



Setting The Example

This Leadership Skill enables leaders to:

- Understand the Leader's responsibility for setting a positive example
- Understand seven ways a leader can set a good example
- Understand three positive results a leader who sets the example can obtain
- Understand how the Setting an Example contributes to the team building process

Setting the Example is one of the cornerstones of effective leadership. The personal behavior of a leader says more than his words – especially when leading younger Scouts. While it seems very simple, nothing is more important. Fail to demonstrate this to members of your group, and you will never achieve the success that you work toward as a leader. No matter how well you talk the talk, if you don't match it with your behavior, you will lose the respect of the members of the group that you are attempting to lead, and as a leader you will fail.

Seven Key Ways to Set The Example

Follow the Rule Book

If you play league ball, you play by the league rules. Listen to those in authority. As they gain your respect, respect their authority. If you don't understand the rules, ask questions until you do. If the rules don't make sense, work at getting the rules changed.

Try Hard

Following instructions may not be enough. Some teams win, some lose, even in the same league, playing by the same rules. Always do the best job you can. Give more than 100%. Persistence and consistency can make up for shortfalls in other areas.

Show Initiative

Focus on what needs to be done without putting it off until forced to do it. Avoid procrastination. Seize the day. Nothing ever comes to those who wait. Ask for what you want. Look for opportunities to help.

Be Deserving of Their Respect

Show good judgment. Don't clown around, disturb others, or goof off. Don't use crude or offensive language at any time. Don't joke with someone you don't know. Their sense of humor may be entirely different than yours.

Leaders are supposed to act as if they deserved the respect of those who elected them. Nobody who

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demands respect ever gets it, because it must be earned. Remember that wherever you go, someone is undoubtedly glancing your way. What you do is far more important than what you say.

Know Your Job

Keep the “big picture” in mind along with the nitty-gritty. Find out what is expected by those you lead and by those you report to. Be personally proficient in outdoor and leadership skills. You ought to be a good resource for anybody in your group, but not the best for everything. Don't wind up doing everything or you'll be doing it alone, stick to your job as leader. Know your group members' strengths and weaknesses. Know how to back each member up and make everyone look good.

Attitude, Attitude

Your group will notice your opinions on almost anything. Some will adopt your opinions them because they would like to be like you. Do you ever seem to express attitudes that aren't the real you? Is this hypocritical? Attitudes often set the real example. Conscious, positive, attitudes can work wonders.

Personal Appearance

Cleanliness, proper clothing, neat personal areas, showering regularly are important elements that affect other's perception of the example you set. Complete and proper wear of the Scout uniform serves as one of the most influential factors in setting the example through your personal appearance.

The essence of Setting the Example is to remember that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, imagine that a Scout in your Troop or Patrol sees you when you are least aware of it, and that will be the one image that sticks in his mind. Every leader has a special responsibility to set a positive example. As a leader, you are in the forefront of the group, and constantly watched by those you work with.

If you fail to set the example, why should you expect group members to do any better? To help keep the group together and get the job done, everything you do and say should line up with the best possible examples of leadership. When you set the example, you help facilitate the results you want as a leader.

Setting the example is an “internal” component of guiding and directing the team building process. If the leader sets a certain tone to get the job done, others will follow and he will earn their respect. By setting an appropriate example - acting mature, showing initiative, etc - the group will work together more efficiently and effectively and gets more done toward accomplishing their goals.