

Adventurer's MK

PATROL LEADER

Introduction to Leadership Skills

Leadership cannot be taught, only leadership skills can be. Being a Patrol Leader does not exclude you from being a member of the team, nor does it mean you have overall say on what your team do. Being able to listen, communicate and respond to team members are important skills to learn in order to becoming a good leader.

Your attitude as a Patrol Leader needs to be one of support and helpfulness. The attitude that you show your team will create a learning environment and help build the confidence they will need to succeed in every activity. Being an effective leader requires that you put the needs of the group before your own. Instead of thinking of themselves as the boss, a really good leader sees themselves as serving those they lead. They are always looking for ways to make their experience better, to help the troop learn new skills and succeed in reaching goals, and to take on as much responsibility as they are able.

Leading Self

- Being clear on what you want to be as a leader is the first step in leading oneself. You need to lead yourself before you can lead others. It's about being clear of your own sense of purpose, your own vision, and why you want to be a leader.
- As with the saying "If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything," you must also have a clear sense of your goals as a leader. These goals will guide you through the actions you take as a leader.

Leading Individuals

- The skills you use to lead others such as communication, decision making, and planning are often regarded as foundational leadership skills.
- You need to master these basic skills in order to effectively lead others.

Leading Teams

- In addition to one-to-one skills, leaders need to be able to lead and inspire individuals to work together effectively in order to achieve their goals as a team.
- As a leader of teams, it is your responsibility to create an environment in which your members are recognised, are valued, and feel challenged.

Avoid creating an us-versus-them environment

Seek out areas on which you can agree and build from there. Explore ways that everyone succeeds. Look for ways to draw on individual strengths of members to the advantage of the entire troop. Help each member to feel that they have something important to contribute to the success of the patrol and troop.

Most problems have many solutions. Once the team agrees upon one, provided it is an ethical choice, go along with the group choice, even if it is different from the choice you personally would have made. As a leader, it's your responsibility to help focus the full energy of a group on making that solution work.

You will be tested as a leader when the spirits of patrol or troop members are down. When that happens, draw upon your abilities to communicate clearly, listen actively, and encourage open discussions.

Using Questions as a Leadership Style

- The thin line between telling and suggesting is not often clear, and suggesting a course of action may be seen as a demand.
- Using questions to help the team make their own decisions is a means of an exchange of ideas or viewpoints.
- By asking questions that cause people to think, is a way to look at experiences to understand and use that understanding to empower your team.

The Patrol Leader does not have to be an expert. However, he or she must be a good example for the team and must be able to train with as well as mentor the team.

Resolving Conflict

Even with the best leadership, there are bound to be occasional difficulties between two people, between groups of people, or between one person and a number of others. The signs of trouble brewing may be small – someone becoming withdrawn and quiet, for example. Or the signs may be obvious – shouting, high levels of emotion, etc.

If you are a patrol leader, you may be in an official role in which you are expected to step in to resolve a conflict. Or you may simply want to help a couple of your friends work through a disagreement.

Whatever the case, there is a proven set of steps to follow to resolve a conflict:

1. Be aware of yourself.
2. Be aware of others.
3. Listen.
4. Use your EAR.

BE AWARE OF YOURSELF

How do we respond when we are hearing something we don't want to hear? When a speaker is angry? When we are tired or hungry? A key to resolving conflict is being aware of ourselves. If we are upset or angry about something, it may affect how we relate to others. Be aware of your own emotions. Take a deep breath. Count to 10.

Being aware of yourself will help you remain as calm as you can and stay focused on finding a solution. Being aware of others will help you adjust the situation to increase the possibility of a good outcome. Be aware of their physical comfort, hunger levels, and other factors that could be affecting their emotions. You might want others to take a break before discussing the problem.

LISTEN

The better the information you have, the greater your chances of finding a workable solution to a conflict. Listen carefully to what others are saying, withholding judgment until you've gotten everyone's side of the story. In addition to hearing the words, be aware of tone of voice, body language, and any other clues to what a person really means. Understand what each person is expressing – what he wants and what he is willing to do to get there. Then clarify that the solution lies with both parties.

You can't make a person do anything they don't want to do. Neither should you expect a person to do something that you are not prepared to do yourself.

How can you persuade someone to change positions? To resolve a conflict? A tool for resolving conflict is EAR – Express, Address, Resolve. As a leader who is trying to manage the conflict, you must use your EAR to help others move through the conflict. Here's what you do.

EAR represents three steps in resolving conflict

1. **Express.** Ask each side in the conflict, "What do you want and what are you doing to get it?" Let them Express their pent-up emotions and concerns. Be sure to listen closely and without judgment.
2. **Address.** Ask each side, "Why is that working or not working?" You are helping them to address the issue themselves. You are holding up a mirror for them so they can better address what they see happening.
3. **Resolve.** Ask each side, "What ways are there to solve the problem?" You are holding them accountable for Resolving the issue. You also are getting information about the problem and gaining time to think about other solutions you might offer up later.

Youth Protection

Adventurer's MK places the greatest importance on providing a safe and secure environment possible for our members to flourish and grow. As a member of the Leadership Team, you have a duty to care for, protect and include every member of the Troop.

Bullying Prevention

Bullying should be taken seriously whenever and wherever it occurs. Patrol leaders should understand how to prevent bullying and be prepared to deal with it proactively and thoughtfully.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is harassment or aggressive behaviour that is intended to intimidate, dominate, coerce, or hurt another person (the target) mentally, emotionally, or physically. It is not "just messing around," and it is not "part of growing up." Bullying is a form of victimisation. Bullying of **ALL** forms is prohibited in Adventurer's MK.

Bullying takes many forms:

Verbal—Name-calling, belittling, taunting

Social—Spreading rumours; destroying or manipulating friendships; excluding or ostracising the target

Physical—Hitting, shoving, kicking, using physical coercion, intimidation through gestures

Criminal—Assault; sexual aggression

Cyberbullying—Using digital technology such as social media, cell phones, etc., to engage in these kinds of behaviours

How to Spot Bullying

A youth who is being bullied may:

- Be reluctant to join activities or unwilling to participate.
- Avoid activities, arrive late, or leave early (to avoid the bully).
- Avoid certain places or areas.
- Refuse to leave their tent at camp (out of fear).
- Experience nightmares, bedwetting, or insomnia (triggered by fear).
- Seem nervous around certain youth.
- Wait to use the restroom away from the group.
- Appear sad, moody, angry, anxious, or depressed.
- Seek, carry, or hide weapons (for protection).
- Lose money or personal items such as clothing or food (taken by the bully).
- Feel sick, often with seemingly psychosomatic illnesses.

- Appear lonely, have difficulty making friends, or suddenly have fewer friends.
- Seem reluctant to defend themselves verbally or physically when teased or pushed.
- Have bruises, cuts, defensive wounds, or other physical marks.
- Mention or consider suicide.

Patrol Leaders should identify these youth and take measures to help ensure their smooth integration into the group.

- Support and empower youth who are bullied or at risk to be bullied; ensure they are connected with other members who have things in common.
- Keep an ongoing, open line of communication with adult leaders.
- Set an example by how you integrate these youth into the program; model strong, positive behaviour by your interaction with youth and adults.
- Take bullying seriously; reinforce the message, that bullying is not acceptable behaviour.
- Closely supervise youth in your care and interrupt bullying whenever it occurs

Remember - Youth Protection Begins With **YOU**.

How to Address Bullying

These tips can help Patrol Leaders respond effectively:

- Immediately stop the bullying. Stand between the bully and the target, preferably blocking their eye contact. Do not immediately ask the reason for the bullying or try to determine the facts.
- In a matter-of-fact tone of voice, state what behaviours you saw or heard. Tell members that bullying is unacceptable, "Calling someone names is bullying.
- Support the bullied youth in a way that allows him or her to regain self-control, to save face, and to feel safe from retaliation. Follow up with the youth later, but at the time of the incident do not ask what happened or be overly solicitous. Young people often find it uncomfortable to be questioned in front of peers.
- Do not require members to apologise or make amends during the heat of the moment. Everyone should have time to cool off.
- Speak to bystanders but do not put them on the spot to explain publicly what they observed. In a calm and supportive tone, praise them if they tried to help. If they did not act, or if they responded aggressively, guide them in how to appropriately intervene or get help when they witness bullying; e.g., "Maybe you weren't sure what to do. Next time, please tell the person to stop or get an adult leader's help if you feel you can't work together to handle the situation."
- Immediately notify adult leaders.
- Hold members who bully others fully accountable for their actions.
- Increase supervision to ensure the bullying is not repeated and does not escalate. Let the bullies know you will be watching to be sure there is no repetition or retaliation.
- Do not require members to meet to "work things out." Forced apologies don't help, and a compulsory meeting could worsen the relationship between the parties. Instead, encourage the member who bullied to make amends in a way that would be meaningful for the youth who was bullied.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of your team is of primary importance. Adventurer's MK provides an opportunity for members to experience the outdoors and along with this experience comes an added measure of risk. Steps must be taken to manage and minimise the inherent risks of being outdoors to make all experiences as pleasant and safe as possible.

Be sure to exhibit the standards you will be leading, and give consideration to potential safety hazards during and between the activities. Always be prepared for emergencies, and keep an eye on the wellbeing of your team.

Personal Support

All leaders need someone to talk to, to share their involvement, and to help them to see their leadership positions in perspective. This does not mean you have failed as a leader, but it is something very important, and should be obtained at every given opportunity.