



Holding Effective Troop Meetings

Planning, coordinating and presenting exciting and engaging Troop meetings is a hallmark of a well run quality Troop, and is the responsibility of every youth leader of the Troop. Poorly run and boring meetings is the reason given most often when Scouts leave a Troop, and leads to the lack of skill development, poor retention of current Scouts and ineffective recruiting of new Scouts.

Preparation before the Troop Meeting:

- A good troop meeting follows the Troop Meeting Plan
- The Patrol Leaders' Council plans the troop meetings
- Resources such as the BSA publications Troop Program Features Volumes I, II, and III are used to help plan effective, productive Troop meetings
- During the planning stages of Skills Instruction, ensure that instructors understand that demonstrations are most effective when they *show* rather than simply *tell* - hands on experience is the most effective method of skill instruction
- Rotate assignments among Patrols - Program Patrol and Service Patrol, and presentation responsibilities
- The Scoutmaster checks with the Senior Patrol Leader before a troop meeting to make sure everything is ready
- The Senior Patrol Leader contacts each Patrol Leader and any other essential youth leaders 48 hours before a troop meeting to ensure preparedness and conduct a "resource needs" check
- The Patrol Leaders contact their patrol members to update them on the agenda and of anything required

Troop Meeting Format

1. Pre-opening
2. Opening
3. Group Instruction
4. Skills Instruction
5. Patrol Meetings
6. Inter-Patrol activity
7. Scoutmaster's Minute - Closing
8. After the meeting



Conducting the Troop Meeting:

- Troop meetings must have variety, action and purpose
- Many meetings can and should take place outdoors
- The Senior Patrol Leader is responsible to lead every Troop meeting
- The Patrol assigned as the Service Patrol should arrive early to prepare the room or outdoor area
- Instructors arrive prepared and have their materials gathered ahead of time
- The Senior Patrol Leader should move about during the meeting and make observation notes to provide feedback to youth leaders after the meeting
- Keep the program moving
- Be flexible, if part of the program is not working, move on to the next item
- Except for the Scoutmaster's Minute, each portion of the meeting is the responsibility of the Scouts themselves
- Use the Scout Sign to maintain order and deal with any disruptions immediately
- Inter-patrol contests should relate to the skills instruction
- Alternate favorite activities to avoid reducing popularity
- Recognize Scouts and Patrols for positives like well-planned and executed presentations, proper uniforming, a good opening or closing ceremony
- Debrief with the Patrol Leader's Council after the meeting

After the meeting the Patrol Leader's Council evaluates the meeting using the *Stop, Start, Continue* method and reviews the agenda for the next meeting.

Evaluating the Troop Meeting:

- Was the meeting well attended?
- Was the meeting fast paced and fun?
- What worked well that we could do again?
- Did we do something new and different?
- Did we accomplish a purpose?