Planning and Problem Solving

This Leadership Skill enables Leaders to:

- Understand the strategy of Planning and Problem Solving
- Understand how the effective use of Planning and Problem Solving strategy contributes to the team building process
- Understand the importance of Planning and Problem Solving in developing the team member abilities

In Troop and Patrol Leadership, no tool is more important than Planning and Problem Solving. Effective Planning and Problem Solving will serve as the core strategy for meeting goals and solving problems to overcome obstacles on the way to meeting team goals. Effective use of Planning will also help any leader to *keep the group together* while *getting the job done.*

The following steps comprise the Planning and Problem Solving Leadership tool:

Consider the Task	What is the task or job to be done/what is the problem Break it down into smaller parts
Consider Resources	What do you have available that will help to do the job or overcome the problem
Consider Alternatives	What other ways are there to get the job done or solve the problem
Formulate & Write out the Plan	Make a plan include as much detail as possible and as needed Write the plan in clear individual steps including all individual job assignments
Put the Plan into Effect	Get the job done or fix the problem As a leader supervise all parts of the plan as they are getting done
Evaluate the Outcome	Use the SSC tool to figure out how well the job was accomplished or the problem was solved

The steps of the Planning and Problem Solving process can also be illustrated as a cycle of activities, at each step, a decision is made which allows the group to move to the next step in the sequence. The cyclic nature of the process allows the group and the leader to form multiple courses of action or multiple alternative plans in the Planning and Problem Solving process.

Consider the Task

Evaluate the Outcome

Consider Available Resources

DECIDE

Put The Plan in Action

Write The Plan

Consider Alternatives

The Six Steps of Planning

At each step of the Planning and Problem Solving process, the input of the group is included in the "deciding" step. Effective leaders understand that there are multiple factors that will affect the process and when leading a group it is important to keep the following principles in mind:

- Establish ownership and responsibility for the problem
- Present a win/win attitude
- Look for ways of redefining the problem and solution
- Recognize and acknowledge all perceptions, problems, and misunderstandings early in the process or as they arise
- Get agreement on the problem before going on to solutions
- Be very clear about each phase of plan or problem solving strategy
- Plan for small successes first, before moving on to the "big" problem