

Young Leaders' Scheme Taking the lead!



Module B

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0845 300 1818

By choosing to become a member of the Young Leaders' Scheme, you will have the opportunity to develop your leadership skills within The Scout Association.

As a Young Leader, you need to know about how to lead young people in different circumstances. You also need to be able to recognise different styles of leadership and when it is appropriate to use these different styles. If you think about it, you already know a great deal about leadership. As a Beaver Scout, Cub Scout or Scout you will have come into regular contact with adult leaders, who also have differing styles of leadership. You will already have some ideas about what makes a good or bad leader. If you are new to Scouting, you will have experience of different styles of leadership from school.

Styles of leadership

We all know that there are different leadership styles. Teachers, Leaders in Scouting and perhaps others like sports coaches will have used different techniques to try and motivate you.

There are about five different leadership styles:

- ◆ Informal/Supportive

Using this style, the young people you are leading may not be aware that that is indeed what you are doing. Being there to help and support is a form of leadership.

- ◆ Formal/Directive

This is a style that you would most associate with leading – the regimental sergeant-major, giving firm and clear instructions.

- ◆ Democratic/Team Based

This style involves leading a discussion and including everyone in the final decision.

- ◆ Passive

This is the most subtle form of leadership. It involves knowing when to let go and let your youngsters take the lead. It is used when there is no risk to their safety involved and gives them the opportunity to make their own decisions.

- ◆ Organiser

This is a planning style as much as a leadership style. You take responsibility for getting things organised in such a way that the outcome that you desire is achieved.

You will also learn when and where it is appropriate to use each style of leadership. For example, while an informal/supportive role might be useful at a Beaver Scout Colony meeting, the same approach probably shouldn't be used when a casualty is waiting for someone to go and fetch help!

What kind of leader are you?

Hmmmm. Tough one, eh?! In reality of course, it is not always that easy to pigeonhole ourselves into just one of the categories above. We all know that we adopt different approaches when dealing with different situations, depending on the outcome that we want to achieve. Or it may be that you have no opinion on the outcome of a discussion and take a genuinely passive role. It is important to realise that we can (and often, must!)

The Scout Association

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email info.centre@scouts.org.uk www.scouts.org.uk

adapt our leadership styles to the challenges that we face. Your Section Leaders will be able to help you here. Watch what they do in different situations during activities and then ask them why they chose to react in that way.

What makes a good (or bad!) leader?

Think about some of your own experiences in Scouting. Picture something that you thought went particularly well. Think about the leaders involved and what it was that they did to make the experience successful. Did they change their leadership styles to suit different situations? Why?

Some ideas to get you started can be seen below. These are only a taster, there are many more!

Good leaders:

- ◆ plan
- ◆ are team players
- ◆ learn by experience and from mistakes
- ◆ help people learn
- ◆ Have a good sense of humour.

Bad leaders:

- ◆ impose
- ◆ don't listen to others
- ◆ try to do everything themselves.

What have you learned in this module?

Leadership is not an easy skill to master. Some people are natural leaders, but most of us need time to develop our own preferred leadership style. Hopefully, you now have a better idea of which styles of leadership suit different situations. Your leadership skills will develop as you progress through the Young Leaders' Scheme. Don't worry if your own leadership style is not obvious to begin with, it will come with time and experience.