Project designed by adults
   - Youth opinions consulted

6. Adult initiated, Shared decisions
   - Youth opinions taken seriously in decision making

7. Youth initiated and directed
   - Rare: adult don’t want to give up control
   - Hard to sustain without adult involvement

www.scout.org/en/information_events/library/youth_involvement/youth_involvement_youth_empowerment

Boy Scouts of America
Troop 2837 Chester, VA
3rd Annual Mulch Fund Raiser
Ladder of Youth Participation

8. Youth initiated, Shared decisions
   - Adults are involved as facilitators for the goals of young people
     - Resources
     - Skill development
     - Evaluation help
   - Enhances learning for young people, builds a sense of community and ownership, and adults enjoy the enthusiasm of young people

Patrol System Survey Results

Adults may be overly-involved
   - 24% report that planning is largely or wholly accomplished by the adults. Skill instruction happens with direct adult involvement in 73% of the responding Troops. Of these 8% report that adults do all of the instructing.
   - 36% report that directions to Scouts are largely given by adults, of this 9% report that directions came almost exclusively from adults.

Patrol System Survey Results

Youth leader’s planning is sometimes compromised.
   - 24% report that youth leader’s plans are either nonexistent or frequently revised or vetoed by adults.
   - 60% report that adults other than the Scoutmaster attend patrol leader’s council meetings and 53% speak up and advise Scouts during these meetings on a regular basis.
   - 38% of troops report that adults have the primary responsibility for planning meetings and events.

Patrol System Survey Results

Patrols don’t appear to have a large measure of independence or continuity
   - 45% of patrols are often combined for an activity or event.
   - 49% of patrols have 10 minutes or less scheduled at troop meetings, 17% have no time scheduled.
   - 41% of troops have inter-patrol competitions less than once a month.
   - 87% of troops do not have their patrols set up independent campsites; of these 29% make no differentiation of patrols at all when camping.
   - 59% of patrols have no independent meetings or activities.
Empowerment

- Participation is linked to empowerment
- Strive to make empowerment inclusive

-- Andy’s Rule No. 90:
The Scouts who show up for every meeting are usually the ones who don’t need to.

http://netcommissioner.com/askandy

Participation ↔ Empowerment

- Consider who
  - Has most of the information?
  - Initiates, sets the agenda?
  - Decides, plans and organizes?
  - Expertise is implemented?
  - Sets up the structure and rules?
  - Evaluates?
  - Has the power?

Rate Participation

- Activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Youth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...have most of the info.</td>
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<tr>
<td>...initiated</td>
<td>...set the agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>...plan and organize</td>
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<tr>
<td>...make the decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>...expertise is used</td>
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<tr>
<td>...set the rules</td>
<td>...decided the structure</td>
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<td>...evaluated</td>
<td>...feedback is actively sought</td>
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<tr>
<td>...have the power</td>
<td>...are empowered</td>
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<≤ shared / in between ≈≥
Rate Participation

- Okpik outing to Northern Tier Ely Minnesota during Winter, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>-5</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+5</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>...have most of the information</td>
<td>+5</td>
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<td>...plan and organize</td>
<td>...expertise is used</td>
<td>...decided the structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>...have the power</td>
<td>!!!!!</td>
<td>...are empowered</td>
<td>+4</td>
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Rate Participation

- Activity: 25th Annual Scouting for Food

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Participation ↔ Empowerment

- Consider how youth can
  - Have most of the information
  - Initiate and set the agenda
  - Decide, plan, and organize
  - Use their expertise
  - Use their structure and rules
  - Reflect on “we did it ourselves”
  - Have power

How to foster participation

- “Scouting is a game for boys under the leadership of boys under the direction of a man” B-P
- That is, adult leaders should provide opportunities for play
Play

• Impression vs. Expression

“Scouting is not soldiering” B-P

Baden-Powell wrote that play is the first great educator. He also described Scouting as a game full of gusto.

• Impression vs. Expression

Play

• Action play
  – Develop sensorimotor skills
  – Understand logical consequences

• Symbolic play
  – Modeling qualities they want to acquire

• Social play
  – Mastery; Expression
  – Rules; Roles; Teams ...

Team Play

• Listening; Communicating
• Agreeing on goals; understanding authority
• Dealing with differing abilities
• Challenge and Choice
• Collaborate or Compete?
• Spirit and Support
• Decision making
  – including dealing with consequences
• OMHIWDMB or Winning, period?
Offering Play

- The answer is simple: the adult leader should offer as much “play” as possible, taking into account the capabilities of the young people.
- Offering as much play as possible means establishing a framework allowing room for initiative while ensuring guidance and security.

Goldilocks Problem

- Offer a “just right” framework.
- Don’t limit opportunities by using a framework that is:
  - Too tight
  - Too loose
- Example: Chess

Framework Too Tight

- Don’t block opportunity for initiative and exploration.
  - The framework is so tight that there is no longer any play; everything is determined in advance; there is no room for initiative.
  - This is the attitude of authoritarianism and overprotection adopted by some adults.

Framework Too Loose

- Don’t refuse to establish any framework or rules.
  - There is no longer any play because there is no longer any confrontation between the dynamism of the individual and reality.
- Laissez-faire can careen between boredom and terror.
Chess
• Board; Rules; Movement
• A fun framework!

BLTUPlayM
• “Scouting puts the boys into fraternity gangs which is their natural organization whether for games, mischief, or loafing.”

Resources
• The BSA syllabus for training youth leaders is ILST
• www.scouting.org
  >Training
  >Youth

ILST: How to Use Games
• Be Prepared!
  – Know how the game is played, what the objectives are, and how its parts lead to learning the objective.
• Present the Game
  – Make the rules clear
  – Stand back
• Lead the Reflection
Project Adventure

• www.pa.org

Methods of Scouting

• The ideals
• The patrol method
• The outdoors
• Advancement

• Adult association
• Personal growth
• Leadership development
• The uniform

The Universal Question

• “What can I do to help?”

www.people.vcu.edu/~albest/Training/PatrolMethod
ALBest@vcu.edu
(804) 752-7588