



# Venturing Advisor Guidebook



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

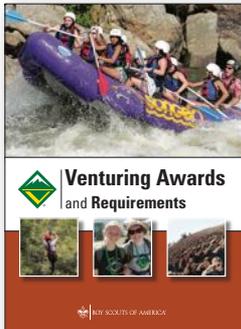
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## Venturing Tools Quick Reference Guide

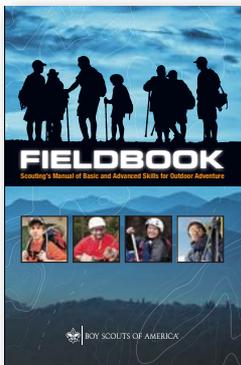
**Venturing Portal @ Scouting.org, [www.scouting.org/venturing](http://www.scouting.org/venturing),** is your one-stop shop for resources for Venturing news, crew resources, recruitment materials, training, and national events. Check it out, and send in your suggestions for improvement.



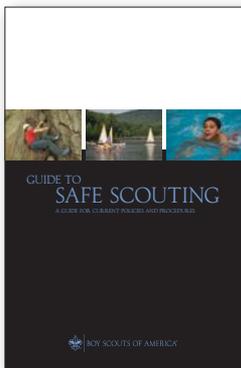
**Handbook for Venturers, No. 33494**, is the youth's guide to adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service through Venturing.



**Venturing Awards and Requirements, No. 34784**, presents the requirements for the Venturing awards and details the requirements for the TRUST, Quest, and Ranger awards. Other opportunities for Venturers are described as well.



**Fieldbook, No. 34006**, is the go-to manual for backcountry challenges—everything from hiking, camping, and canoeing to mountain travel, ultralight backpacking, wilderness navigation, and whitewater kayaking—but is small enough to fit into a backpack for use in the field.



**Guide to Safe Scouting, No. 34416**, lays out all Boy Scouts of America policies and guidelines established to protect members from known hazards. Limitations on certain activities aren't viewed as stumbling blocks, but rather are best described as stepping-stones toward safe and enjoyable adventures.

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# Part I: **Venturing Basics**





**“ Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover. ”**

*—Mark Twain*

# Introduction

**A**s you begin using this *Venturing Advisor Guidebook*, you might know little or nothing about Venturing, or you might already have experience as a Venturing Advisor. Wherever you're starting, you will find this guide useful. It will explain what Venturing is and how it works. Most importantly, it will tell you as an Advisor, committee member, or chartered organization representative what needs to happen in your crew to make it successful. This guidebook answers such questions as:

- What does Venturing really mean?
- What are the responsibilities of adult Advisors and youth leaders?
- What does it mean to share leadership as an Advisor?
- How will being an Advisor benefit me or others?
- How do I support youth as they plan a fun program that fulfills their goals and interests?
- How do I know that I am effectively carrying out my responsibilities as an Advisor?
- Where can I get practical help for things that we need to do in our crew?

We will share information and insights, tying these insights to the practical, to actual things you will be doing as a leader in your crew. We hope that you'll keep returning to certain chapters, like the chapter about leadership. Most people, as they learn, don't catch everything the first time and don't fully appreciate what's being said until they've experienced it—until they're right in the thick of things. Then, all of a sudden, questions pop into their heads. That's good! That's a part of learning. Just don't let your questions or curiosity get lost or dropped. Return to this guidebook again and again. Make it a part of your planning sessions, your conversations with others, your crew meetings, and your reflections on activities. We also hope that you will read this guidebook with a pen in your hand to highlight those things that are new and important or to record your thoughts and impressions as you read, so that when you return to a certain page, you will have the benefit of those thoughts and impressions.

## What Is Venturing?

Venturing is the young adult program of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women ages 14 through 20, or 13 with completion of the eighth grade. Local community organizations such as professional organizations, places of worship, and civic groups start and support specific Venturing crews by matching the interests of young adults with the people and program resources within their own organizations. For example, a local scuba diving shop could start a Venturing crew and invite young adults interested in high-adventure activities to join. A Rotary Club could start a Venturing crew to help young adults learn about service to the community, or a religious organization could use Venturing to help achieve the religious and personal development goals, purposes, and objectives of that organization for its youth.

### *Venturing Terms*

**crew:** A local group of young adults who plan and lead a Venturing program. Crews may be single-gender or coeducational.

**Venturer:** A youth member of a Venturing crew.

**officer:** The elected and appointed youth leaders of a Venturing crew. The crew president and vice presidents for program, administration, and communications are elected; additional officers, such as secretary, treasurer, and activity chairs, are appointed.

**Advisor and associate Advisor:** Adult volunteers responsible for the safety and well-being of the crew.

**consultant:** Subject-matter experts who assist the crew with program needs.

**crew committee:** A group of adult volunteers drawn from parents, chartered organization members, and other interested adults who support the crew program.

**chartered organization representative:** The liaison between the local council and the organization that charters a Venturing crew. The chartered organization representative encourages the crew committee and crew's Advisors in the quality delivery of the Venturing program.



## Preparing Yourself as an Advisor

To put the key resources in your hand from the start, you should also acquire additional materials: the *Handbook for Venturers* and *Venturing Awards and Requirements*. The handbook is a Venturer's key document for planning and leading the crew program. *Venturing Awards and Requirements* contains complete references for ancillary and enrichment recognitions as well as serving as a one-stop resource for many program resources.

New Advisors should read the "Venturing: Experiential Education" and "Becoming an Effective Advisor" chapters of this guidebook to get a sense of their role as an Advisor for a Venturing crew. Follow that with the section in the *Handbook for Venturers* that describes the mechanics of planning meetings and activities.

Training is available to help you serve as an effective leader. You should immediately complete Youth Protection training for Venturing Advisors (available at [myscouting.org](http://myscouting.org)). Follow Youth Protection training with Venturing Advisor Position-Specific Training and Crew Committee Challenge (for committee members), which will introduce you to the responsibilities, opportunities, and resources that will ensure a successful Venturing crew experience. Your local district or council training committee will be able to share training dates with you.

## What Happens in Venturing?

The first goal of the Venturing program is to give youth an opportunity to pursue their interests in a way that might not be available in a traditional educational setting. We're talking about personal, hands-on adventures with people who have a particular skill set or have knowledge of it. Venturing recognizes the difference between reading about sailing and going sailing, between talking about photography and taking pictures, between discussing archaeology and going on an archaeological dig.

The second goal is to lead a life in Venturing that fosters personal, social, and community health through the delivery of service to others. That's why a Venturing crew organizes a program of activities around adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service. This kind of program helps us to experience more opportunities and balance in our lives; to take responsibility for others and our community; and to be mentally, emotionally, and physically fit. Service brings a sense of fulfillment and community to Venturers.

The third goal is to create an environment that encourages growth in the crew's Venturers as well as in the Advisors. This is achieved in a place that is safe, fun, and challenging. Venturing provides opportunities for new experiences and new ideas.

## Organization of the *Venturing Advisor Guidebook*

The remainder of this guidebook is designed to help you understand the content of Venturing and your role as an Advisor, crew committee member, or chartered organization representative. The following chapters provide some background and explanatory material for the elements of the program. Throughout the book, insights focus on the Advisor's, crew committee's, and chartered organization representative's role in supporting Venturers as they design and implement their program. These are designated by the following:



### Advisor Insight

Look for the Advisor's badge of office to help explain how a crew Advisor and associate Advisor work to support youth as they design and implement the program.



### Committee Insight

Look for the committee member's badge of office to help explain how a crew committee chair and crew committee members support the Advisor as he or she works with the youth and youth officers.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight

Look for the chartered organization representative's badge of office to help explain how the chartered organization representative supports the Advisor as he or she works with the youth and youth officers.



**“ In life, all the easy things have been done;  
from now on, it’s high adventure!”**

*—Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004),  
religious leader*

# Venturing: Experiential Education

Scouting at all levels is an educational program, but it is delivered through methods that are different from what Venturers experience in school. Scouting is an educational approach delivered in part through a process called experiential education. Experiential education focuses on participating in adventurous activities and does not necessarily occur outdoors, though outdoor methods are commonly used.

Simply put, experiential education is about challenges and outcomes. Experiential education includes cooperative games, trust-building activities, problem-solving initiatives, high-adventure activities (often through the use of ropes courses, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, kayaking, canoeing, or mountaineering), and expedition leadership (backpacking, dog sledding, sailing, etc.). By processing what was learned during an activity, we use the deeper meaning of what was learned to achieve our goal of character development. Experiential education can include a commitment to delivering service as part of a team—and learning about how one has grown and developed while leading service. For example, a group of young adults planning and implementing a day camp for disabled youth is a great setting for the experiential education process and provides an example of the pairing of challenges and outcomes.

## Experiential Education Content

The “content” is not the critical piece in experiential education; the essential element is how the content is used to develop an experience that facilitates personal growth for the participants.



### Advisor Insight: The Purpose of the Game

Rather than the activities themselves, it is the skills and processes embedded in the activities that are responsible for achieving program outcomes. This is the purpose of the game. The combination of challenge, mastery, and success in activities is what leads to participant growth. Challenges should be holistic in order to maximize positive outcomes. This means that programs should include mental, emotional, and physical challenges so as to encourage mastery in all three areas at the same time. Providing program goals in adventure, leadership, and service offers a means of personal growth in multiple areas.

## Characteristics of Experiential Education

- Goal-setting is critical to achieving program outcomes at both the individual and the group levels. The setting of goals and how those goals were accomplished provide one measure of the success of the adventure, while also providing practical skills in the development and execution of achievable projects.
- Challenges should increase incrementally so as not to overwhelm participants early on in the program but allow them to grow and develop throughout. Skills and capabilities should be developed prior to the adventure and in concert with the difficulty of the challenge to be faced.
- Participation includes consequences: success and failure. Some adventures fail to reach their goal. This can be good for participant development. Program participants can learn from their failures to achieve later success. Leaders need to be prepared with a strong skill set in the tenets of youth development to manage both the learning from success and the learning from failure.

One of Venturing's strengths is its flexibility, not only on a given adventure but throughout the time a young adult is involved in the program. As such, goals can be set, revised, and reset. Skills can be developed over time and sharpened as the challenge increases. And the planning and reflection process can be nurtured to get the most learning from each outcome, whether it's a success or a failure in objective terms. The growth and transition from participant to adventure leader to mentor of leaders capture and develop this process on a large scale.



### Advisor Insight: The Venturing Experience

What makes an effective Venturing experience? What makes for a great crew? It is not as important what the adventure is, only that it be perceived as challenging and of interest to youth. It needs to be designed and led by youth so that their personal investment in the process makes the growth real and personal. And at the end, having a thoughtful mentor guide them through to a deeper understanding of what they have accomplished is what makes Venturing effective.

## Adventure and Venturing

It is important to emphasize that while experiential education is often a program based on expeditions and other outdoor adventures, it need not be that sort of experience. Here are some examples:

- Members of a Venturing crew interested in attending the Lollapalooza festival in Chicago could organize an exciting Venturing activity around that goal. Planning the adventure, raising money for transportation, arranging for lodging, learning how to care for one another in the high heat and humidity associated with an outdoor activity, and then reflecting on the success of the event after it concludes—these steps all capture the essence of adventure education.
- Another crew decides to organize a Special Olympics-type of event for special-needs youth. This would require them to publicize the event, raise money for awards and recognitions, train judges, reserve a facility for the event, and successfully execute the event. The process requires each member of the team, led by a peer, to collaborate in the execution of the event. Reflecting on the success of the event after it concludes likewise captures the essence of adventure education.

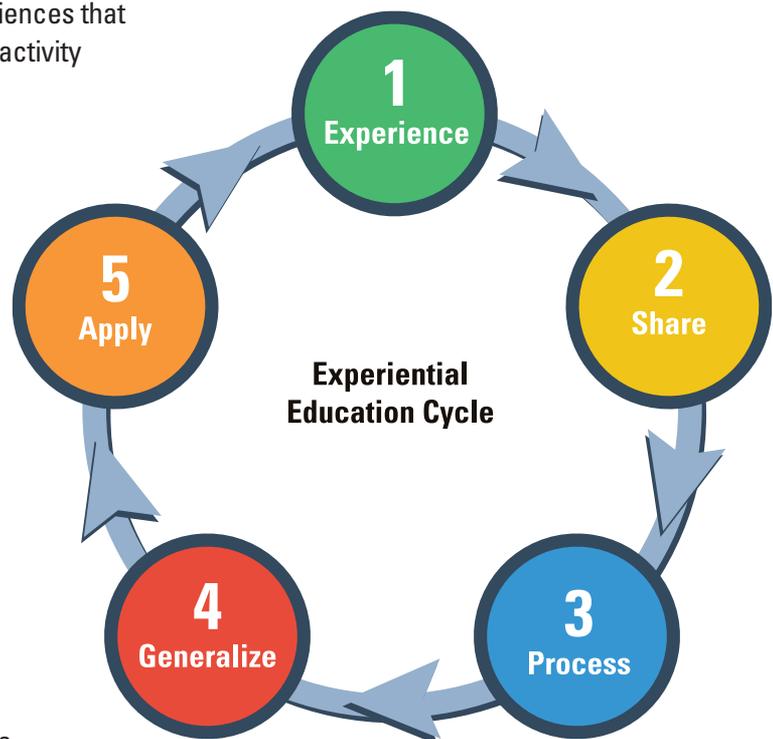
- A crew chartered to a religious organization organizes a service project for a retirement home. Learning that many of the residents graduated from high school in the 1940s, they organize a production featuring dances and music from that era. Those residents who can are invited to dance with the Venturers; those who are not able to do so are involved in meaningful and fun activities away from the dance floor. A reflection and analysis at the close of the service project help the Venturers learn more than just about the songs and dances they learned. They recognize how much they achieved as they worked together.
- A crew with an interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines holds an “Iron Scientist” contest for middle school students. Instead of being structured as a regular science fair, it is organized more along the lines of the “Iron Chef” TV show. Participants are given a box of odds and ends and some tools, and have three hours to construct a device to solve a simple problem. The youth provide judges, collect the tools and materials needed for the event, and publicize it as an after-school activity. A reflection at the close helps the youth learn from the event and how they worked together to make a difference for the youth in the school.

A key component of experiential education is to allow participants to have personal choice related to activities. The “challenge by choice” philosophy of adventure programming allows the participant to have some autonomy related to the activities in which he or she takes part.

## Experiential Learning and Reflection

Venturing uses an experiential learning approach. Another way to say this is that adventure education focuses on experiences that allow the participant to take part in a challenging activity and then reflect on what was learned and how to apply it to new situations.

While some skills (how to use a stove, how to stage a play, how to plan a trip, etc.) are taught by a knowledgeable teacher or peer, the learning that comes from adventure education tends to be more subtle and is brought to the attention of the learner by a process of evaluation often referred to as “reflection” at the close, helping the learner to extract the greatest meaning from the experience. It is best to discuss the purpose of the learning, especially if it is about working with people or reflecting on personal attitudes or beliefs, at the end of an activity, during a process of thoughtful and open consideration and analysis. The model presented shows the relationship among the steps of experiential learning as youth make sense of their experiences and generalize the outcomes of their experiences more broadly. To help with the sharing, processing, and generalizing, the approach outlined on the following pages works well for the Advisor—or preferably an experienced Venturer—in leading the reflection discussion.



## Learning From Adventures: Leading a Reflection

Begin the process by establishing the ground rules for a reflection. Have Venturers sit so they can see one another and ask them to agree not to interrupt or make fun of one another. Let them know they are free to keep silent if they wish.

In the model presented on the previous page, Step 1 (the experience) refers to the activity that all the participants have in common. Steps 2 through 5 take place during the reflection. The steps are prompted by the questions in the following section. The goal is to use the questions to guide the Venturers in sharing their experience and identifying how the experience helped them grow as individuals and as a team—and then to generalize what they learned to other experiences and seek to apply what they learned to their next adventure.

Reflecting on an activity should take no more than 10 minutes. The more you do it, the easier it becomes for both the leader and the members of the crew. Remember that both the value and values of Venturing often lie beneath the surface. Reflection helps you ensure that these values come through to the members of the crew.





## Advisor Insight: Tips for Leading a Reflection

- Facilitate (but do not lead!) the discussion.
- Avoid the temptation to talk about your own experiences.
- Reserve judgment about what the Venturers say to avoid criticizing them.
- Help the discussion get going, then let the Venturers take over with limited guidance from you.
- If you describe what you saw, be sure that your comments don't stop the participants from adding their own thoughts.
- Above all, be positive. Have fun with the activity and with the processing session.

Ideally, the reflections should be led by one of the crew members. Leading a reflection during and after a crew adventure provides the youth officers feedback on what was learned and how to improve the next crew adventure.

## Questioning Guidelines for Reflections

The sequence below is a helpful way to organize the questions that you pose during the reflection. You want to have your participants identify (1) the purpose of the activity, (2) the challenges they encountered while taking part in the activity and the root cause (leadership skill) of the obstacles, and (3) what they might do differently next time and how to better apply the skill for greater future success. This sequence of questions aligns the questions with the steps in the experiential education cycle.

| QUESTIONS   | RESPONSES TO ELICIT  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Focusing Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the purpose of the game or activity?</li> </ul>  | <p><b>What did you do?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participants identify the specific actions they were to undertake. The answer should be as concrete and specific as possible.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Analysis Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask questions that help the participants analyze the success or challenges that they encountered while playing the game or taking part in the activity. The questions should help frame the game or activity around the leadership skill that the game helps to explore.</li> </ul> | <p><b>What happened?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to elicit answers to identify challenges in completing the task and how a particular leadership skill was explored.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Generalization Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can participants use this skill more effectively?</li> </ul>  | <p><b>How will you use what you learned?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants should demonstrate the ability to generalize from the challenges encountered in the game or activity to real-world applications of the skill.</li> <li>• What will happen the next time the group encounters obstacles related to the application of this skill?</li> </ul> |

When using this guide for organizing questions, remember that your role is to facilitate the discussion rather than to search for the “right answers.” Keep in mind that a reflective discussion is a process, and the needs and experiences of a team at a given time might lead to unanticipated—but equally valid—outcomes. Use thought-provoking questions, organized as described on the previous page. The following types of questions (with some examples) are useful in reflecting:

- *Open-ended questions* avoid yes and no answers: “What was the purpose of the game?” or “What did you learn about yourself?”
- *Feeling questions* require participants to reflect on how they feel about what they did: “How did it feel when you started to pull together?”
- *Judgment questions* ask the participants to make decisions about things: “What was the best part?” or “Was it a good idea?”
- *Guiding questions* steer Venturers toward the intended purpose of the activity and keep the discussion focused: “What got you all going in the right direction?” Keep in mind that sometimes creative Venturers will find a purpose in the activity that was not originally intended; that does not make it a “wrong answer.”
- *Closing questions* help Venturers draw conclusions and wrap up the discussion: “What did you learn?” and “What would you do differently?” and “How might you use this skill in other settings?”



## ***Counseling and Mentoring Strategies***

### **Listen Attentively**

The hardest part of mentoring is listening closely to the individual. This can be difficult because many of us lack good listening skills. Remember to give your undivided attention, establish a comfortable distance, face the individual, and maintain good eye contact. Let the person know you are willing to take time to hear him or her out.

In many mentoring situations, individuals are not really looking for a solution. In this case, people simply want to unburden themselves. They know what to do and may already be doing it, but they want encouragement and reassurance. Advice may confuse the issue.

### **Summarize What Is Being Said**

From time to time, summarize what the individual has said. Include the facts you have picked up. The summary will let the person know that you are listening and that you understand. This practice also helps keep the individual on track and helps him or her organize thoughts into a logical sequence that could lead to a possible solution.

### **Get All the Facts**

As you listen and summarize, try to gather all the facts that relate to the problem. In mentoring, opinions, emotions, feelings, and reactions are facts just as much as hard data. As facts are gathered, you can ensure that the individual has all of the information needed and knows what resources might be available.

### **Explore a Variety of Solutions**

Some possible solutions may now be explored. Encourage the person to think of a variety of ways to handle the problem. Again, offer no advice. Explore the suggested possibilities and encourage the person to choose an option that feels comfortable.

Recognize that the individual has done more thinking about the problem than you have. He or she might have a solution in mind and may simply need confirmation. Or he or she may have tried some solutions but done so inexpertly and can be guided toward a more skilled approach.

The final step is planning the implementation—determining who will do what and when. Follow up if necessary.

### **Reactions and Responses**

To put these principles successfully into operation, you as a mentor must show that you are listening, that you are interested, and that you understand.

Certain comments or reactions can help reassure the individual that you are listening and will also keep the person talking.

- Restate the person's words in your own way.
- Make a statement regarding the person's feelings. People can have their feelings hurt, so it may help in counseling if the individual feels you have concern for his or her feelings. Something as simple as saying, "It made you feel pretty bad, huh?" can make a difference.
- Indicate that you are listening and that you understand. "I understand" or a nod of the head might suffice. "Tell me about it" or "Go ahead" are encouraging.
- Ask the person infrequent questions. For example, try "Uh-huh, what happened then?" or "How did you feel about that?" Don't cross-examine the person or even give that impression.

### **Be a Friend**

Skilled mentoring never appears to be mentoring. When you take a seat next to an activity chair for an outing and ask, "How's it going?" and then listen to him or her explain all the problems, you don't appear to be a mentor but a concerned friend.

**“ Young people need models, not critics. ”**  
—*John Wooden, winner of 10 NCAA  
Championships as head coach of  
UCLA men’s basketball team*

# Becoming an **Effective** Advisor

**W**elcome to the position of Venturing crew Advisor. Your role is to support the youth leaders of the crew as they design and lead the adventures of the crew. Leadership responsibility belongs to the young adult members of the crew. They can go a long way on their own, but the support of a caring adult will take them farther and help them gain insights along the way. Every adult volunteer is expected to be a role model for the crew and to seek every opportunity to develop leadership among the officers and members of the crew.

## **The Big Picture: How Advisors Serve Youth**

Whether your role is crew Advisor, associate Advisor, or crew committee member, references to “Advisors” include all adults who are not participating as Venturers. While the roles with the crew vary, the basic concept of supporting youth through advice and insight borne of experience is common to all adults who work with Venturing crew members. The following points address how an Advisor should approach his or her role with a crew.

**Advising Versus Leading.** As an adult in Venturing, you are an Advisor, not a crew leader. A crew leader has responsibility for organizing and running an event, determining roles and responsibilities, and evaluating the experience. A crew leader is focused on achieving an outcome. As an Advisor, your responsibility is to ensure that the process of Venturing takes place in a fun and safe manner for the youth members of the crew. Your role is to help youth design and carry out the program that the youth officers and crew members designed. As an Advisor, you help prepare them to make leadership decisions and to be prepared to function effectively as a Venturing crew.

**Supportive, Not Directive.** As an Advisor, you support the young adults. Your concerns are more about a process than merely about the outcome of a particular activity or adventure. As an Advisor, you are there to make the youth members of the Venturing crew aware of the opportunities they have to become successful. Your focus is in helping them achieve meaningful personal goals through Venturing. Your responsibility is to ensure that Venturing meets the needs of the members of the crew. You seek to advocate for youth by empowering them to design and lead their own program. This serves as a means of helping them practice skills in a safe environment that will serve them well in life. Your role is not to direct the youth to carry out certain tasks.

**Youth-Led but Adult-Guided.** These are important words. Yes, the youth are in charge of the crew and are responsible for leading the activities that the crew has designed. It does not mean that you sit back and watch disaster unfold and declare it a success “because the crew is youth-led!” Rather, you have a responsibility to help the youth leadership of the crew do its best to carry out the crew’s program of activities and adventures. As an Advisor, one aspect of your work with the crew is to ensure that a constructive working relationship is developed between the youth of the crew and the adults who support them.

### ***When Does an Activity Fail?***

One of the challenges Advisors occasionally face is when to allow an activity, or some part of an activity, to fail. There is no hard and fast rule, save for the clear responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone. As long as safety is not a factor, the adult should consider the value that will come from failures that help members of the crew learn something constructive. Some considerations:

- What is best for the youth involved? Can the “failure” be used as a learning opportunity?
- Can the adventure be delivered in an abbreviated manner?
- What is the financial cost of the event?
- Will the “failure” have a significant effect on other members of the crew that will not be conducive to building and strengthening the crew and its members or that may cause other members to bail out of the crew as a result of the poor outcome?
- Does the cancellation of the event have too great a cost in terms of good will?

Part of the role of the Advisor should be to encourage youth to engage in self-reflection about their activities so they can learn from each of their experiences, whether or not those experiences are successful.

**It is never an acceptable goal to let an activity fail on purpose.**

Having the Advisor work with the youth officers and event chair for an activity is designed to help the crew plan and prepare effectively for an event before it takes place. Working conscientiously with the youth leadership of the crew—guided by the suggestions in this chapter—will help in making nearly all events a success. Often, if an Advisor perceives that an activity is headed in the wrong direction, a midcourse reflection and discussion may be helpful in fostering the learning process while at the same time avoiding a disappointing and negative effect from a “failed” activity.

Use questions instead of lecturing or giving advice. In your role as an Advisor, the value of your experience is critical. How the value of your experience is shared is also very important. The thin line between telling and suggesting is not often clear, and suggesting a course of action undermines using experiences as a teaching and learning tool for Venturers. Questions, then, are often the best way to support helping young adults in the crew make their own decisions. Some ways to make questions more effective are drawn from the literature on mentoring. In mentoring, the focus is on helping others find their own answers and using thoughtful questions and reflective comments to help them assess a situation or a course of action.

## ***What Makes an Advisor Effective?***

First and foremost, Venturing Advisors should like working with young people. An effective Advisor understands that the best way to help young adults grow into productive citizens is to help them learn to do things on their own that challenge them—but with a safety net in place.

- Advisors work as mentors in life as well as in Scouting. They are connected with the youth they serve. Advisors help coach from behind the scenes.
- Advisors help the members of the crew identify program goals and develop a path to achieve those goals.
- Advisors support the members of the crew as they plan their adventures. They don't insert themselves into the process but rather work to help Venturers achieve more than they believed they could accomplish.
- Advisors keep the crew officers focused and on task. They work to make sure that the youth officers of the crew are working to prepare the crew for upcoming activities and adventures. Advisors ensure that the officers consider multiple inputs in the planning process.
- Advisors help the crew stay organized and serve as facilitators. The Advisor's role is to help make the delivery of the program run more easily but without doing it themselves.
- Advisors apply strategies to help youth of various ages work together.
- Advisors offer perspective gained from their experiences but understand that it is the crew's program to design and deliver.
- Advisors help keep the program and activities designed by the crew's officers connected with the purpose and values of Scouting.
- Advisors serve as a resource and connect young adult leaders with resources and consultants to help deliver the crew's program in the best and safest way possible.
- Advisors are hands-off but influential. They are not the leaders of the crew. Advisors expect great things from the youth they serve, and they provide support and guidance to ensure that excellence is achieved.



## The Chartered Organization

Before getting into the specific responsibilities of Venturing Advisors, it is important to understand the chartered organization and its role with the crew. The chartered organization may be a religious organization, school, labor group, professional society, civic club, or other community organization that is granted an annual charter from the Boy Scouts of America to operate a Venturing crew. The program, adult team, and membership of the crew are determined by the chartered organization within the framework of the policies and standards of the BSA.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Responsibilities

The chartered organization agrees that it will select and approve competent adults, help them secure program resources, and provide meeting facilities. The chartered organization representative serves as a liaison between the Venturing crew and the chartered organization.

The chartered organization agrees to:

- Conduct the Scouting program according to its own policies and guidelines as well as those of the Boy Scouts of America.
- Include Scouting as part of its overall program for youth and families.
- Appoint a chartered organization representative who is a member of the organization, will represent it to the Scouting district, and will serve as a voting member of the local council. (The chartered organization head or chartered organization representative must approve all leadership applications.)
- Select a crew committee of parents and members of the chartered organization (minimum of three) to screen and select adult leaders who meet the organization's standards as well as the leadership standards of the BSA. The committee chair must sign all leadership applications before sending them to the chartered organization head for approval.
- Provide adequate facilities for the crew to meet on a regular schedule with time and place reserved.
- Encourage the crew to participate in engaging programs designed by youth leaders of the crew, which are vital elements of Scouting.

The following section maps out what the chartered organization expects from the adults who serve as Advisors and committee members for the crews in the chartered organization.

## Adult Roles in Venturing

The relationships between the Advisors, committee members, consultants, and Venturers are some of the most important elements of a Venturing crew. During your time in the crew, you will work closely with the youth officers and members of the crew to help them make thoughtful decisions about how they take part in adventures, how they lead the crew, the sort of service projects they support, and how they set and achieve personal goals.

As an Advisor, you help the members of your crew get the most out of Venturing by:

- Helping them to explore their interests, values, passions, and goals—all while having fun
- Learning about how to design and lead adventures
- Encouraging the members of the crew to chart their progress through the use of Venturing’s adventure-based recognition system
- Helping members of the crew leverage their Scouting experiences and prepare for life as an adult

The crew organization chart on the following page shows the relationship between youth and Advisors. As you study this chart and the materials that follow, keep in mind how these roles serve to support youth leadership in the crew.

## Position Descriptions

One of the fundamental differences between Venturing and other youth programs is the fact that adults act as Advisors and consultants, not leaders.

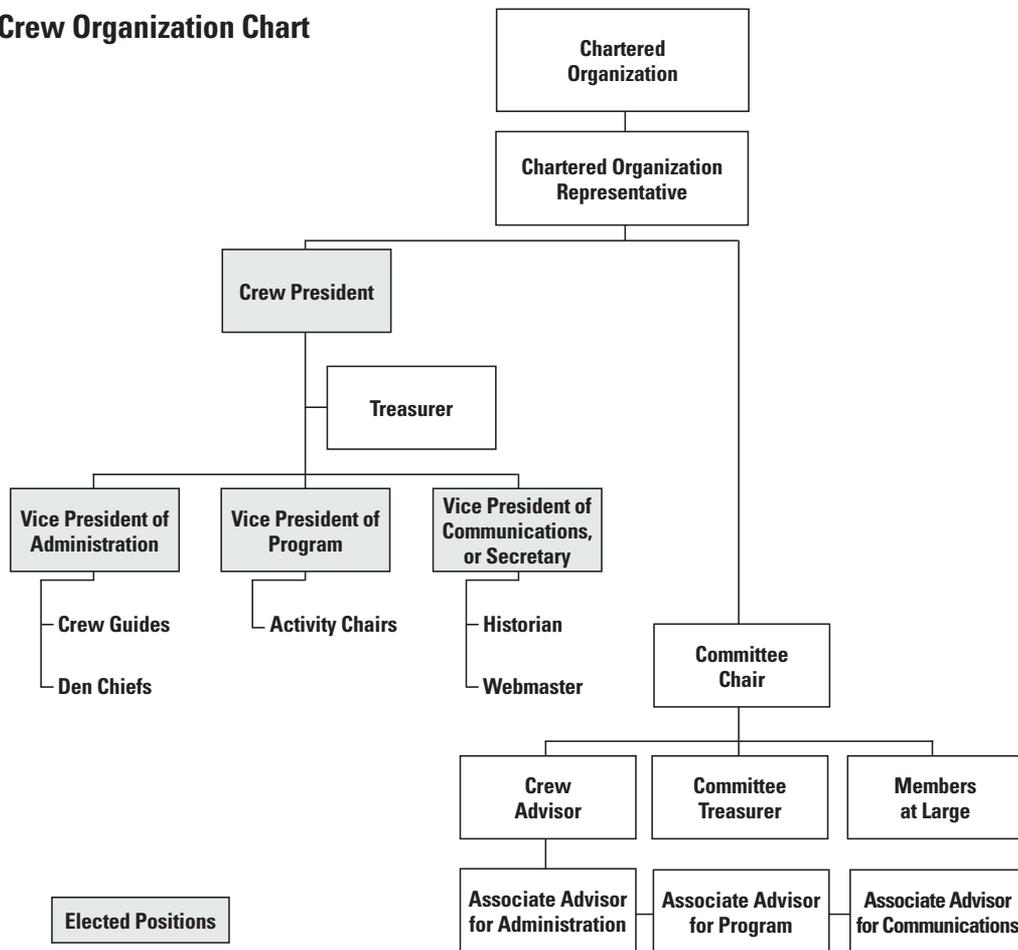
The working relationship between Venturers and the adults who work with them is an important element in the success of the crew. Venturing adults can be a tremendous resource for the program, and the relationship between Venturers and adults can actually make the crew’s program even more worthwhile and fun. This section explains each adult role and how each position relates to the others.

The different adult roles include:

- Direct youth contact responsibilities
  - Advisor
  - Associate Advisor for administration
  - Associate Advisor for program
  - Associate Advisor for communications
  - Other associate Advisors
  - Consultants
- Crew support responsibilities
  - Chartered organization representative
  - Crew committee
  - Crew committee chair

Because each of these positions has a different role in supporting the Venturing crew, they will be discussed individually.

## Crew Organization Chart



The number of crew positions and roles, and the adult leaders and mentors, will vary based on crew size. The natural mentoring and guiding relationship between Venturing leadership positions and those of adult Advisors and committee members is as follows:

| Crew Position                              | Mentor Position                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| President                                  | Advisor                              |
| Vice president of administration           | Associate Advisor for administration |
| Vice president of program                  | Associate Advisor for program        |
| Vice president of communications/secretary | Associate Advisor for communications |
| Treasurer                                  | Committee member                     |
| Activity chairs                            | Consultants                          |

As crews change in size or they have other specialty needs, crew leadership is encouraged to modify the crew's organizational approach to ensure clear communications and accountability.



## The Crew Advisor

The Advisor is the key adult volunteer and is responsible for training crew officers, helping them plan a program of activities, coaching them in their leadership responsibilities, and obtaining adult help and resources as needed through the crew committee. The Advisor is supported by one or more associate Advisors who serve as backup volunteers and provide assistance for the program and administration of the crew.



### Advisor Insight: Setting the Tone

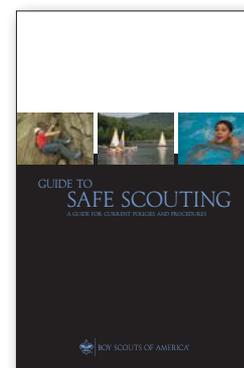
As the primary adult volunteer, the Advisor sets the tone for the crew, models the desired form of mentorship, and helps the officers and members become the leaders of their own crew. The Advisor coaches and guides, demonstrating through actions what the youth officers need to learn and similarly demonstrate with one another and with the members of their crew.

### Advisor Responsibilities

- Fosters an environment within the Venturing crew that has a true sense of community and that encourages everyone's growth and responsibility to one another.
- Serves as a role model and a mentor.
- Develops crew officers to lead—to plan, make decisions, and carry out a program of activities over an extended period.
- Encourages participation and support for the Venturing crew from the chartered organization, associate Advisors, crew committee, parents, and other adults in the community.
- Upholds the standards and policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America.
- Provides the necessary framework for protecting the members of a crew from abuse.
- Ensures that activities are conducted within BSA safety guidelines and requirements. (Advisors should be trained by the BSA.)
- Seeks to cultivate within the members of a crew a capacity to enjoy life—to have fun through the Venturing experience.

The ultimate responsibility for supervising a safe crew program operated by the youth rests with the Advisor. This person is recruited by the crew committee with approval of the chartered organization representative, and is registered with the Boy Scouts of America as the primary adult volunteer. The Advisor works with the chartered organization representative and local council and district leadership to keep informed of how to best support Scouting for the members of the crew. The Advisor participates in all crew meetings and activities, crew officers meetings, and crew committee meetings, and conducts the annual crew officers seminar.

An important resource to support a safe crew program is the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. It is updated regularly and is a helpful guide for evaluating risk. It is available both as a hard copy and online (<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx>).





## Associate Crew Advisors

Several roles for the associate Advisors are recommended.

### Associate Advisor for Administration

- Provides backup support for the Advisor and assumes responsibility for the crew in the Advisor's absence (based on crew custom).
  - Supports the youth administrative vice president and assists this person specifically with the crew's recruitment and recognition efforts.
- Helps encourage Venturer recognition; maintains recognition records, including the crew recognition chart; and reviews recognition progress at each meeting. Also serves as an advocate for recognition programming.
  - Supports officers in the recruitment of new members.
  - Helps in sustaining the interest of current crew members.

### Associate Advisor for Program

- Provides backup support for the Advisor and assumes responsibility for the crew in the Advisor's absence (based on crew custom).
- Supports the youth program vice president to help determine the interests of members, plan the year's program, and ensure that the crew calendar is maintained.
- Supports and coaches the activity chairs to help them plan and carry out their particular activity.

### Associate Advisor for Communications

- Provides backup support for the Advisor and assumes responsibility for the crew in the Advisor's absence (based on crew custom).
- Supports and coaches the youth communications vice president to identify and assess the best way to communicate to Venturers on the VOA and in its jurisdiction, understanding that several methods of delivery must be utilized for maximum effectiveness.
- Supports and coaches the youth communications vice president in the publication of a newsletter of past, current, and future events, including articles of noteworthy events and other items of interest to Venturers.
- Submits articles about crew activities to other Scouting media (e.g., council or region newsletter and websites).
- Supports and coaches the youth communications vice president to pursue opportunities to increase crew exposure by submitting articles, comments, photos, and upcoming event announcements and reports to external publications such as local newspapers and other appropriate venues.
- Supports and coaches the youth communications vice president to maintain web pages, blogs, calendars, message boards, etc., on the most relevant social media and social networking sites.
- Supports and coaches the vice president for communications to identify and maintain the tools to communicate with all relevant parties using a variety of methods such as telephone, text message, email, and postal mail as appropriate.

## Other Associate Advisors

Some crews, particularly those with a large membership or a unique program, may have a number of adults serving as associate Advisors. Their responsibilities may include providing equipment and transportation, making parental contact, planning special activities and several projects, or helping with the superactivity or high adventures. A crew may recruit as many associate Advisors as it needs to carry out program plans.

## Consultants

A consultant is a person whose special skill or talent is needed for a crew activity or project, including specialists for hire, such as commercial river guides. Consultants may or may not be members of the BSA, and may have no relationship to the BSA beyond assisting the crew with a program experience. Usually, consultants are adults who are recruited on a one-time, short-term basis to provide expert help for a specific activity or project.

Key expectations for consultants:

- Provide expertise to the crew's program.
- Assist the crew's activity committees in planning activities

Consultants may be members of the chartered organization, parents, or other adults in the community who are found through the Program Capability Inventory (PCI) or recruited by the crew committee. For example, if the crew's Venturing Activity Interest Survey indicates that a number of members would like to learn to play golf, the crew committee reviews the PCI or contacts others with golfing expertise. It recruits someone to serve as a consultant for the golf activity.



### Advisor Insight: Consultants

Unlike the outdoor program for Boy Scouts, it is not expected that an Advisor have mastery of all of the outdoor and other skills that may be required by members of the crew. Helping Venturers connect with consultants helps Venturers gain important skills in planning, resource and time management, and communication as they engage consultants to support the crew's programming.

The consultant works with the Venturer who is the activity chair to plan the details of the activity. Consultants are recruited for their expert skills and might not know much about the crew. The activity chair is responsible for explaining the interests and abilities of the members to the consultant and for planning an activity the members will like, with the assistance of the consultant.

Many adults can serve as consultants to a crew. Some are unable to serve as regular volunteers, but most are willing and flattered to serve as an expert consultant for a Venturing activity.

These people are volunteers, so their motivation is to contribute to a program that they believe is worthwhile and can make a difference in the lives of young people. They are the kind of people who care about their community and want to be sure that capable and caring leadership is being nurtured now ... for the future.



## The Crew Committee

The committee is composed of three or more adult men and women who serve during the crew's charter year. The committee is led by a crew committee chair who is appointed by the chartered organization and registered as an adult leader with the BSA. The committee chair schedules and conducts all committee meetings, coordinates programs, and serves as a liaison between the Advisor and the crew's chartered organization representative.

The crew committee chair appoints and supervises the crew committee and crew leaders, all of whom must be registered members of the BSA.



### Committee Insight: Stay Engaged

The crew committee should meet regularly to ensure that the crew has a quality program, under the guidance of capable Advisors who achieve the purposes of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America. New committee members can be recruited during the year from parents of Venturers or other qualified community members. One person is appointed by the head of the organization or is selected by the committee to serve as its chair.

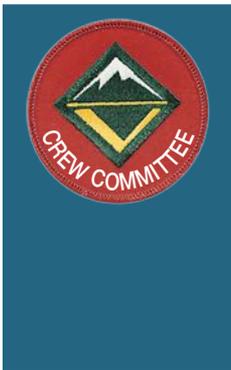
### Crew Committee Responsibilities

The committee serves to provide support for the crew officers and the program that they design and deliver. Members are often parents and guardians of youth in the crew and chartered organization members who are interested in youth programs. They are required to be 21 years of age or older. The committee is composed of a minimum of three members, one of whom serves as chair. There is no maximum number of committee members serving at a given time. The responsibilities of the crew committee include the following:

- Select quality leaders for the crew.
- Develop community service projects.
- Arrange transportation for outings.



- Provide for special needs and assistance for individual Venturers.
- Meet regularly at a time and place convenient to all.
- Serve on boards of review and at courts of honor.
- Maintain records of crew finances and recognition.
- Assist in the charter renewal process.
- Help with the annual Friends of Scouting campaign.
- Provide adequate adult support.
- Provide meaningful and significant responsibilities for crew committee members to support the crew program.
- Complete and maintain the crew's Program Capability Inventory (PCI) in collaboration with a crew officer.
- Secure equipment, facilities, and program resources.
- Review, support, and approve the crew's program plans.
- Keep the parents of Venturers informed about the crew, its chartered organization, and Venturing through regular newsletters, social media updates, and parent meetings.
- Encourage participation and support for the Venturing crew from the chartered organization, associate Advisors, crew committee, parents, and other adults in the community.
- Seek and suggest opportunities, crew activities, and projects. Committee members, on a rotating basis, should be involved with crew meetings and activities so that they can see firsthand how the crew is doing and have the opportunity to get to know the members.
- Uphold the standards and policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America.
- Provide the necessary framework for protecting the members of a crew from abuse.
- Ensure that activities are conducted within BSA safety guidelines and requirements by completing Crew Committee Challenge training.
- Seek to cultivate within the members of a crew a capacity to enjoy life—to have fun through the Venturing experience.
- Members of the crew committee with special expertise may advise crew officers in roles such as quartermaster, secretary, and treasurer.



### Committee Insight: Recruiting Advisors

The most important responsibility of a crew committee is recruiting qualified adult Advisors for the crew. This is an extremely important task because the committee must find individuals who are excellent role models as well as effective advisors of young people. When a leadership vacancy occurs, the crew committee identifies several candidates based on their ability to fulfill the role and then selects the individual who, in the committee's estimation, is most qualified. Once that person is approved by the chartered organization representative, the next step is to recruit the candidate for the position. If that person cannot accept the appointment, the committee can move to the next name on the list.



## Chartered Organization Representative

The chartered organization representative's primary responsibility is to uphold the policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America. The chartered organization representative ensures that all adults involved serve the best interests of the chartered organization and the BSA. He or she becomes a member of the BSA council or district, representing the chartered organization and the crew.

The chartered organization representative is a member of the chartered organization and the recognized head of its "Scouting department." The chartered organization representative is appointed by the head of the institution and serves as the connecting link between the institution and the crew, and the institution and the Boy Scouts of America. A chartered organization may operate any or all Scouting programs—a Cub Scout pack, a Boy Scout troop, a Varsity Scout team, and a Venturing crew—with all of them served by the same chartered organization representative. The chartered organization representative is the chartered organization's presence on the district committee and is a voting delegate at the local council's annual meeting. In addition, the chartered organization representative may serve on the crew committee or as committee chair.

The chartered organization representative will:

- Serve as a liaison between the units, the organization, and the council structure.
- Encourage unit leaders and committee members to take advantage of training opportunities and to regularly attend district roundtables.
- Promote well-planned unit programs.
- Organize units to serve the youth needs of the organization and its community.
- Promote the recruiting of new members.
- See that boys and adult volunteers graduate from one program phase to the next.
- Assist with annual unit charter renewal.
- Suggest unit Good Turns for the chartered organization.
- Encourage unit committee meetings.
- Encourage the pursuit of Journey to Excellence status.
- Inform organization leaders.
- Encourage active outdoor unit programs.
- Emphasize recognition.
- Secure district help when needed.
- Use approved unit finance policies.
- Encourage recognition of leaders.
- Cultivate resources to support the chartered organization's units.
- Represent the chartered organization on the council and district levels.

## Some Observations Regarding Adult Roles in Crews

Venturing crew committees operate somewhat differently from troop committees that support Boy Scout troops. These points are important to consider for committee members who have previously served as a committee member for a Boy Scout troop.

- There are not the same sort of boundaries as seen in Boy Scout troops. The role is more based on one-on-one mentoring (within the guidelines offered by the *Guide to Safe Scouting*), based on skills and advisory relationships.
- Committee members in Venturing crews are more likely to support youth directly than a leader in a Boy Scout troop.
- The lines between Advisor and committee members are often blurred; the skills possessed by a committee member dictate the nature of his or her involvement with the crew members.
- For mixed-gender crews, male and female Advisors must always be present.

## Developing Effective Advisors: Adult Training

Training leads to success. The Boy Scouts of America has developed a variety of training courses that are designed to help you find success as an Advisor or committee member with a Venturing crew. Some training courses are required, so check with your local council.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Training

It is important for the chartered organization leadership to communicate the expectation that all leaders must be trained to take on their roles in support of the crew. In addition to meeting a minimum standard of training, encouraging the further development of skills among the Advisors will serve the crew program well.



## Joining Courses

These courses are required for all new registered leaders.

### Venturing Youth Protection Training

This course is required for all adult Venturing volunteers. This training will help adults understand and guide youth through possible problems related to abuse and harassment. You will also learn about the issues you may face as a volunteer to help provide a safer environment for the crew members and to protect yourself. This training is available through your local council or as an e-learning course at [www.MyScouting.org](http://www.MyScouting.org). A login is required for e-learning, and anyone may create a user account and view the courses. Registered members of the BSA may provide their member numbers to receive credit in their member record. New Venturing adults should complete BSA Youth Protection training before submitting an application for registration. This training must be renewed every two years.

## Orientation Courses

Orientation courses are designed to help Scouters learn more about their Scouting role and about other leadership positions in the program. “Scouters” is the term used for adults registered as members of the Boy Scouts of America, regardless of the program they support.

### ***Fast Start Orientation Training***

While not required to be considered “trained,” Fast Start training is an excellent online orientation to Venturing.

Fast Start is intended to be taken by Venturing volunteers and chartered organization representatives immediately following the acceptance of their new role, ideally within their first 48 hours. It explains Venturing, the crew startup process, roles and relations of youth officers and adult Advisors, and resources. Chartered Organization Representative Fast Start Training is also available for individuals in that role with the crew.

## Position-Specific (Role-Based) Courses

These instructor-led courses are designed to help Scouters learn how to effectively carry out their Scouting roles. Completing the course—and Youth Protection training—will make a Scouter “trained” and eligible to wear the Trained emblem for the role(s) covered in the course.



*Trained emblem*

### Venturing Advisor Position-Specific Training

Venturing Advisor Position-Specific Training is for crew Advisors and associate Advisors and is designed to provide an introduction to the responsibilities, opportunities, and resources that will ensure a successful Venturing crew experience. If a crew’s focus is outdoor activities or high adventure, the Advisor and associate Advisors should also complete Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills before the crew goes on an outdoor adventure.

### Crew Committee Challenge

Crew committee members should complete the Crew Committee Challenge. This training course outlines how the crew committee helps support the operation of the crew. Committee members are also welcome to take Venturing Advisor Position-Specific Training to gain further insight into Venturing, but it is not necessary to be considered “trained” as a committee member.

## Supplemental Training Courses

Supplemental training courses are designed to help Scouters with a particular skill or to enhance their Scouting role.

Supplemental training modules are designed to provide orientation beyond the basic training offered in leader-specific training. These training courses are available in a variety of formats: group training sessions, self-study, and coaching. Many supplemental training courses are available at <http://www.scouting.org/training>, and others are provided by the BSA local council.

### Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills

This hands-on course provides adult leaders the practical outdoor skills they need to lead Venturers in the out-of-doors. Upon completion, leaders should feel comfortable using basic outdoor skills in a camp setting. Completing this course will certify the unit leader in an outdoor-oriented Venturing crew as “trained.” This course is often offered conjointly with Boy Scout leader training, which allows for valuable networking as many Boy Scout leaders can share adventure ideas that can be taken to the next level in Venturing.

### Powder Horn

Open to registered adults as well as Venturers 14 and older, Powder Horn is a hands-on resource management course designed to give you the contacts and tools necessary to support a high-quality high-adventure program in a Venturing crew. Powder Horn helps volunteers in Boy Scouting and Venturing find the resources to conduct a high-adventure program in their unit through the use of consultants.



*Powder Horn*

## Advanced Training Courses

Advanced training courses are focused primarily on leader development and how to leverage leadership skills to support your role in Scouting.

### Wood Badge

Wood Badge is a leadership development training course for adult leaders in the BSA. The course is divided into two components: a six-day (usually offered over two weekends) residential skill development experience and an application phase. During the application phase, Wood Badge candidates, guided by an experienced mentor, carry out a series of projects designed to support the unit they work with. Venturers who are 18 years or older may also complete Wood Badge training.



*Wood Badge Training Award*

### Leadership Challenge

This conference hones the skills taught in Wood Badge in an outdoor experiential learning environment. Leadership Challenge underscores the values of Scouting and teamwork and promotes the concepts of servant leadership. The course is open to Scouters in all programs and is offered at BSA high-adventure bases.

## Training Opportunities

It is worth noting that some of the BSA's training courses are open to both youth and adults. Powder Horn is open to youth 14 and older, and Wood Badge may be completed by Venturers 18 and older. Advisors and Venturers who take part in these training courses together find their working relationship in the crew strengthened as a result of sharing these experiences.

Fundamentals of Training and Trainer's EDGE are likewise open for young adult members of the crew. If a Venturer serves as a member of a local council National Youth Leadership Training course staff, he or she must complete Trainer's EDGE.

### National Training Conferences

National training conferences are held at the BSA's national high-adventure bases in New Mexico, West Virginia, Florida, and Minnesota. Conferences offered at these national facilities allow for both general and deep specialization in areas of interest by crew Advisors.

Additional information on BSA training courses for adult leaders is available online at [www.Scouting.org/Training/adult](http://www.Scouting.org/Training/adult).

### Training Awards for Adult Volunteers in Units

The training awards and keys are designed to recognize crew adult volunteers for tenure, training, and performance in their leadership roles. These awards provide an outward affirmation that you have received and applied training to support a high-quality Venturing program for youth. When adults receive recognition for training and service, it sets an example for youth to set goals that lead to the full use of the Venturing recognition program. Progress forms to track completion of training awards are available at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).



*Venturing  
Leader's Key*



*Venturing Leader's  
Training Award*



*Unit Leader  
Award of Merit*

### Young Adult Roles in Venturing

As a Venturing Advisor, you will work with the crew officers to help them take responsibility for the crew's operations. Some areas of responsibility will be harder for them to master than others. But learning to take responsibility for others is part of the maturation process—part of growing up. As an Advisor, your role is to facilitate that process.

Depending on the size of the crew you support, youth officers will take on these roles and perhaps additional ones to meet the needs of the crew:

- President
- Vice president for communications (or secretary)
- Vice president for administration
- Vice president for program
- Treasurer



## Advisor Insight: Supporting Crew Officers

Each officer is supported by an Advisor or committee member. The crew organization chart earlier in this chapter makes this explicit.

### Crew Member

Crew members are not part of the crew's leadership team, yet their actions are important to the success of the crew's program. Their principal responsibilities include:

- Participate in meetings and activities.
- Periodically serve as activity chair.
- Recruit new members.



### Crew President

The crew president is the primary leader of the crew. He or she is selected by crew members as the best person to lead and represent them. Being president carries honor and privilege, but it also requires hard work, responsibility, and dedication. The principal responsibilities include:

- Serve as leader of the crew.
- Implement the crew program in cooperation with officers and members.
- Work closely with Advisors and other adults in a spirit of partnership.
- Represent the crew at the Venturing Officers Association (VOA) and be available to report to the chartered organization and crew committee.
- Work with the crew Advisor in conducting the crew officers seminar.
- In consultation with the vice president of program, appoint activity chairs.
- Appoint special crew officers.
- Present an annual report to the chartered organization at the conclusion of the term of office.
- Assess on an ongoing basis whether the responsibilities of the officers are being considered and carried out effectively.
- Approach Venturing in a spirit of fun and enjoyment, and encourage others to do so as well.
- Run the crew officers' meeting.



### Vice President of Administration

Two key responsibilities characterize the position of vice president of administration: leading the recruiting efforts for new crew members and managing member recognition.

First, this position provides leadership for recruiting new members into the crew by ensuring that prospective members are made aware of the crew and are invited to the crew's open house and by encouraging members to bring friends to crew meetings.

This position also follows up with any members who seem to be losing interest and helps them re-engage with the crew. The principal responsibilities of this position include:

- Serve as administrative officer of the crew.
- Assume the responsibilities of the crew president in his or her absence.
- Lead the recruiting and admission of new members during the year.
- Coordinate with others the leadership of crew membership and sustainability events.
- Organize, record, and recognize the achievements of crew members.
- Conduct opening and closing ceremonies for special occasions as scheduled.
- Attend all crew activities.
- Participate in the council's annual Venturing Officers Association program planning conference.
- Approach Venturing in a spirit of fun, and seek to reflect this spirit in the recruiting of new members and through recognizing the achievements of crew members.
- Appoint and supervise den chiefs and crew guides.



### Vice President of Program

Much of a crew's success depends on the program of activities, and managing the development of a good program is the core of the position of vice president of program. Venturing is based on planning a program that meets the needs and interests of crew members. The principal responsibilities of this position include:

- Serve as the program officer of the crew and arrange the program planning process for the crew.
- Collect and maintain a crew activity file consisting of the Program Capability Inventory, a list of crew member interests and suggestions for activities, program resources, and an annual activity schedule.
- Determine the interests of the crew members on an ongoing basis (using Venturing Activity Interest Surveys).
- Appoint youth chairs for special projects and appoint special crew officers, if this responsibility is assigned by the crew president.
- Provide support for the chair and committee for each activity.
- Maintain an up-to-date calendar of crew meetings and activities.
- Approach Venturing activities in a spirit of fun and enjoyment, and encourage others to do the same.





### Vice President of Communication, or Secretary

Effective communication is a key ingredient in any organization. The vice president of communication, or secretary, is primarily responsible for written communication—correspondence, records, and minutes showing decisions, plans, and publicity—and for ensuring that everyone has the right

information. An adult member of the crew committee may be assigned to assist, and other crew members can be enlisted to help as well. The principal responsibilities of the position include:

- Serve as the communications officer and, in that position, manage all communications and publicity for the crew.
- Maintain crew membership and attendance records in consultation with the vice president of administration.
- Handle crew correspondence and minutes.
- Coordinate crew publicity through local media, social media, crew newsletters, and the crew's telephone network.
- Approach Venturing in a spirit of fun, and seek to reflect this spirit in the publicity and communications of the crew.



### Treasurer

The crew treasurer is responsible for keeping accurate records of the income and expenditures of the crew's funds. The crew expects an exact accounting of all the money taken in or paid out. The treasurer ensures that all expenditures are approved by crew officers and the Advisor before writing any checks. An auditor from the crew committee may be assigned to assist in setting up bookkeeping procedures, bank accounts, and money-handling methods. The principal responsibilities of this position include:

- Serve as the financial officer and, in that position, maintain financial records and the crew budget.
- Collect and disburse crew funds.
- Communicate with the officers and members on a regular basis to keep them informed about the crew's finances.
- Maintain and share balance sheets for current adventures.
- Approach Venturing in a spirit of fun, and spread this spirit in carrying out the treasurer's responsibilities.

## Appointed Crew Roles

Some crews may also make use of the following appointed roles:

| Additional Office   | Description of Responsibilities   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Quartermaster</b></p>  | <p>The crew quartermaster is responsible for the crew supplies and equipment. He or she keeps an inventory of and maintains equipment in good working order. When equipment is loaned to a crew member, the quartermaster monitors the safe return of the items. The crew quartermaster generates a list of equipment and supplies needed by the crew for future acquisition.</p> |
| <p><b>Crew Guide</b></p>     | <p>The crew guide serves as an individual mentor for new Venturers, assisting in their understanding of the Venturing program and participation in crew activities.</p>   |
| <p><b>Historian</b></p>    | <p>The crew historian collects and preserves memorabilia, press releases, photos, and other data of historical significance to the crew. He or she maintains information about crew activities and erstwhile crew members.</p>  |
| <p><b>Den Chief</b></p>    | <p>The den chief serves as a liaison to a Cub Scout den and assists a Cub Scout den leader in operating the den.</p>  |

Regardless of the role the officer serves with the crew, all crew officers are responsible for the following broad tasks that support their crew:

- Fostering and developing an environment within a Venturing crew that has a true sense of community and that encourages growth and responsibility to one another
- Working in a spirit of camaraderie with the Advisors of the crew
- Developing a program of activities for the crew and helping to carry them out

- Upholding the standards and policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America
- Ensuring that activities are conducted within BSA safety guidelines and requirements
- Cultivating the capacity to enjoy life—to have fun and to explore as they lead

Much of your success as an Advisor will be grounded in how you model those dispositions and support the young adult leaders of the crew as they meet and overcome challenges associated with delivering the crew’s program.

## Youth Leadership Training

One of Venturing’s strengths as a youth development program is the depth of leadership and skill training programs available. Various training courses help youth members serve their crew as leaders, plan and prepare for adventures, manage time well, and serve as mentors. Work with your crew leadership to connect them with training courses that will help them lead the crew more successfully.

Leadership and service to others are two key tenets of Venturing. Combine these two elements and you get the concept of what is sometimes called “the servant leader” or the “others-first leader.” Others-first leadership as a philosophy teaches that the leader works with and through a team to accomplish the mission. Rather than just talking about leadership, Venturers can complete experiential leadership training offered by the BSA to learn relevant leadership skills that teens can use immediately and throughout their lives.

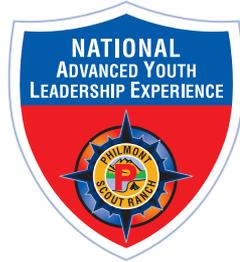
## Young Adult Leadership Development

The BSA offers a continuum of leadership training courses for Venturers. The courses listed in this section will help them develop leadership skills that they will use in Venturing and in life. Their value has also been recognized by their inclusion in the Venturing recognition system as either a participant or a staff member. In many cases, there is a parallel between the course designed for Venturers and the course designed for Advisors. This is deliberate. All BSA training courses use a common leadership language that supports dialogue and understanding between Advisors and Venturers.

**Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC)** is the first course in the series of leadership training offered to Venturers. The purpose of the ILSC course is to teach crew members with leadership positions about their new roles and how to most effectively reach success in that role. It is intended to help Venturers in leadership positions within their crew understand their responsibilities and to equip them with organizational and leadership skills to fulfill those responsibilities. The training can be conducted on the district or council level, but it was designed to be conducted at the crew level. The crew may choose to conduct the course at a weekend retreat or over the course of several crew meetings. Completion of ILSC is a prerequisite for Venturers to participate in the more advanced leadership courses. More information about the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews training course is available at [www.scouting.org/training/youth](http://www.scouting.org/training/youth). (Completion of this course is required for the Discovery Award.)



**National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT)** is the second course in the leadership training continuum for Venturers. It expands on the skills learned in ILSC and provides Venturers with more advanced leadership skills and experience during a six-day course delivered in an outdoor setting. This course is conducted by the BSA local council for both Boy Scouts and Venturers. (Completion of this course may be used to meet requirements for the Discovery, Pathfinder, or Summit award.)



**National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience (NAYLE)** is a weeklong experiential course offered at the BSA's national high-adventure bases. It is an exciting program that allows NYLT graduates to enhance their leadership skills in an outdoor adventure setting. NAYLE offers Venturers an unforgettable experience as they use leadership and team-building skills to resolve exciting and challenging outdoor situations. (Completion of this course may be used to meet requirements for the Discovery, Pathfinder, or Summit award.)



**Kodiak Challenge** is an adventure-based leadership development course. Its flexible design allows it to be of value whenever it is completed. Crews find that the adventure-based delivery model allows the course to work well even when youth participate more than once. Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews is the only prerequisite for this training course, and this course may be offered by crews themselves or conducted by the local council. (Completion of this course may be used to meet requirements for the Discovery, Pathfinder, or Summit award.)



## Proficiency Development Courses

The Boy Scouts of America provides additional training courses for Venturers.

These courses are designed to help them lead their program, plan and deliver adventures and activities for the crew, and better position themselves for whatever their futures may bring.

**Crew Officers Orientation** is a training course delivered early in the tenure of a member of the crew. The purpose of the crew officer orientation is to help youth understand the roles and responsibilities of the young adults who lead the crew. (Completion of this training is required for the Discovery Award.)

**Goal-Setting** training provides the Venturer practical guidance in how to use time well and to prioritize tasks as part of completing significant projects. The training will assist the youth not only in life preparation, but also in organizing outings, service projects, and crew activities. (Completion of this training is required for the Discovery Award.)

**Time Management** training is designed to help crew members make the best use of their resources while planning events. Whether the resources to be managed are on the trail or on a service project, time management skills will serve Venturers over a lifetime. (Completion of this training is required for the Discovery Award.)

**Project Management** training connects with another aspect of planning and leading activities. Project planning skills will provide ongoing value to Venturers. (Completion of this training is required for the Pathfinder Award.)

**Mentoring** training focuses on the leadership skill of mentoring: how to do it, how to be effective, and how to support a protégé as he or she plans and develops a project. (Completion of this training is required for the Summit Award.)

**Fundamentals of Training** introduces teaching techniques and skills to new Scout trainers and helps Scouters, regardless of their experience, present effective training courses. Intended for both youth and adult trainers, the course will help those who have trained for other organizations learn the BSA's training techniques and will help freshen up the skills of current BSA trainers.

**Trainer's EDGE** provides an additional opportunity for trainers to enhance their abilities beyond the introduction provided in Fundamentals of Training. Trainer's EDGE supplements the training development sessions offered during faculty development for advanced leadership training courses and provides increased familiarity with the EDGE model that is used throughout the training. The course is intended for both youth and adult trainers.

## Organizing and Leading Small Crews

Venturing is not dependent on the size of the crew; any sized group may form an effective and fun Venturing crew. There are some differences to consider when working with small crews (10 or fewer members) and larger crews.

| Small Crew   | Large Crew  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consensus-driven</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choices made via democratic and representative methods</li></ul>              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Smaller number of activity interests</li></ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wide range of interests within a crew</li></ul>                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth take on a broader range of leadership responsibilities</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater resources and support needed to balance different interests</li></ul> |

### Suggestions for Smaller Crews

**Ownership.** Ensure that all crew members have a responsibility that is important to the success of the crew. Keep crew members invested in the crew's success.

**Program Development.** A small crew may find that it falls into a program rut fairly quickly. Ensure that annual planning conferences include the goal of bringing new and different activities into the mix. Meet regularly and ensure that there are always fun and interesting things to keep the crew returning. You might find that having regular exchanges with other Venturing crews in your area not only adds program variety and divides up the task of program planning, but also allows your crew to meet new youth.

**Leadership.** Small crews may ask too much from members of the crew. Be respectful of crew members' time and availability, but work to keep all members active and involved in planning and delivering the program. There is a role for every member of the crew. Schedule activities when all or most crew members are able to participate.

**Organizational Structure.** Some appointed positions may not be needed in a small crew, but many of the tasks need to be completed. For example, a large crew may have an appointed webmaster. A smaller crew may direct the crew secretary to update a crew web page or social media forum. A small crew may not use appointed committee chairs, but instead direct the vice president for program to take on the responsibility of leading major crew events. Remember to use the resources of the crew committee to help the crew accomplish its goals.

**Access to Resources.** Small crews may have limited resources. Working with consultants may be more important to smaller crews than to crews with a large committee and extensive membership.

**Growth.** Attention must be paid to sustaining all crews, but for a crew of only six members, a high school graduation season may mean that more than half of the crew will leave for college the next year. Ensure that plans to sustain the crew are always present.



**“ The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual. ”**  
*—Vince Lombardi, legendary coach for whom the NFL championship trophy is named*

# Guiding Venturers: Teaching and Learning

**M**any of the adventures planned and led by the members of the crew will require learning new skills to achieve success. The Boy Scouts of America uses several training methods that can help Advisors and Venturers to communicate new skills.

## Overview of the Teaching EDGE Model

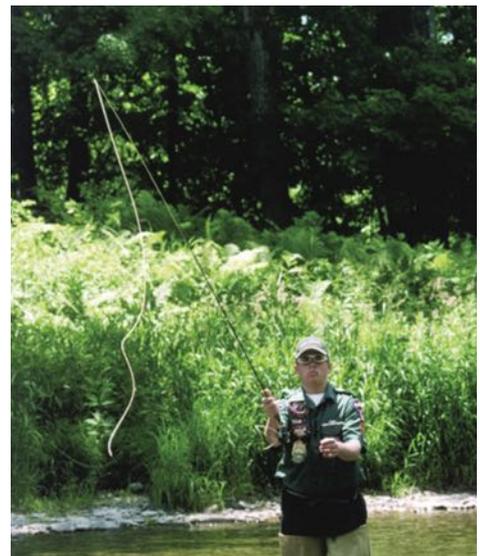
The Fundamentals of Training and Trainer's EDGE are both helpful courses to assist Advisors and Venturers in becoming more proficient presenters and trainers. Presented here is an orientation to basic skills needed to pass along information effectively.



### Advisor Insight: Be Obsolete

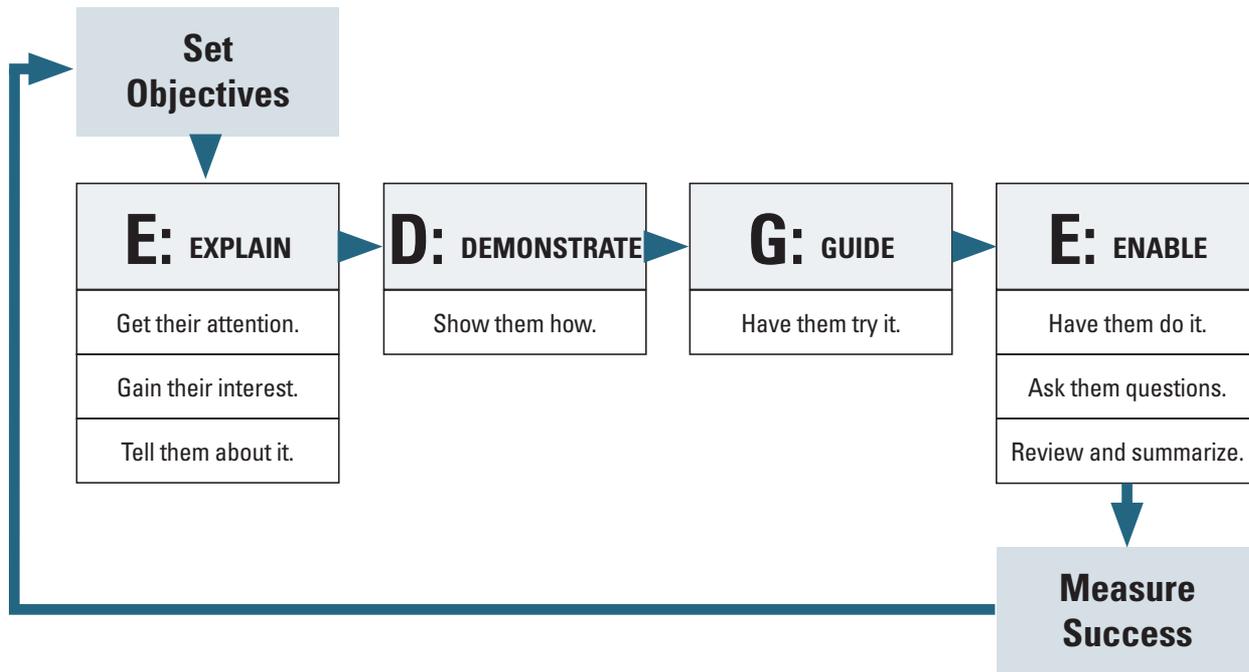
One of the goals as a leader is to make yourself obsolete. The need may arise for you to deliver training in skills related to leading a crew. The first time the skill has been encountered, this is appropriate. With Venturing's emphasis on youth-designed and youth-led adventures, it is desirable that you move into a coaching phase and help the Venturers who have learned a skill under your direction or the direction of a consultant to take on the role of leading the training of other Venturers.

The first step in teaching and learning is to determine what skill needs to be passed on and how well do the Venturers know the skill. In many Venturing activities, these skills are self-evident: using a camping stove, demonstrating a J-stroke when canoeing, or putting up drywall during a construction project. Being clear about what you want them to be able to do helps you plan how to teach the skill and also provides evidence at the end of the teaching that the skill has been learned to your satisfaction. Many teaching and learning professionals encourage you to set your goal at the start of your planning process to help you be clear what your outcomes are at the end of the lesson. If you want a Venturer to be able to cast a line as a part of learning how to enjoy fly-fishing, then the evidence at the end of the skill session is that the Venturer will be able to cast the line consistently and accurately.



## Developing Skills: Elements of Effective Teaching

The BSA's training programs use an instructional approach called the Teaching EDGE, which gives learners a common language to describe training and a helpful methodology for teaching skills to others. The following figure shows the key parts of the Teaching EDGE system.



At the heart of the Teaching EDGE system are four steps: explaining, demonstrating, guiding, and enabling. Research in teaching and learning studies over the years—and experience gained from educators—affirms the value of this approach for teaching skills.

Part of the teaching and learning process outlined by the Teaching EDGE process emphasizes that learning skills is a hands-on experience. No one will learn to be an accomplished painter unless he or she has a chance to put paint on a wall. Make sure that your teaching includes hands-on experiences that give the learner a chance to practice the skill and gain guidance from you during the process.

| Step in Lesson | Instructional Value  |
|----------------|--|
| Explain        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It motivates learners to master the new information.</li> <li>It clarifies the subject for learners AND for the trainer.</li> </ul>                               |
| Demonstrate    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It allows learners to see as well as hear how something is done. They can follow the process from beginning to end.</li> </ul>                                    |
| Guide          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It allows learners to learn by doing.</li> <li>It allows the trainer to see how well learners are grasping the material being taught.</li> </ul>                  |
| Enable         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It allows learners to use the material being taught themselves. It also encourages repetition—an important part of turning information into knowledge.</li> </ul> |

The following are some points to consider when implementing the teaching and learning process that makes up the Teaching EDGE.

Teaching is more effective when:

- Learners experience presentations that provide input to multiple senses.
- Learners are given the opportunity to do what has been taught or teach what has been taught to others.

Applying multiple inputs for teaching through multiple senses enhances learning:

- By helping to improve the learner's focus.
- By accommodating the different ways that different people process information.
- By enabling the brain to store and retrieve information in a variety of ways and by making multiple connections.

Repetition and practice is a helpful part of learning because:

- It allows people to make multiple connections between the new materials and known material.
- It encourages people to remember information.
- It supports the storage and retrieval of information.

### Assessing and Evaluating Learning

Assessment is deliberate action to confirm that learning has taken place. Assessment needs to be purposeful and intentional. Look for specific evidence that the learning objectives have been accomplished. Evaluating is the judgment as to how well the learning took place.

As an example, using a Start, Stop, Continue feedback process can provide the presenter with specific information that will improve the effectiveness of presentations. Note that Start, Stop, Continue is an example of an *assessment*—it is used to gather specified information regarding the teaching episodes you observe. The assessment tool should be based on the learning objectives so that the leader can gain evidence the learners learned what was intended. The *evaluation* is the judgment made based on the evidence collected via the assessment.

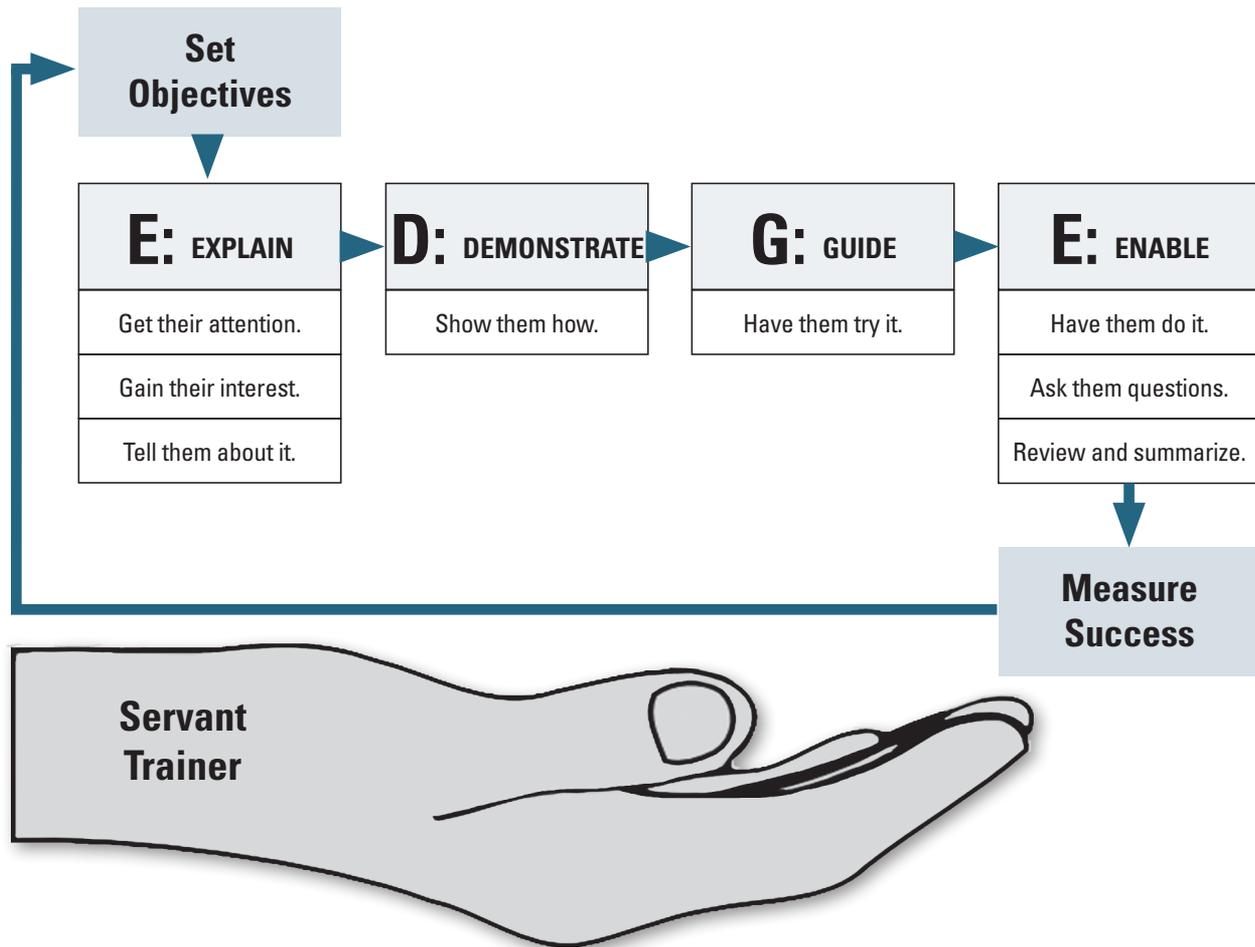


If you are teaching the members of the crew how to start a backpacking stove, the assessment is clear and straightforward: Give them a stove and have them show that they can safely light it.



## Effective Teaching as a Tool of Effective Leadership

The term “servant leader” is often used in Scouting. It is a perspective on leadership to which youth and adult leaders aspire. Note the addition of the hand supporting the Teaching EDGE model and the “Servant Trainer” label in the following figure. It is important to recognize that the purpose of effective teaching is to meet the needs of the learners.



Applying this concept of a servant leader to the role of the trainer poses these important considerations for working with young adults:

- Effective teachers are focused on the learner and not on their role as the person at the front of the room.
- The key outcome is to meet the needs of the learner.
- The presenter works in all ways possible to help the learner achieve success.
- The success of the presenter is based on the success of the learner.

Keeping the needs of the learner first and foremost is the hallmark of a truly effective instructor—and an effective leader, too.



# Part II: Methods of Venturing and Areas of Program Emphasis





“ Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality. ”  
—Warren Bennis,  
*American scholar and author*

# Methods and Areas of Emphasis

**V**enturing is a program designed to help young adults mature into successful and conscientious citizens. While the activities of Venturing are recreational in nature, the program activities are the means by which young adults develop the skills, characteristics, moral values, and attitudes that will help them become successful in life.

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law. The Venturing aims and methods help support that mission by helping prepare Venturers to give lives of service to their families, communities, religious organizations, and professions or occupations.

## Venturing's Aims

Venturing has three aims: character development; citizenship; and physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual fitness. In addition to these defined aims, two additional desired outcomes are identified among the program outcomes of Scouting: developing leadership skills and adventurous programming.

## Character Development

The first aim of Venturing is character development. Character can be defined as the collection of core values by an individual that leads to moral commitment and action, and encompasses a young adult's personal qualities, values, and outlook. The Scout Oath and the Scout Law summarize the Venturing vision of character.



## Citizenship

Venturing also seeks to encourage active citizenship among Venturers. In Venturing, citizenship addresses the young person's relationship with others. Crew members come to learn of their obligations to other people, to society, and to the government that presides over that society, and to develop skills that will help them be effective participants in the process.

## Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Spiritual Fitness

The third aim of Venturing is to develop physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual fitness among Venturers. Fitness includes the body (well-tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), emotions (self-control, courage, and self-respect), and spirit (faith in God and respect for beliefs of others).

## Developing Leadership Skills

Developing skills of leadership is critical in helping young adults move from being spectators in life to being individuals who make a difference. Scouting provides opportunities for young adults to develop leadership skills and to serve others as servant leaders.

## Adventurous Programming

For Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, outdoor program is a learning laboratory where the other aims of Scouting find their expression. In Venturing, adventurous programming is not limited to the outdoor program. The adventure may be indoors or outdoors, but in all cases, it safely helps young adults to move beyond their known comfort zone to confirm for themselves that they can accomplish more than they once had believed possible. Through this process, Venturers develop not only life skills and relationships of trust with other crew members and their adult Advisors but also courage and self-confidence, which are vital to success in life.



## Venturing's Methods

The Venturing methods provide the process through which the Venturing aims and the mission of the Boy Scouts of America are accomplished. The methods are presented in no particular order, as there is no hierarchy among them. Consistent application of each of these methods is at the core of delivering the Venturing program.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Leadership and Mentoring</b></p>       | <p>All Venturers are given opportunities to learn and apply leadership skills. A Venturing crew is led by elected crew officers. Venturing's program model provides explicit training experiences to help youth lead and mentor as well as opportunities to test and refine their skills during youth-led and youth-mentored adventures.</p>  |
| <p><b>Group Activities and Adventure</b></p> | <p>Venturing's emphasis on adventure helps provide team-building opportunities, new meaningful experiences, practical leadership application, and lifelong memories to young adults. Venturing activities are interdependent group experiences in which success is dependent on the cooperation of all. Learning by doing in a group setting provides opportunities for developing new skills.</p>  |
| <p><b>Recognition</b></p>                    | <p>Personal growth comes through the Venturing recognition program and through the acknowledgment of a youth's competence and ability by peers and adults. The recognition program is more than just earning awards. As a Venturer progresses through the four levels of the Venturing recognition program, he or she will learn valuable skills and competencies that have been identified as vital to achieving success in education, in a work environment, and in life.</p> |
| <p><b>Adult Association</b></p>              | <p>The youth officers lead the crew. The officers and activity chairs work closely with Advisors and other adults in a spirit of partnership. The adults serve in a "shadow" leader capacity. The Advisor is there to support and challenge youth officers to make the best decisions as they learn to lead their colleagues on adventures of ever-increasing challenge and sophistication.</p>   |
| <p><b>Ideals</b></p>                         | <p>Venturers are expected to know and live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law and commit to serving God and country, other people, and themselves. A Venturer measures himself or herself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and Venturers reach for them, continuously meet the challenge, and answer the question of how these statements of personal value guide their life path.</p>   |
| <p><b>Group Identity</b></p>                 | <p>Peer groups are essential for the growth and development of young adults. Group identity is the shared sense of belonging to a group with common values and serves as a means to build positive group interactions and self-confidence. Some crews use outward signs of group identity, such as a uniform or jacket, but a crew may decide to form an identity that is more focused on shared commitments.</p>   |
| <p><b>Service</b></p>                        | <p>Service encourages youth to identify a community need and to take action to address that need. Service helps youth make a difference in the world beyond themselves and in the process develop the disposition to put the needs of others first.</p>   |

## Venturing's Areas of Emphasis

Venturing has often been described to nonparticipants as “anything you want it to be!” That statement is accurate, as far as it goes, but it is important to see that Venturing is a process through which youth development takes place. Whether a crew's primary interest is in STEM, service, faith development, or outdoor skills, the Venturing program of adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service provides an explicit way of exploring the interests of the crew members.

Venturing's program is built around four areas of program emphasis that combine with the levels of programming to form a program matrix. The areas of program emphasis are influenced by the aims of Venturing and the desired outcomes noted above. They provide a framework for youth-led adventure and fun and benchmarks of progress for the Venturing recognition method.

|            | Adventure and Activities  | Leadership                     | Personal Growth                  | Service                   |
|------------|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Summit     | Mentoring and participation   | Ongoing leadership development | Goal-setting and personal growth | Leading others in service |
| Pathfinder | Leading and participation   | Leading others                 | Goal-setting and personal growth | Participating in service  |
| Discovery  | Participation   | Preparing to lead              | Goal-setting and personal growth | Participating in service  |
| Venturing  | Initial participation, orientation to the crew, Personal Safety Awareness training, induction into the crew |                                |                                  |                           |

### As a Program Planning Tool

Most importantly, adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service offer a structure for Venturers to design their own program of balanced growth and development. In addition to providing areas of programming, noted by columns in the above figure, the areas of emphasis feature levels of programming. In adventure, for example, the adventure becomes more and more sophisticated for the Venturer. The levels of involvement in adventure support a young adult as he or she moves from participating in crew adventures to leading a crew adventure and finally to mentoring other youth who are leading adventures. Balanced programming that includes youth participation in planning and leading the activity or adventure that meets the needs and interests of crew members will foster retention and active participation of crew members.



### Advisor Insight: Balanced Program

The areas of emphasis also provide a means of ensuring balance for the crew's program. While the focus for the Venturers is on participating and leading adventures, the areas of emphasis work to ensure that adventures are more than just fun outings. The adventures become a means of developing skills as leaders.

## As a Recognition Tool

Recognition is a vital part of the Venturing program. Venturing recognition is designed to not only meet the needs and interests of Venturing-age youth but also provide life skills and competencies that have been identified as being important to being successful in education, in the workplace, and in life.

The Venturing recognition system is designed to focus on adventurous programming that will result in personal growth, service, and leadership. Advisors can help youth reach many of the requirements naturally through the crew's program. Venturers appreciate sincere and genuine recognition for their other accomplishments and service. That may come in the form of an award, a personal note from the Advisor, or simply a positive word of reinforcement and recognition of a job well done.

Advisors should also help Venturers complete university admission papers and job applications to effectively highlight their accomplishments and competencies learned in Venturing. See the *Handbook for Venturers* for a sample entry in a personal résumé for use in applying for a job or for college entrance.

The Advisor has a responsibility to ensure that the Venturing program is delivered. Recognition is a natural outcome of a balanced program. Venturers appreciate recognition of their efforts and accomplishments. The Advisor has a responsibility to engage Venturers with the recognition system.

- **Planning:** The Advisor is responsible for helping the crew plan a good program.
- **Quality program:** Good program is a function of youth interest and the BSA's goals.
- **BSA aims and methods:** The BSA's goals are reflected in the core award requirements.
- **Evidence of quality program:** Evidence of a quality program comes from Venturers who are regularly recognized for their participation in the crew's program



### Advisor Insight: Soft Skills

An important point to communicate to Venturers is the value of the experiences that make up the trail to the Venturing Summit Award. The soft skills of leadership, problem-solving, goal-setting, communications, servant leadership, and more are recognized as valuable skills by human resources professionals, military recruiters, and college admission officers. The adventure makes up of the fun of Venturing, but the skills that are developed while planning and leading adventures is the real payoff.

“ Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. ”

—John F. Kennedy (1917–1963),  
35th president of the United States

# Method: Leadership and **Mentoring**

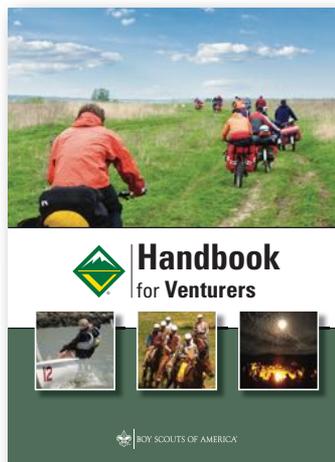
**A**ll Venturers are given opportunities to learn and apply leadership skills. A Venturing crew is led by elected crew officers. Venturing's program model provides explicit training experiences to help youth lead and mentor as well as opportunities to test and refine their skills during youth-led and youth-mentored adventures.

## Why Leadership?

There are a number of answers to this question. Leadership not only serves as one of the methods through which Venturing is delivered but also has an additional position of importance as one of Venturing's four areas of program emphasis.

- Leadership provides a vehicle for personal growth and resilience.
- Leadership develops much-needed social skills and makes for better team players as well as leaders.
- Leadership provides an opportunity to develop soft skills such as listening and consensus building—proven skills by which people achieve success in life.
- Leadership explores ethics and develops empathy toward others.
- Leadership offers youth an advantage through a head start in gaining skills helpful in careers or leadership challenges later in life.

If you have not read the leadership information in the *Handbook for Venturers*, you are encouraged to do so. Basic information needed by Venturers is included there; how to support leadership is emphasized in this chapter.



## Leadership Development

One of the key responsibilities of a Venturing crew Advisor is to help youth become effective leaders. The success of Advisors in their quest to support leadership development has been linked to three qualities:

- Characteristics of the individual learner
- The leadership development program itself
- Support for genuine change by the crew leadership and the Advisor

The characteristics of the individual learners are not immutable. Effective leaders are not born; they become effective leaders through preparation and practice. Venturing will provide that training through your effective advising efforts. The program itself has excellent tools in place. The entire suite of BSA training courses is designed to help young adults be effective leaders. The Venturing program, built around youth-led adventure, provides ongoing opportunities for a leadership development laboratory.



### Advisor Insight: Supporting Change

Support for change may be the most critical factor in Venturing. Advisors who want the program run their way—as an adult might design it—will get the results that they wish for but not the outcomes that will benefit youth. As you take on the mantle of Venturing Advisor, your responsibility is to see things from the perspective of the Venturers in the crew and help them lead the program that they design.

## Managing and Leading

Leadership development is appealing to many Venturers because they can directly connect it with present and future successes in careers and hobbies. Venturers will bring a variety of experiences with leadership with them into the program. Maybe they are a shift manager at a restaurant, a head lifeguard at a pool, or an area director at a summer camp. They may have held leadership roles in a Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop or given leadership in an Eagle Scout or Girl Scout Gold Award service project. Learn about these experiences from your Venturers because they will all come in with different experiences in providing leadership.

Leaders have different styles, and so will Venturers. Some will seek out visible roles that involve directing others, such as the crew president. Others will seek roles that involve behind-the-scenes leadership, such as organizing supply donations for a service project. These are both valuable roles, and the leadership responsibility needs to be recognized by all.

It is important that both Venturers and Advisors realize that leadership and management are not the same things. Both have their roles, and there is overlap. Management is focused on getting specific results by controlling procedures, policies, and people. This control can be through an established chain of command in a workplace or through monetary rewards. Leadership instead focuses on helping a group to achieve common results, sometimes with strong guidance (close to control) but usually through persuasion, coaching, and inspiring.

| Management                            | Leadership                     |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Role focused on stability             | Role focused on change         |
| Decision-maker                        | Guides decisions               |
| Plans details around constraints      | Sets and guides the direction  |
| General focus on short-term needs     | Extended vision                |
| Control based on formal relationships | Control based on relationships |
| Appeals to the head                   | Appeals to the heart           |
| Invested in the culture               | Shapes the culture             |
| Reactive                              | Proactive                      |
| Minimizes risk                        | Engages risk                   |
| Maintains norms                       | Challenges norms               |
| Values results                        | Values achievement             |
| Focused on managing work              | Focused on leading people      |

### Mentoring Versus Coaching

Advisors will need to serve as both a mentor and a coach for the Venturers. It's important to remember that the youth officers will likewise need to be both mentors and coaches to their fellow Venturers, so aim to set a good example.

Coaching is more directive than mentoring. A coach is recognized as having expertise (at least more expertise than the person being coached). A coach gives feedback that points out how to improve performance. A sports coach is a clear example: If a person is having trouble properly swinging a golf club, the coach can explain the steps and provide demonstrations. As the new golfer practices, the coach gives positive feedback to reinforce good techniques and corrective feedback to correct poor techniques.

A mentor is closer to being an equal with the mentee in terms of the task at hand. In a good mentor-mentee relationship, the mentor does not need to offer advice; rather, the mentee will decide when he or she would like to share ideas about how to improve something or how to address a problem. A mentor knows better than to constantly give advice because this does not respect the skills and abilities of the other person.

| Coach                      | Mentor                    |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Focuses on specific issues | Focuses on a relationship |
| Completing an objective    | Transferring knowledge    |
| Brief relationship         | Ongoing relationship      |
| Content-focused            | Process-focused           |

Mentoring efforts should not be limited to adults mentoring youth. Experienced youth should also coach and mentor less-experienced youth. There is a formal expectation of this for youth seeking the Summit Award, which requires an experienced youth to take Mentoring training and mentor a less-experienced youth who is leading a crew adventure. Mentoring also embraces situations where experienced youth may be younger than the less-experienced youth. Working to develop and sustain a crew marked by support for all members of the crew will help encourage openness of the Venturers toward the experience. One-on-one mentoring should still be conducted in adherence of Youth Protection policies to avoid any misunderstandings between Venturers (such as one Venturer interpreting the mentoring relationship romantically or as unwanted advances).



## Advisor Insight: Effective Mentoring

Effective mentors provide their mentees with help and support by adapting to the needs of the mentee. Some traits of effective mentors include the following:

- Is a good listener, first and foremost
- Is committed to learning and to helping others learn
- Offers empathy
- Builds rapport with the learner
- Encourages the learner
- Is observant and reflective
- Provides constructive challenges for the mentee
- Understands himself or herself and others
- Has intuitive wisdom gained from experience
- Helps the learner consider issues from different perspectives
- Has professional expertise and an understanding of how to apply it
- Shares experiences to guide the process
- Is not focused on project details
- Is focused on the relationship and not the goals
- Offers friendship

An effective mentor will maintain the relationship outside of crew activities and meetings, seeking to support the mentee beyond participation in the crew.

### Building a Relationship With Crew Officers

Supporting a Venturing crew is more like cultivating a long-lived plant than it is building a house. You do not do the actual construction of the program; your role as Advisor is to help guide the members of the crew as they run their own program. As a Venturing leader once remarked, “You gotta let the crew president drive the car.” The time to hand over the keys is now.

### Status Check

The expectation is that Venturing crews are led by Venturers. Adults serve as Advisors who guide and mentor the youth officers of the crew. Sometimes, a crew doesn’t come together and an adult may take a more heavy-handed approach to advisorship and function more as the leader of the crew. A simple test is this:

Q: Could a prepared youth carry out this task?

A: Yes

If so, it should be taken care of by one of the crew’s youth officers. If not, consider what it would take to move the crew officers into a leadership position.

If you are serving as the Advisor for a newly formed crew, you have some advantages, as there are no bad habits to undo. However, for the crew to be successful, crew officers need to be prepared to assume leadership of the crew. This will involve training and support from the Advisor.

Being a leader is a challenge. Many people are interested in seeking office, but once they are elected or appointed, the challenges of responsibility weigh on the officeholder. These are some perspectives for an Advisor to consider when mentoring Venturing officers:

- Serving as an officer can be lonely—not all members of the crew can identify with the challenges.
- Many adolescents bask in some level of anonymity; taking on a role that puts them front and center with their peers can be disconcerting.

- Leadership can take more work and time than a newly elected officer may realize while seeking the office.
- Inform the officer of the high expectations you have for him or her with empathy for being a young adult and the demands that that phase of growing up implies.
- Venturers do not automatically become effective leaders. The professional literature on developing leadership skills in young adults identifies that they move through three levels in their ability to serve as an effective leader:

### AWARENESS → INTERACTION → INTEGRATION

At the awareness level, leadership is not a conscious part of their experiences. At the interaction level, Venturers begin to see the need for leadership and begin to seek out ways to do it more effectively. At the integration level, leadership skills are becoming fully integrated into the Venturer’s problem-solving toolbox.

- Being a supportive Advisor is critical. As caring adults, we want the feeling the officer has at the end of the term to be one of quiet satisfaction and competence for a task well done, and not relief that the task is over.

Two central tensions are present in the life of adolescents: disorientation/discovery and independence/self-identity. As an Advisor, your efforts in mentoring and supporting young adults can help provide them grounding in a fun and rewarding program and a positive context to explore their growing independence.

Work with youth in advance of the meetings and activities. Move from a coaching model—focused on specific tasks—to more of a mentorship approach—helping the crew officers make independent decisions as to how to best lead the crew.



#### Advisor Insight: Meta-Leadership

The term “meta-leader” has become popular in the emergency management field. The idea has applications for the role of the crew Advisor in Venturing. Applying the five elements of meta-leadership to the role of the Advisor ensures that the Advisor is mindful of these factors:

- Leading up—Understand and respond to the team’s priorities: move the project forward.
- Leading down—Support the team members to ensure that they have the resources and support to be successful.
- Leading across—Break down barriers between any subteams that contribute to the overall success of the project.
- Understanding the problem you’re dealing with—Having sufficient skills as a leader and understanding the nature of the crew leadership and whatever project might be under way.
- Understanding yourself as a leader—Being aware of yourself, your skills, and your ability to serve the needs of the group, taking into consideration the relationship between and among the participants, the adventure, their needs, and any constraints.

In your role as a meta-leader, you will always be keeping an eye on how youth officers are mentoring, both formally and informally, other members of the crew. Be sure that they have the skills in place to do so (Mentoring training is a key component of this) and that you are always aware of the state of the mentor-mentee relationship.



## Developing Youth Leadership

One of the most important things an Advisor brings to his or her relationship with a youth officer is a focus on the needs of the officer. If that simple rule is followed, everything else will fall into place. You are not trying to transform the officer but allow what the officer experiences to produce the transformation.

The second piece of advice is to help the youth officer keep in mind that the members of the crew are in Venturing for one main reason: to have fun.

## Gender and Leadership

Young men and young women are both capable as leaders. All leaders benefit from clear expectations, quality training, and support from the Advisor. There are some observed differences in how males and females approach leading, which is helpful for an Advisor to be aware of. Several overall trends are listed in the table below. The insight for Advisors is to recognize that differences in leadership approaches are neither good nor bad; they simply exist, providing a given Venturer a different means of approaching a leadership opportunity.

| Male               | Female           |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Structure          | Consideration    |
| Transactional      | Transformational |
| Autocratic         | Participative    |
| Instruction-giving | Socio-expressive |
| Business-oriented  | People-oriented  |
| Less empathetic    | More empathetic  |

These trends may help alert you to where youth with strengths can excel in some settings while other youth with less-developed skills may benefit from additional coaching.

As an Advisor, be perceptive as to the leadership styles and dispositions of the members of the crew you work with. It is important to adapt your approach to working with Venturers to fit each youth leader's abilities and needs. Each youth is different, so Advisors cannot expect to treat each the same. The key is to help each youth find his or her own leadership voice.

Realize that your role as Advisor will evolve over time as well. At the beginning of a new officer's tenure, for example, the Advisor may need to be more hands-on, later stepping back as the youth gains confidence and experience.

Navigating your role as Advisor and the role of the youth leadership team calls for regular and open communication between the Advisor and the leadership team.

### ***Removing a Youth Officer***

Venturing is a youth development program designed to help youth have fun and develop skills at the same time. Some-times, however, a youth may be struggling with the responsibilities of office and alternatives need to be considered.

If an officer needs to be removed from a role, ensure that you have confirmed this with other Advisors and the crew committee. The crew president should be consulted as well and kept in the loop regarding the reasons for the officer's removal. If the crew president is to be removed, speak with the vice president and ensure that the crew's operation will not be compromised.

#### **Background**

While no crew should ever expect to remove an officer, being prepared can minimize the damage to a crew should this need to take place. Consider the following as essential practices for every crew:

- Service expectations in bylaws
- Ongoing communications with all officers
- Backup officers for roles to ensure follow-through
- A remediation outline to use if necessary

#### **Remediation or Alternatives**

- **Resupervise.** You may have an officer understand the role of adults in the crew as Advisors and that adult association is an important part of helping them experience success in their leadership role. Occasionally, some officers will test the rules and their role in the crew as part of their self-expression. Reinforcement may end the problem.
- **Reassign.** Counsel them to take on a new or different role with the crew. Some youth officers may have underestimated the time it takes to fulfill their role with the crew. Finding a way to better utilize their contributions with the time they have available is a constructive alternative.
- **Retrain.** A youth officer who has taken on a role before completing formal training may struggle with some of the specific responsibilities of the role. Be sure that officers have the opportunity to take needed training, and coach them in how to apply the skills in their leadership role with the crew.
- **Retire.** Recognize that some officers may be unable to execute the role they agreed to for reasons of disposition (they are not yet suited to the demands of the role), for reasons of preparation (training is unavailable), or unfortunately, because of negligence that damages the viability of the crew.

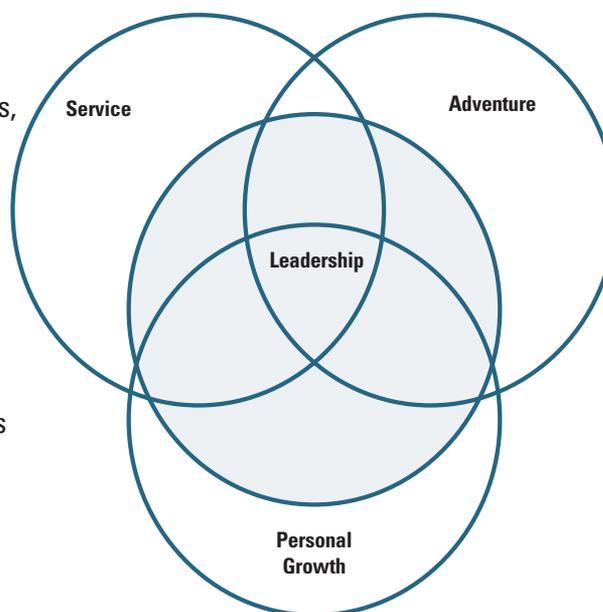
Before removing an officer, be sure that there are no alternatives. Answers to these questions must be unequivocal:

- Did the Advisor do everything possible to help the officer be successful?
- Did the Advisor ensure that training and support were provided to the officer?
- Did the Advisor appreciate that there are different ways to be an effective leader and that doing it the way the Advisor might choose to do it is not a requirement?

## Area of Program Emphasis: Leadership

Leadership in Venturing is developed by leading. Venturers lead adventures, the crew, service, and themselves through personal growth. The sections that follow are designed to help Advisors support the officers of the crew as they grow as leaders.

Representing the program matrix in another format can reveal the role of leadership in Venturing. Leadership is at the center of everything that Venturers do.



### Advisor Insight: Uniting the Program

As an Advisor, you have an obligation to ensure that the program planned by the members of the crew is grounded in Venturing's four areas of program emphasis. When the areas of program emphasis are all represented in the annual program, the opportunity for leadership development unites all of the other areas. It does so not only as content for one of the areas but also to represent the process that connects adventure, service, and leadership.

For leadership development in Venturing to be fully realized, planning for leadership during the annual program planning meeting is essential. Planning adventures and planning service projects is directly connected to a need for youth to serve as leaders to execute those experiences.

### Support for Leading Adventures

Crew adventures are an opportunity for leadership development that can appeal to Venturers who might shy away from official leadership roles. Leadership involves more than just doing the work oneself; it means being a member of the team and coordinating with others, but this can take many forms. For example:

- Organizing transportation to, from, and during an adventure
- Organizing meal planning, food purchasing, and cost-sharing
- Organizing safety and first-aid training appropriate to the adventure
- Organizing the annual program calendar for the crew to allow for a process of building up skills from Tier I adventures toward a Tier III adventure.

Notice that the verb "organizing" is used in these examples. Planning is also essential, but planning could be done by oneself or with a group. Organizing requires coordination of plans among the individual members of the crew; this is where leadership comes in.

Remind Venturers that there are many ways to provide leadership on an adventure that don't mean being the boss on the trip. Shared leadership is a reality in our world and in Venturing. No one has the expertise or time to lead every aspect of an activity.

## Crew Leadership Positions

The officer positions are the most visible recognitions of leadership in Venturing. These offices provide the opportunity for Venturers to learn how to lead others over an extended period of time and in a variety of circumstances. A crew president is not likely going to be an expert on every aspect of Venturing during her or his term of office, unlike a leader for a specific activity or adventure. This teaches the valuable skills of delegation and communication as well as the value of trust.

The Venturing officers should be reminded of the principles of servant leadership so that they don't overemphasize the hierarchy of these positions. Hierarchy does serve important roles in various parts of our lives, but Venturing is not a job, so a vision of shared leadership is important to maintain.

Crew officers will bring different leadership experiences with them, which will suggest different advising roles for adults. A president who has served as a senior patrol leader in his Boy Scout troop probably will need less coaching and mentoring from an Advisor than a president who has never held a formal leadership role before (this person will need more explaining and demonstrating). Zealous youth sometimes forget that leadership does not mean being the boss and may need kind guidance regarding this difference; never do this in front of other youth.

## Selecting Crew Leadership

Elections for a one-year term should be held as soon as possible after the start-up of a crew so that the officers can begin leading the crew's program of activities and crew business. Most established crews elect officers in the summer or early fall, corresponding to the school year. Other crews elect officers in January to follow the calendar year. This provides continuity for the crew through the spring and summer months.

Two types of elections may take place in a crew:

- Temporary election of officers followed by a permanent election (new crew)
- Permanent election of officers for a one-year term

The reason a new crew may begin with a temporary election of officers is that the crew members might not know each other well enough initially to hold a permanent election. The option your crew selects is up to your crew.

Certain election procedures must be followed when your crew holds its regular election. These procedures include the following:

1. The Advisor informs crew members of the responsibilities and position description of each office and stresses the need for commitment to the goals of the crew and attendance at all meetings.
2. The present or temporary youth president explains the election procedures and the date of the election, and appoints a nominating committee of three or more crew members. This nominating committee will interview prospects and prepare a slate of nominees. An associate Advisor should be involved with the nominating committee to lend support and advice. A nominating committee is important because this committee takes the time to be sure that nominees are able and willing to serve. Those nominated should understand and commit to the responsibilities and the time involved.

3. The nominating committee interviews those crew members indicating an interest in running for office and contacts any others the committee feels should be considered. All nominees must be registered Venturers.
4. On election day, certain procedures are followed:
  - The president asks for the nominating report—the slate of candidates for each office.
  - Crew members are invited to make any additional nominations. If the nominations of these individuals are seconded and the nominees agree to serve, their names are added to the ballot.
  - Nominations are closed by a majority vote.
  - Each nominee is invited to give a brief talk on his or her qualifications, goals, and desire to serve. Crew members should be able to ask questions of each candidate.
  - Voting then takes place. If there is only one nominee for an office, the president requests a motion to approve this nominee for office. If there are two or more nominees for an office, voting is done by secret ballot. The nominee receiving the most votes is elected.
  - In the event of a tie, the two nominees receiving the most votes are voted on again.
  - The newly elected officers are congratulated, and an installation ceremony may be conducted.

Some crews find that semiannual terms of office are preferable, but most crews make use of annual elections as shared above. This tends to work well with the annual program planning model used by most crews. Adjustments for procedures such as this may be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the needs of the Venturers in the crew are met.



## Challenges in Working With Young Adults

- Whenever behavioral issues arise, it is the Advisor's responsibility to address the crew member's conduct in a way that is conducive for the crew and in accordance with BSA Youth Protection guidelines. It is important to be consistent, firm, and fair. Young adults need to know what they can expect from you as their Advisor and what you expect of them. Be consistent in your words and actions, and make it clear that you should all work together to make the crew go.
- While you don't want this to turn into a lecture, it may be necessary on occasion to reinforce that things like lying, cheating, using inappropriate language, fighting, hazing, harassment, name-calling, and bullying have no place in Venturing and will not be tolerated. Reflection and counseling can be a first step in reinforcing boundaries that have been broken. Such reflection can be aided if the crew has already created its own code of conduct\* that makes clear that this kind of behavior is unacceptable.
- If a youth continually disrupts meetings or endangers himself or herself or others during Venturing activities, contact the youth's parents or guardian to explain the situation and discuss ways you can all work with the crew to better integrate this member into the Venturing program.
- The BSA does not expect you to be an amateur psychologist, and it is not your responsibility to "treat" the symptoms of a youth you are worried about. However, showing genuine care and concern for the youth's well-being may in itself have a positive effect. The How To... chapter of this guidebook has excellent information on symptoms and signs of mental health and wellness concerns.
- If a situation arises involving a crew member with special needs, it may be best to involve his or her family. The BSA's Scouting for Youth With Disabilities manual may be helpful and can be found at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsources.aspx>.

*\*See the Handbook for Venturers for information on creating a crew code of conduct.*

## Leadership Training

Many training opportunities exist in Venturing and Scouting as a whole beyond the crew. National Youth Leadership Training, the National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, and the Kodiak Challenge were described previously in this guidebook. Additional courses of benefit to eligible Venturers include the courses described below.

**National Leadership Seminars (NLS)** are offered throughout the country annually. They are conducted by youth leaders in the Order of the Arrow. The Order of the Arrow (OA) is the national honor society of the Boy Scouting program. Venturers are not elected through crews, but boys who were elected in a Boy Scout troop may continue their membership in the OA. NLS courses are great opportunities to learn about the principles of leadership in a conference setting that emphasizes the methods of the OA.

**Wood Badge** is the BSA's advanced leadership training for Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing leadership. Wood Badge would be most appropriate for crew Advisors and committee members. A Venturer who is 18 and also an assistant Scoutmaster in a troop would qualify to attend, but it should be understood that the age of the other participants is likely to be much older. Wood Badge is a six-day training course, typically conducted over two three-day weekends (all day for three days).

The **Leadership Challenge** is an experiential leadership course in the wilderness for adult volunteers who have completed Wood Badge. Rather than teaching new skills or concepts, the Leadership Challenge uses those taught in Wood Badge reflected upon in a backcountry adventure.

Venturing also offers skills-based training for the members of the crew. These trainings are designed to help them accomplish specific tasks, such as using resources well. These training courses are built into the recognition system, including the **Project Management** and **Time Management** training courses. It should be clear how participating in such trainings helps develop leadership skills and knowledge, but it is also important to recognize the leadership skills that youth learn by facilitating these trainings for other youth. The skills developed during these courses will have immediate application as crew members lead adventures and service projects and as they act on the responsibility of leading the crew.

Remember that different leadership situations will appeal to different Venturers. A Venturer who has no desire to have an officer position or take role in leading adventures may find the challenge of leading trainings to be quite rewarding.

### Support for Leadership Training

The crew committee should promote leadership opportunities for all interested youth. Encouraging the Advisor and youth officers to develop plans to allow for leadership rotation/elections that take into account the size of crew membership and desires of youth members is important.



### Committee Insight: Promoting Leadership Training

The crew committee should also promote leadership training such as National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) conducted by the local council or consider encouraging the crew to conduct a Kodiak Challenge. The committee can assist by working with the youth officers, especially the president and treasurer, to identify sources of financial support for these courses. This could mean developing a fundraising plan.

### Creating a Culture of Leadership

The crew Advisor is the primary adult contact for the crew president and perhaps the other youth officers. It is essential that the Advisor realize that the youth all bring a variety of leadership experiences that will color their styles. A youth officer who becomes a boss (or worse yet, a dictator) needs gentle but firm counseling to realize that this is not an appropriate style in Venturing. Use the EDGE method as a guide. If the officer is inexperienced, the Advisor may need to directly explain why this is an inappropriate style. The Advisor should also be demonstrating a more open leadership style himself or herself. More experienced officers may just need to be coached to realize that the crew is not the same as a work environment where certain management practices may have been beneficial to the officer.

## Supporting Resilience in Young Adults

Young adults will meet the expectations Advisors have of them, whether the standards are high or low. To support developing this construct in young adults, Advisors need to communicate to them that they support them unconditionally and hold them to high expectations. Researcher Rick Little identified the “Seven C’s of Resilience.”

- **Competence:** When youth are taking advantage of opportunities to develop important skills and dispositions, they gain a sense of competence. We undermine competence when we “save” them from handing consequences of unsuccessful actions.
- **Confidence:** Provides the essential belief that young adults can be successful in new experiences, solve problems in new and different ways, and recover from challenges.
- **Connection:** The relationship that exists between and among institutions such as schools, other people, and communities, providing a sense of personal security and a sense of place within the world.
- **Character:** Provides young adults with a clear sense of right and wrong and a sense of honor and integrity. The ideals of Scouting assist with this construct.
- **Contribution:** Young people who recognize the importance of adding to the well-being of others. Developing an “others-first” sense of engagement for the sake of doing good work and not with the expectation of compensations.
- **Coping:** Young people who cope with challenges in a healthy and productive way are less likely to make poor, short-term decisions when stressed.
- **Control:** Young people recognize that respect is earned through a demonstration of constructive and positive responsible behaviors. Resilient young adults also recognize that an internal locus of control is essential for success in life.

The ability to model these attributes as Advisors is the most important way to develop these dispositions among the Venturers you work with.

## Servant Leadership

Along the same lines of promoting leadership over management in Venturing, you also want to promote servant leadership, or “others-first” leadership. This is in contrast to leadership that is solely task-oriented (getting the task done, no matter what the costs) or, even worse, leadership aimed solely at aggrandizing the leader and seeking personal benefit and advancement.

Author Adam Grant has identified three general styles of interaction with others in leadership settings: taking, giving, and matching. *Takers* focus on obtaining as much as possible from others. *Matchers* are observed to focus on an even trade of resources and influence. *Givers* contribute to others without expecting anything in return; this is the set of leadership values aligned with servant leadership. Grant’s work shows that those who lead from the perspective of a giver achieve exceptional results. Givers are able to succeed in a way that benefits others rather than achieving success by cutting others down. This model of leadership not only leads to success in organizational roles but also provides a rich and successful foundation for life.





## Advisor Insight: Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a goal for everyone to keep aiming toward. People's own desires and goals (including career goals) often will pull them in a direction opposing that of a true servant leader. Therefore, you should model and promote continual reflection on your leadership styles and goals. Below are some questions that are good to ask yourself and the Venturers you work with:

- While accomplishing our goal, did we stay true to our values (Scout Oath and Scout Law)?
- Did we accomplish the goal while keeping the team together?
- Did we remember to treat everyone as a valued individual and not just a group?
- Did I help others to achieve their personal goals, or did I focus only on achieving my own goals?
- How did I help someone else at a cost to myself?

### Reflection

Reflection is an important aspect of leadership development in Venturing. That's why it is included in the formal leadership training programs such as NYLT and the Kodiak Challenge. It is also quite valuable even on a Tier I adventure of a few hours. Remember that reflection is best led by a youth, not the Advisor. Before a reflection, the Advisor can help coach a youth to conduct an effective reflection with these tips:

- Remember to have some questions developed ahead of time.
- Remember that no one should judge the answers of others during a reflection.
- Remember not to rush the reflection; some silence allows everyone to think at his or her own pace.
- If the reflection goes long, you don't have to use all of your planned questions. Quality over quantity!

Sometimes a youth officer requires reflection or coaching on a one-on-one basis with an Advisor. Remember the Youth Protection policies: The coaching should be conducted in an open space that is observable by at least one other adult.

The Advisor should always seek to keep an eye on the morale of the crew members. Youth officers may have such strong enthusiasm that they don't see morale falling in a crew. The Advisor should try to guide youth officers toward realizing this rather than just telling them outright, but if things are going downhill fast, a quick but private "Did you get the feeling that the crew is really upset with things?" is useful.



## Advisor Insight: Reflections

Reflections also provide feedback to the youth officers who are leading events. The feedback often gathered at the close of an activity should end on a positive note. Seeking feedback on "what should we do differently next time?" both improves the quality of the next adventure and provides important feedback regarding the quality of the youth as a leader. Guidelines on leading reflections are provided in the "Venturing: Experiential Education" chapter of this book.

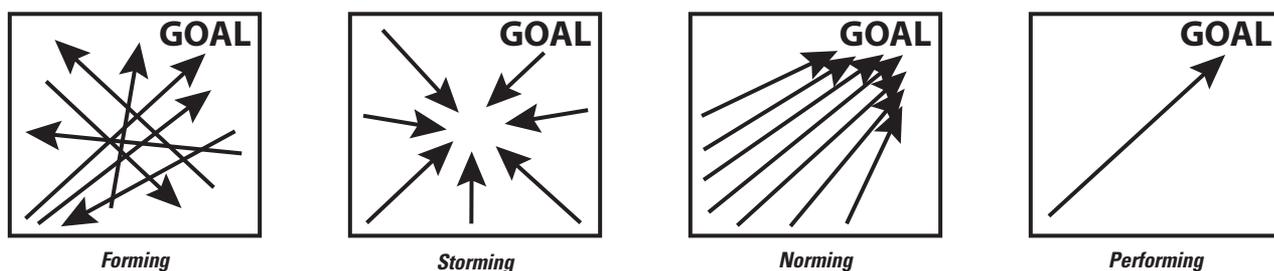
Large group reflections are valuable as everyone participating in the reflection can gain from the discussion. When helping a single youth officer reflect at the close of an event, take care with respect regarding Youth Protection guidelines (no one-on-one conversations behind closed doors).

## Application of Leadership Skills

Some of the points discussed previously emphasize the importance of vision and innovation in leadership. There are also specific skills that support effective leaders in supporting change and innovation. The points below—the EDGE method as a teaching tool and as a leadership skill—can help you as you work with crew officers to help them become more effective leaders. These skills are developed in more detail in the Wood Badge training course for Advisors and the National Youth Leadership Training course for crew members. The following information should serve as a helpful guide until you and the crew officers are able to enroll in those trainings.

### The Leading EDGE Method

While there are many models of leadership, Scouting in general has focused on a straightforward model called EDGE. Four different leadership styles are presented: Explain, Demonstrate, Guide, and Enable. The big takeaway for Venturing leaders and Advisors is that there is not just one type of leadership that will work in all situations. The Leading EDGE is recommended as a tool for analyzing the functionality of a group and guiding the leader to organize more effective ways to work with those groups.



In the figure above, the arrows represent the orientation of each group member toward each other and toward the task that needs to be performed. As a team becomes more united and more proficient, their efforts to work toward a common goal improve. The general steps that lead from a group embroiled in chaos to an effective team are classified as forming, storming, norming, and performing.

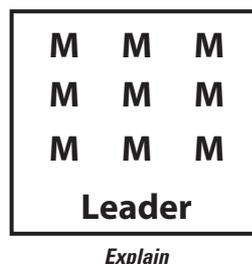
#### Forming (High Enthusiasm, Low Skills)

If the team is in the Forming stage, the members will likely exhibit high enthusiasm and motivation for doing something new, though their skills and productivity are low.

As members of a new team or a team with a new task, understanding how to approach a problem may be difficult to achieve and actions among the team members may be, to a degree, counterproductive and in conflict with achieving the desired goal.



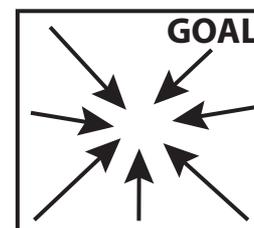
The Explain style is directive; the leader directly explains exactly what he or she expects to be done. This might be quite appropriate in emergency situations when time is of the essence and certain leaders have training in emergency management. It can also be effective when others are not yet well trained or developed in how to accomplish certain tasks or the group is newly formed. For instance, when a crew holds a weekend camping trip for new Venturers, they will not know the culture of the crew or the expectations, so directive leadership will probably be both appreciated by them and effective.



Explaining is important because it clarifies the subject for the learner and the instructor.

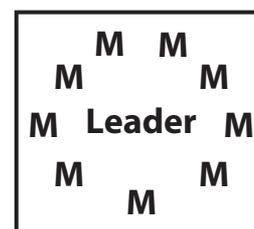
### Storming (Low Enthusiasm, Low Skills)

A team that is in the Storming stage will likely exhibit less enthusiasm and motivation for doing something new. Their skills and productivity are still low. The conflicts they have experienced will likely dampen their enthusiasm and help them recognize that they lack the skills—or the ability to apply them—to accomplish their desired task.



*Storming*

The Demonstrate style is still fairly directive, but the focus is more on showing a method to achieve the desired results. An example is demonstrating how to pitch a new style of tent to fellow Venturers. Another example would be during a crew conservation project. Perhaps some crew members are becoming disgruntled with the amount of work so they are rushing through the planting of trees. A leader may need to demonstrate the proper method that was earlier described as well as to demonstrate a positive attitude about the eventual results of the project.



*Demonstrate*

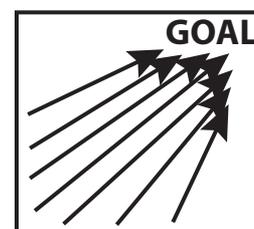
In this stage, a person has been at a task long enough to realize that mastering a skill may not be easy and that lots of work remains to be done. As a result, his or her enthusiasm and motivation are low. Skills are still low, too. An instructor must demonstrate the new skill to the learner, clearly showing him what to do and how to do it.

Demonstrating is important because it allows learners to see as well as hear how something is done. They can follow the process from beginning to end.

Ask the participants to suggest examples of when they have participated in a team that has experienced conflict of this sort and how direct involvement by the leader would have been beneficial.

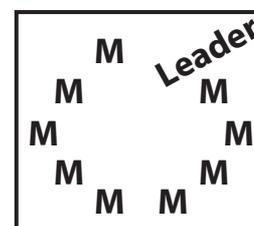
### Norming (Rising Enthusiasm, Growing Skills)

If the team is in the Norming stage, the members will likely exhibit increasing enthusiasm and motivation for doing something new. Their skills and productivity are developing as well. Success in achieving the desired goal will simultaneously increase their enthusiasm toward accomplishing their goal and help them understand how their skills are used in aspiring to their goal. Each member's orientation toward accomplishing the task is becoming highly aligned with the others.



*Norming*

The Guide style moves away from the leader directing action and toward a support role. The leader just needs to offer corrective and positive feedback to others to accomplish the goal. The crew's skills should be fairly solid in terms of the task at hand and the attitude should be fairly positive. The leader serves as a coach through feedback. Since Venturing is about leadership and not management, hopefully the leader is helping to accomplish the task along with the rest of the crew, at least as much as possible.



*Guide*

Leaders of teams in the Norming stage can find success by giving team members considerable freedom to act on their own but being ready to provide guidance (coaching) when a little help is needed.

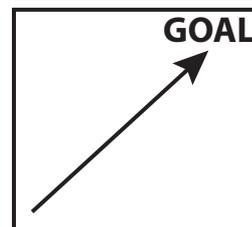
The leader will need to guide the person—giving him or her more freedom to figure out things on his or her own, offering support through encouragement, and helping the person move closer to the goal.

Guiding is important because it allows learners to learn by doing. It allows the leader to see how well learners are grasping the skill or accomplishing a task.

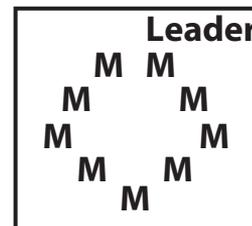
### Performing (High Enthusiasm, High Skills)

If the team is in the Performing stage, the members will likely exhibit high enthusiasm and motivation for doing something new, and their skills and productivity are high as well. All members of the team are working together well and have a clear vision that is leading them to success.

The Enable style gives control of how to accomplish a goal to others. The leader is still ultimately responsible for the results, but the group is knowledgeable and motivated enough to accomplish the task itself. A mistake that leaders sometimes make is that they try to rush to the Enable stage with a group before it is ready. This just leads to frustration. If a leader tells others to plan a weeklong canoe adventure completely on their own and they have never done this before, they are likely to find themselves frustrated and unable to accomplish the goal. Is it their fault? Well, without pointing too many fingers, it can be noted that the leader probably made the first mistake by deciding upon the wrong leadership style for this task.



*Performing*



*Enable*



A leader enables team members to make decisions on their own and to keep progressing toward completion of the task.

At this point, the team and team members should have considerable freedom to make decisions on their own and to function independently. Enabling is important because it reduces the role of the leader or instructor as it encourages learners to use skills themselves.



### Advisor Insight: Let 'Em Lead!

An often-quoted leadership maxim in Scouting comes from William "Green Bar Bill" Hillcourt: "Train 'em, trust 'em, and let 'em lead!"

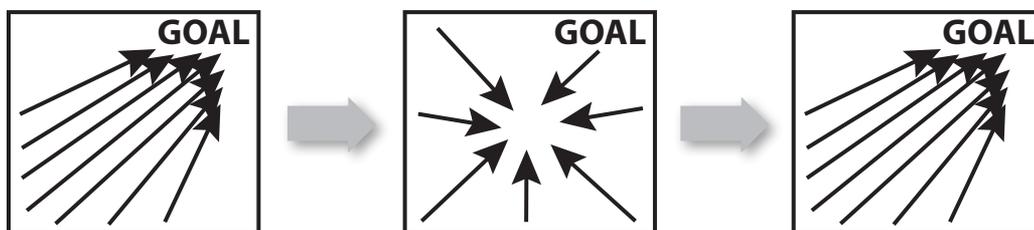
In your role as a Venturing Advisor, your responsibility is not to lead the crew but to offer support for the crew officers as they lead the crew. By supporting a culture of training and ensuring that all share the same skills and outlook on leadership, an Advisor can support a crew officer much more effectively with a simple question such as "Why does the team appear to be Storming right now?" This helps to keep the Advisor in a role that clarifies the challenges so that the crew officers can consider the question offered by the Advisor and use the same tools to determine what the team needs to be more successful.



## Regression

What might account for a team experiencing, for example, a return to Storming?

As it develops, a team does not always move smoothly from one stage to the next. It also does not always move forward and will sometimes find itself back at an earlier stage of development. Leaders should be aware that when an experienced team starts to learn a new skill or sets out toward a new goal, the team will be back in the Forming stage. A team that runs into unanticipated roadblocks along the way also may slip backward one or two stages. Any time new members join or existing members leave, a team may temporarily move backward through the stages of development as it adjusts to each new situation. Helping the youth leadership identify the cause of the regression rather than reacting to the regression itself is an essential role of the Advisor.



### *Team Development and Leadership Style Summary*

| Team Stage | Best Leadership Behavior |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Forming    | Explain                  |
| Storming   | Demonstrate              |
| Norming    | Guide                    |
| Performing | Enable                   |

The role of the leader, as the team develops greater and greater skill, becomes more and more peripheral to the group itself. The pairing of Teaching EDGE with Leading EDGE provides a simple means of determining the optimum leadership approach to employ with a team.

## Dealing With Failure

Venturing is unlikely to run without any hitches or glitches. In fact, if it is, your crew is probably not challenging the youth and they are possibly going to become bored with its program and leave. Failure is indeed a teacher. This doesn't mean that the Advisors should allow an adventure to become unsafe or to completely fail. Safety is always a primary responsibility of adult volunteers in Scouting. Allowing an event to completely fail is not likely to be a helpful teacher. Venturing is youth-led but adult-guided. Advisors have many opportunities to ask questions of officers before events to help steer the planning and organization. Still, there are times that the event will fail. Some scenarios are presented on the following pages.

### No One Signs Up/Shows Up

This is an occurrence across the nation, so no one should take it personally when this happens. No doubt, the social priorities of young adults can be frustrating to adults who scheduled vacation or family business around a Venturing calendar. Ideally, Advisors work with youth to build in a mechanism to avoid this happening at the last minute. A frank discussion of at what point an activity or adventure will be canceled due to lack of interest should be held well in advance. Minimum participant numbers should also be discussed and agreed upon.

### Forgotten Items

Perhaps some (hopefully not all) of the meals for a trip were forgotten. The first thing Advisors can do is help everyone remain calm and rationally think through the options of how to handle the situation. Is it possible to arrange for purchasing of the supplies at this point? Can the current food or supply inventory be repurposed? Should the event be shortened? It's a good exercise in weighing pros and cons.

### Unprepared for the Weather

What about a crew camping adventure that ends up having endless rain? Morale starts to drop. Some crew members want to just go home; others want to prove themselves and stick it out. Safety is an utmost concern, so if there are health risks, the Advisors need to make mature assessments of the reality of finishing an event. Coaching youth officers to consider the morale of the overall crew is important. Helping them to separate their own desires from the needs of the group can be a very important lesson.



## Advisor Insight: Overcoming Disappointments

Now and then the crew or members of the crew may become discouraged. Perhaps team members are discovering the reality of the challenges facing them. A campout or other planned activity that did not go very well may cause some Venturers to become frustrated. Help crew members process their frustrations and challenges by keeping these things in mind:

- You will be tested as a leader when the spirits of crew members are down. When that happens, draw upon your abilities to communicate clearly, listen actively, and encourage open discussions.
- Recognize accomplishments and offer encouragement and reassurance to those crew members who are making efforts to achieve.
- Try to identify the stages of team development of the entire crew, and use that information as a guide for determining which styles of leadership to use.
- Start, Stop, Continue can be an effective tool for discovering what is at the root of crew members' discontent and for helping Venturers find their own solutions to a discouraging situation.

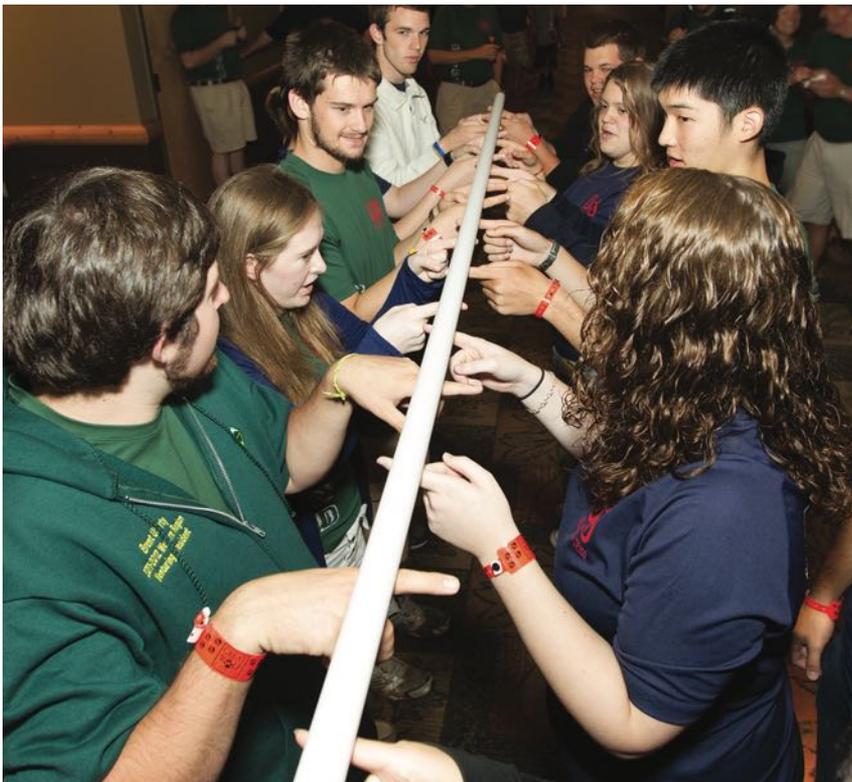
### Celebrating Success

Venturing crews and the crew officers will achieve significant milestones together during the design and execution of their crew adventures. It is important to celebrate the many accomplishments that crew members have enjoyed during their time together. Documenting crew histories with a scrapbook, photo album, or slide show can be an enjoyable way to create an overview of all that members have accomplished. It is important and satisfying to know that they have accomplished something. The crew members will obtain a sense of closure that builds confidence as they take on the next challenge.



## Advisor Insight: Leadership Hints

- Be on the lookout for situations that might lead to an “us-versus-them” environment. Help Venturers seek out common ground on which they can agree and build from there. Explore ways that everyone succeeds.
- Help the crew to develop. Offer a vision of success based on the crew’s shared values. The Scout Oath and Scout Law are expressions of the BSA’s values. Rely on them to help the entire team pull together to do what they all believe in.
- Acknowledge differences; respect and value others. Look for ways to draw on individual strengths of Venturers to the advantage of the entire crew. Help each Venturer perceive that he or she has something important to contribute to the success of the crew and its adventures—because that’s true!
- Recognize that there are many different ways to get things done. Many problems have multiple solutions. Once the crew agrees upon one, provided it is an ethical choice, go along with the group choice, even if it is different from the choice you would have made. As a leader, it’s your responsibility to help focus the full energy of a group on making that solution work.
- The Leading EDGE is a skill that should be understood and applied by Venturers and Advisors. Leading and carrying out adventures provide essential opportunities to develop the leadership abilities of the participants.
- Keep an eye open for Venturers who demonstrate leadership abilities in addition to the management skills that allow them to get the job done; your coaching and mentoring will help them develop into key leaders within the crew.



“ Life is either a great adventure or nothing. ”  
—*Helen Keller*

# Method: Group Activities and **Adventure**

**V**enturing's emphasis on adventure helps provide team-building opportunities, new meaningful experiences, practical leadership application, and lifelong memories to young adults. Venturing adventures are interdependent group experiences in which success is dependent on the cooperation of all. Learning by doing in a group setting provides opportunities for developing new skills.

As discussed in the Venturing: Experiential Education chapter, adventure is the primary method used by Venturing to educate its members. Although the outdoors is well-suited for Venturing, adventure need not be in the outdoors. Instead, it should be viewed as a process that involves participating in activities and leads to personal growth. Part of that process involves the youth members selecting where to go and what to do on their adventures. As long as it interests crew members, challenges them, and is led by the youth, any activity has the makings of an effective Venturing crew adventure.

## **Area of Program Emphasis: Adventure**

In addition to serving as a method of Venturing, adventure is also one of its four areas of program emphasis. As a Venturing crew Advisor or committee member, you have an important role to play in helping guide the members of your crew as they plan and carry out adventures.

The *Handbook for Venturers* explores in great detail the importance of adventure in the Venturing program and includes instructions for Venturers to plan and carry out adventures. Therefore, it is important for you as an Advisor or committee member to become familiar with adventure-related content in the *Handbook for Venturers* before advising youth officers responsible for your crew's adventure program.

## **Tiers of Adventure**

Three levels of adventure have been established to challenge and engage crew members to experience adventure as part of Venturing's program model. Different levels of adventure provide the opportunity for personal growth, leadership, and skill by crew members.

**Tier I Adventure**—No preparation, no prior skill development, no planning, less than one day in duration (not overnight), not far outside comfort zone (typically, these are good recruiting activities and easily accommodate guests). Examples include a day hike, bowling night, watch-and-learn STEM night, trip to a natural history museum, or climbing wall activity.

**Tier II Adventure**—Some planning or preparation required, some prior skill development desirable or even required, less than four days in duration (could even be less than one day if extensive planning, preparation, or skill development is needed prior to participation); outside comfort zone. Examples include a weekend campout, running a Special Olympics event, or staging a music and dance event for a nursing home.

**Tier III Adventure**—Extensive planning, preparation, and skill development required prior to participation, at least four days in duration, far outside comfort zone (this is typically a once-per-year summertime superactivity). Examples include a 50-mile backpacking trip, directing a science-themed Cub Scout day camp, trip to a weeklong arts festival, a New York City museum tour, or organizing a sports camp for disabled youth.

## *Tiers of Adventures*

The notion of tiers of adventure is designed to challenge you and the members of your crew to take on new challenges and provide you with experiences that you would not have otherwise encountered.

The use of Tier II and Tier III adventures is important because of the degree of planning and preparation required to organize and carry them out. These adventures are real tests of your growth as a leader.

### **Differentiating Tier II from Tier III**

The fundamental difference is in the level of preparation, planning, and gathering resources to carry out the adventure. Generally, a Tier II adventure lasts from two to four days and a Tier III adventure lasts for four days or more.

When an event of fewer than four days is considered a Tier III adventure, it should reflect these criteria:

- The planning needed to carry out a shorter event is comparable to that of a longer event.
- The preparation needed to implement the activity is similar to the preparation needed to implement a longer event.
- The opportunity to challenge the activity chair and the members of the crew is similar as to what would take place during an activity of longer duration.

Your crew should offer a variety of tiered adventures. The different tiers are not only required for Venturing awards recognition but also designed to meet the wants and needs of the members of your crew.

### **The Advisor and Committee Role in Planning Adventure**

Venturing adventures should be planned and led by the youth officers of the crew. But that doesn't mean there isn't an important role to be played by crew Advisors and committee members. As discussed in the *Becoming an Effective Advisor* chapter, your role is to SUPPORT the youth officers as they design and lead the adventures of the crew. One of the great challenges for Advisors and committee members is to know their place during the planning and carrying out of adventure. It's human nature for adults to jump in, make decisions, and get the task done. While you may know the answers because you've planned similar activities in the past, if you do all of the work, the youth won't have an opportunity to grow and learn. While it might be a fun, well-planned activity, it won't be a Venturing adventure. A good Advisor or committee member who is assigned to work with a youth officer knows when to guide, when to coach, when to mentor, and when to let the officer figure it out for himself or herself. It is often more art than science and you will make mistakes along the way, but that's OK. A Venturing adventure will help you grow as well.

The following is a walk-through of the process for planning a Venturing crew adventure (covered in detail in the *Handbook for Venturers*) to identify the roles played by crew Advisors and committee members:

### Who Is Responsible?

The Advisor is ultimately responsible for the program offered by the Venturing crew. In many crews, the day-to-day advisement of this function is handled by an associate Advisor for program. The duties for this associate Advisor include:

- Supporting the youth vice president for program to help determine the interests of crew members, plan the year's program, and ensure that the crew calendar is maintained.
- Supporting and coaching youth activity chairs to help them plan and carry out their particular adventure.
- Helping the vice president for program and other officers evaluate completed activities and continually fine-tune the year's program of activities, based on insights gained from the evaluations.

Depending on the nature of the crew's adventures and availability of adult volunteers in your crew, additional associate Advisors may be utilized to advise youth activity chairs. In a smaller crew, the associate Advisor for program may also advise the activity chairs.

The associate Advisor for program (and any other associate Advisors who work with youth activity chairs) should develop a positive relationship with the youth they advise. This should include a meeting at the beginning of the vice president's term (or activity chair's assignment) to discuss duties and expectations of both the associate Advisor and the youth officer. As the vice president (or activity chair) does not "report" to the associate Advisor, care should be taken to ensure the youth officer he or she reports to "is kept abreast of program discussions and is provided with an opportunity to weigh in on decisions when appropriate.

A good Advisor will regularly communicate with the vice president for program or activity chair. If the youth officer does not take initiative to speak with the Advisor about adventure planning, the Advisor should make it his or her business to touch base with the youth officer. The Advisor does not plan the adventure, but should serve as a resource during each stage of the process and as a sounding board for the youth officer to discuss ideas.

Other associate Advisors and committee members also play a role in most adventures. Their roles are covered later in this section.

### What Is Our Goal?

The Advisor should play a key role in working with the crew president to establish the overall goals of the crew and ensure these goals are fulfilled through all activities, including crew adventures. Specific goals for individual adventures should be developed by the activity chair and vice president for program, with support from their associate Advisor(s).

### What Resources Are Available?

A good Venturing crew will have a variety of resources available to its youth members who are responsible for planning adventures. This library should include all of the BSA materials referenced in the Adventure chapter of the *Handbook for Venturers*, as well as maps and guidebooks of areas where your crew may visit. The associate Advisor for program should be familiar with the materials in this library and should regularly encourage the vice president for program and activity chairs to utilize them.

### When Will We Go?

The timing of individual adventures will mostly be set during your crew's annual program planning. Therefore, the associate Advisor for program will support the vice president for program as they prepare a calendar of activities for the upcoming year. The associate Advisor should ensure the vice president is aware of calendar conflicts, that the other officers participate in the calendar planning process, and that a draft is presented to the crew committee for review.

### Where Will We Go, What Will We Do, and How Will We Get There?

An associate Advisor can play a key role here by encouraging the vice president for program and activity chairs to expand their thinking and consider some alternatives to the typical adventures offered by the crew. If the vice president for program or activity chair is inexperienced in adventure planning, suggest places and activities the crew has tried in the past that worked out well. The decision of where to go and what to do is ultimately up to the youth members of the crew. But a good associate Advisor can help present options and offer pros and cons of each alternative so that the Venturers can make an informed decision. If the officers are planning a trip to a faraway place or an expensive activity, the associate Advisor should not discourage ambitious ideas. However, they should help the youth officers understand the cost and logistics involved and encourage them to determine the feasibility of such an adventure.

Once it is determined where the crew will go and what they will do on an adventure, the associate Advisor should support the vice president or activity chair as he or she considers options for how to get to the adventure destination. The associate Advisor should encourage youth officers to be mindful of cost, logistics, and safety to help them determine the transportation option best suited for that adventure.

### What Equipment and Supplies Will We Need?

The youth activity chair should work closely with his or her associate Advisor to determine the equipment needed for the adventure. The crew quartermaster (with the support of his or her assigned associate Advisor or committee member) can also assist with the development of an equipment list. The person assigned to advise the quartermaster should encourage him or her to inventory and maintain crew equipment so that it is available and in working order for adventures.

### How Can We Manage Risk?

Some crews have added a youth officer position responsible for risk management. If that position exists within your crew, an associate Advisor or committee member should be assigned to advise this Venturer. In most crews, risk management is a function of the vice president for program and activity chairs. Either way, the role of an adult Advisor is critical when managing risk. This associate Advisor or committee member should familiarize themselves with the *Guide to Safe Scouting* and other BSA resources related to risk management so that they can provide effective counsel to the youth they advise. The associate Advisor or committee member should offer planning resources to the youth officer and review the draft written by the officer to ensure all appropriate elements of good risk management are covered.

The associate Advisor or committee member who is responsible for risk management should ensure that a risk management policy is developed that will guide the creation of adventure-specific risk management plans by youth officers.

### How Much Will It Cost?

Both the associate Advisor assigned to the activity chair and the committee member assigned to advise the crew treasurer should play a role in the development of an adventure budget. While it is the responsibility of the activity chair to develop the budget, the associate Advisor should advise him or her along the way and review the draft budget.

The committee member assigned to the youth treasurer should encourage the use of a budget template for all crew adventures. This committee member may also help the youth treasurer develop standard costs that can be added to budgets, including:

- **Food**—Some crews may use the following formula or something similar: \$4 for breakfast, \$6 for lunch, \$8 for dinner, and \$3 for an evening snack. When planning, note that food costs will be much higher if the crew eats in restaurants rather than bringing and preparing their own food.
- **Gas**—Some crews have developed a standard formula for calculating gas costs that might set a typical miles per gallon (e.g., 20 mpg), a conservative estimate of the cost per gallon for gas (e.g., \$5 per gallon), and an approximate number of people per vehicle (three to four people per car). Once the activity chair determines the miles to be traveled, it should be relatively easy to determine a reasonably accurate gas budget for an adventure.
- **Contingency**—Some crews set a standard contingency cost that is built in to each of their budgets. While this might range between 5 and 15 percent, it may be helpful to establish a standard that all crew adventures should follow.
- **Excess funds**—It might also be helpful to develop a crew policy for leftover funds from adventures that went under budget. Should the money be returned to each participant or should it go in the crew's general fund? Either way, the treasurer and assigned committee member can help establish policies up front that will make it easier for activity chairs to budget for adventure.

The committee member assigned to advise the treasurer should also support the collection of payments from participants and payments by the crew for supplies and services for each adventure. This committee member should work with the treasurer to establish some basic procedures for money handling (receipts, deposits, petty cash, etc.), tracking of income and expenses for each adventure, and reports to crew officers and the crew committee.

### How Do We Document It?

The associate Advisor for program should encourage the vice president for program and activity chairs to develop a binder with planning documents used to carry out previous crew adventures. If your crew is planning a backpacking trip to a nearby state park, it would be very helpful for the activity chair to pull up plans from a similar adventure in the past. A trail map, driving directions, budget, permits, contacts, risk management plan, evaluations, etc., that were developed by a former activity chair provide a great starting point.



Developing a standard format for the contents of the binder, along with a checklist of items to include, could be a useful task for the vice president for program, with the assistance of an associate Advisor. If your crew has not done this, the associate Advisor can work with the vice president for program to pull together documentation from previous adventure plans.

#### How Do We Promote It?

Promotion of upcoming adventures is often the responsibility of the crew secretary. The committee member assigned to advise the secretary should encourage and support him or her in the development of a variety of communication methods that will promote and provide information about adventures. These methods might include a crew email distribution list, Facebook group or page, website, phone tree, and newsletter. This committee member should encourage the secretary to use multiple methods of communication to get the word out and ensure the secretary includes parents and Advisors in the communication loop.

Advisors who will be participating in an adventure have additional responsibilities when it comes to communication during the planning process. Interpersonal dynamics among crew members is key to the success of a Venturing adventure, especially if a crisis develops. Advisors should build a friendly, trusting relationship with crew members by offering personal observations and thoughts about the adventure that they might find useful. Those Advisors who have sought out opportunities for moments in common with crew members during previous crew meetings and activities can make all the difference during a crew adventure.

#### How Do We Prepare for It?

The vice president for program and activity chair should work as a team with their associate Advisors to develop a meeting and activity program that will ensure the crew is prepared for its adventures. Additional activity chairs (and corresponding associate Advisors) may be recruited to plan and carry out individual meetings or activities that will prepare the crew.



The associate Advisor should encourage the vice president for program and activity chair to establish requirements and assess qualifications for crew members who want to participate in the adventure. The associate Advisor should ensure the activity chair clearly explains the level of difficulty of the adventure. If your adventure demands technical skills or a certain level of physical fitness, the associate Advisor should work with the activity chair to develop a training plan to prepare the crew members. If the associate Advisor and activity chair are not satisfied that someone is adequately prepared leading up to the adventure, it's much wiser to tell them they can't come than endanger them or detract from the experience of others. If this must happen, the associate Advisor and activity chair should consult with the associate Advisor and vice president for program, as well as the president and Advisor.



**Leaders can inspire, teach, entertain, and in many other ways shape the framework upon which an adventure can unfold.**

—Robert Birkby,

*Eagle Scout, outdoor explorer, and adventure writer*



## The Advisor and Committee Role During an Adventure

There are many facets to advisement during a Venturing crew adventure. The only way to become an effective Advisor during an adventure is to go on adventures with your crew and practice the skills of working with youth.

Serving as the Advisor during an adventure is an agreement, and you're responsible for honoring your end of it. Crew officers and members expect you to advise them and, in return, give you the authority to do so. You're responsible for:

- Maintaining the safety and well-being of the crew. While the crew officers should lead the adventure, it's ultimately up to the Advisor to keep the crew safe.
- Helping the crew achieve its objectives, which include both accomplishing the task at hand (e.g., reaching a summit or having a fun day at a museum) and ensuring that personal growth occurs through the adventure.
- Helping to create a quality experience that will be memorable for each crew member.
- Ensuring all rules and policies of the Boy Scouts of America are followed.

Here are a few helpful hints that may assist you in your journey as an adventure Advisor:

- While the youth officers are the leaders of the adventure, that doesn't mean Advisors should think there is nothing for them to do. To the contrary, Advisors should anticipate decisions before officers have to make them so that they can be prepared to ask a probing question, suggest an alternative, etc.
- Adventures should be fun! Good Advisors have a sense of humor and are willing to laugh at themselves even when they make a mistake. Humor lets crew members know you are accessible and will go a long way toward building stronger relationships with them.
- Recognize potential problems early. Crew officers don't always perform as you hope. The crew may unexpectedly fall into the Storming stage of team development. You should always be aware of little problems, frustrations, and mistakes that might sow the seeds for bigger problems later on. If you are on the alert for these kinds of signs, you will be prepared to help crew officers minimize the chances for real problems.

- While there are certainly times when crew members need to be left alone without adult Advisors, there is value in Advisors not clustering with each other on breaks and meals. Instead, consider mixing in with the crew members. It is a fine balance to not insert yourself in a way where you become just another one of the crew members. Finding moments in common to turn up the music on a car ride sing-along or join in the fun around the campfire is essential. But it's just as important to know when to pull back, especially when there is a safety issue.
- If there is a safety concern, be prepared to take charge. While an adult Advisor using an authoritarian leadership style is typically not appropriate in most Venturing crew settings, that is certainly not the case when it comes to ensuring the well-being of crew members. If there is time to involve crew officers and reach consensus about an unsafe situation, that is great. But if the situation demands immediate action, then it's time for the Advisor to make a decision.
- One of the most important traits of a good Advisor is that you care about young adults. Caring about crew members builds relationships, promotes trust, brings the crew together, helps you be more sensitive to problems that are under the surface, and can be a powerful tool when managing conflict. Caring leadership during an adventure includes:
  - Ensuring that the adventure provides an opportunity to help crew members learn and grow.
  - Showing empathy by putting yourself in each crew member's shoes and being sensitive to their needs.
  - Being open by sharing personal experiences of your own if appropriate.
  - Listening to crew members in an active, nonjudgmental manner.
  - Forming and maintaining meaningful relationships.
  - Demonstrating tolerance of the weaknesses and shortcomings of others.
  - Providing additional directions, instructions, and corrections to beginners that leave them more, not less, confident.
  - If you must correct a crew member or officer, try to do so in private, unless there's a general lesson that might benefit others and won't be conveyed by the individual Venturer as critical of him or her.
  - Acknowledging others for their strengths and contributions.
- Good Advisors are coaches who are capable of keeping up the spirits of the group even when they themselves are hungry, cold, or tired. Crew members are looking at the Advisors to set the example, so it's important to be aware of what you say and how you act at all times. If you are negative, it will rub off on the rest of the crew members. By serving as a source of energy and inspiration, you can help overcome many difficult situations during your adventure.
- From time to time, conflicts will arise between crew members during an adventure that may require the Advisor to step in. It is important to fully understand the real issues that are causing the conflict (typically these are not the obvious ones). Take advantage of any trust you have with the crew members who have a conflict to calmly and carefully look for easy fixes. By exploring for common ground on smaller issues, you may be able to build trust when it's time to address bigger ones. If it's impossible to reach agreement between the crew members, reaffirm that as the Advisor, you bear ultimate responsibility for the crew and have the final say on decisions during the adventure.

The committee's role during an adventure is to serve as a designated contact in case of emergency and be prepared to notify parents, the local council, and authorities if necessary.

### The Advisor and Committee Role After an Adventure

The activity chair or vice president for program is responsible for conducting an evaluation of the adventure. This should include a survey of crew members. The associate Advisor assigned to advise the youth officer who conducts the evaluation should assist as needed with a review. The associate Advisor for program might also assist the vice president for program in developing an evaluation form that can be used at the end of each adventure.

A crew historian may be responsible for collecting photos and videos taken by crew members during an adventure. His or her duties may include organizing the photos and posting them on social media (e.g., crew Facebook page), a photo-sharing site (e.g., crew Flickr account), a scrapbook, or a bulletin board, as well as preparing a slide show for larger crew adventures. The associate Advisor or committee member assigned to advise the historian should follow up to ensure collecting and sharing of memories from adventures takes place and offer support as needed.



## Advisor Insight: Supporting Group Activities and Adventure

### Adventure as the Core of Venturing

Once again, review that adventure does not just mean high adventure. Youth join Venturing to have adventure. Leadership and character development are taught through adventure and not as ends unto themselves. Challenging oneself is an important part of personal growth.

### Supporting Challenge

Advise youth in building a program of continuous adventure.

### Helping Youth Plan Adventures

- Involve youth in all stages.
- Brainstorm ideas.
- Seek balance in types of adventures.
- Plan out a calendar (maybe a year, maybe less; whatever fits the crew).
- Backdate important planning milestones.
- Help youth budget the costs of an adventure.
- Revise plans (coach, but do not just do for the youth).

### Creating a Culture of Adventure

- Outdoor adventures
- How can an arts and hobbies crew have adventure?
- How can a STEM crew have adventure?
- What does adventure look like for a religious life crew?

“

**The greatest happiness is the happiness that comes  
as a by-product of striving to do what must be done.**

*—Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919), American author,  
naturalist, explorer, historian, and politician who  
served as the 26th president of the United States*

”

# Method: **Recognition**

**P**ersonal growth comes through the Venturing recognition program and through the acknowledgment of a youth's competence and ability by peers and adults. The recognition program is more than just earning awards; as a Venturer progresses through the four levels of the Venturing recognition program, he or she will learn valuable skills and competencies that have been identified as vital to achieving success in education, in a work environment, and in life.

## **Venturing Recognition Program**

The Venturing recognition program is a tool to help give structure to a Venturer's experiences and learning. While recognition is one of the methods of Venturing, this method is best approached as an outcome of a balanced annual program plan developed by the members of the crew. Details and guidance on developing and implementing an annual crew program plan are presented in the *Handbook for Venturers*.



### **Advisor Insight: Recognition**

Most Venturers appreciate recognition and the sense of accomplishment made possible through an external system that acknowledges their achievements and mastery. The Venturing recognition awards are designed to be natural outcomes of an active crew program.

The four Venturing awards (or "Trail to the Summit") constitute a pathway that guides a Venturer from participant to leader to mentor for others. The requirements for each award fall into each of the areas of program emphasis. The requirements can be found in this guidebook, as well as in the *Handbook for Venturers* and *Venturing Awards and Requirements*.

## The Trail to the Summit: Young Adults and Recognition

Advisors should encourage Venturers to use the recognition program leading to the Summit Award as a means of helping them to create a dynamic program based upon adventure while also providing service to others. It is helpful for Advisors to point out how recognition serves functions other than just helping with personal achievement; recognition can open doors in terms of scholarships, jobs, and education. Recognition and awards are also methods through which individual actions can be magnified to inspire others.

Achieving the Summit Award is a significant accomplishment for a Venturer that can also inspire a younger crew member to push himself or herself to try new adventures and to learn how to be a leader.



### Advisor Insight: Work Recognition Into Program

An advisor can effectively promote the Venturing recognition program by working with the crew officers to thoughtfully plan the yearly crew program to address various aspects of the Trail to the Summit program or possibly an optional award that is appealing to the crew. When recognition is a natural outcome of a series of adventures, meaningful service to others, and relevant learning, youth are more likely to engage in it.



### Venturing Award

The Venturing Award is designed to be earned within a month of a Venturer joining the crew. Its requirements are based upon learning about Venturing and its values, learning about personal safety, and forming a commitment to further participate. A crew's leadership should seek to make this a natural process for all new members.

Venturers who are registered members of a Venturing crew before June 1, 2014, do not need to earn the Venturing Award and may immediately begin work on the Discovery Award.

### *Venturing Award Requirements*

The Venturing Award should be earned by all Venturers within about a month of joining. It is critical that the crew officers understand why this is important. If needed, the Advisor should explain how this award ensures that new members understand the values and goals of Venturing and how to keep themselves safe. The four requirements and some brief remarks follow.

#### **Requirement 1. Participate in a crew activity outside of a crew meeting.**

The prospective Venturer takes part in a crew outing. The event should be typical of the activities of the crew outside of crew meetings and provide to the candidate a sense of the crew's program and activities.

The Advisor should make sure that the new Venturer has a positive experience at his or her first crew outing. It is important that the new Venturer gets to realistically see the types of activities in which the crew participates. This outing may be key to the Venturer remaining interested and active in the crew.

**Requirement 2. Participate in an interview conducted by your crew president and your Advisor.**

The candidate discusses the crew and expectations for participation with the crew president (or his or her designee) and the crew Advisor. This is to affirm that the candidate is aware of how the crew functions, what is expected in terms of participation, and available opportunities for leadership, personal growth, and service. The candidate should be provided a Venturing application and information about costs of participation at this point.

As the Advisor, make sure that this conversation is led by the new Venturer. If the majority of the questions seem aimed at the Advisor rather than the president, politely point out that the president actually is the crew's leader, so questions should be directed to him or her.

Youth under the age of 18 will need a parent's or guardian's signature on the application.

**Requirement 3. Complete Personal Safety Awareness training.**

The purpose of this training is to help keep all crew members safe from situations that may cause harm, including responding to sexual harassment or assault, suicide prevention, and Internet safety. This course may be completed either online or as part of a crew meeting.

Youth may roll their eyes at having to complete this type of training, so it is helpful if the crew president can be the one reminding them to take it. However, it is also important for the Advisor not to fall into the temptation of implying that this is not important or to just sign off on it without it being completed. Keeping youth safe is a primary responsibility of adults in Venturing. While potentially awkward to discuss, these topics affect a great number of young people. Sharing the fact that Advisors take a similar training to keep youth safe can help set the example in a positive tone.

**Requirement 4. State your intention to join the crew by participating in an induction ceremony during which you repeat and commit to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law and the Venturing motto: Lead the Adventure.**

At the next crew activity, the candidate is welcomed as a member of the crew. The prospective member is asked to formally and publicly state her or her interest in joining and participating fully in the adventures of the crew and to commit to living by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

You will note that the requirement does not direct a prospective Venturer to memorize the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Venturing motto. This was intentional.

The focus is to emphasize living by these values and to declare their intention to do so. While many Venturers will be former Boy Scouts or Varsity Scouts and will be intimately familiar with the Scout Oath and Scout Law, many prospective Venturers will be new to the movement. For those who have come up through the traditional Scouting programs, memorization of the Scout Oath and Scout Law occurred at an age when advancement was fairly high on their list of desired outcomes. For those who are new to the program, memorization may just be enough to keep them from achieving even this first level of recognition and becoming engaged with the crew. As Advisors, it is our desire to ensure that new members find the onboarding process to be straightforward and without obstacles. For some, investing the intellectual energy in memorizing those words may present a wedge between their interest in Venturing and joining the Scouting movement.

Memorization will quickly come as the crew regularly recites it at the opening of meetings and during award ceremonies and uses it in conjunction with ethical controversies and other teachable moments.

It is appropriate to encourage the youth officers to plan a small ceremony or celebration to welcome these new Venturers fully into the crew. It is important to know the feeling of your crew's youth toward ceremonies. Some appreciate formal ceremonies and feel moved by them. Others will prefer a simpler induction to the crew. A sample induction ceremony is available online at [scouting.org/venturing](http://scouting.org/venturing).



## Advisor Insight: Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit Award Requirements

Following are summaries of the intent and experiences associated with these awards. Full requirements may be found beginning in the *Handbook for Venturers* and *Venturing Awards and Recognitions*.



### Discovery Award

The Discovery Award is designed to help a new Venturer benefit from full and active participation in crew activities and to learn skills and basic competencies that will prepare him or her to assume leadership roles in the crew as he or she progresses on the Trail to the Summit. The purpose of the Discovery Award is to move past the orientation provided by the Venturing Award and shift the Venturer into action. The four areas of program emphasis form the foundation of the program and are developed through these experiences:

- **Adventure.** Participate in two crew adventures and attain first-aid skills.
- **Leadership.** Learn how to be an effective team member by completing initial leadership training courses.
- **Personal Growth.** Set and achieve a personal goal.
- **Service.** Contribute service to the community, both as a crew member and as an individual.
- **Reflection and Closure.** Complete an Advisor conference and take part in a crew board of review after completing the requirements in adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service.



### Pathfinder Award

The Pathfinder Award is designed to solidify basic and intermediate leadership skills by providing the Venturer with opportunities to lead crew activities, adventures, and service projects and to focus on personal leadership development. The four areas of program emphasis continue to form the foundation of the program, with the Venturer now taking a more active part in the leadership of the crew and the crew's activities.

- **Adventure.** Participate in two additional crew adventures and serve as the leader for one of them.
- **Leadership.** Plan and give leadership to a crew activity. Develop additional leadership skills or serve as a crew officer.
- **Personal Growth.** Set and achieve additional personal goals and take part in an ethical controversy discussion.
- **Service.** Contribute service to the community, both as a crew member and as an individual. Give leadership to a service project that strengthens the crew.
- **Reflection and Closure.** Complete an Advisor conference and take part in a crew board of review after completing the requirements in adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service.



## Summit Award

The Summit Award, as the highest Venturing award, is designed to provide advanced leadership skills and experience and to help focus the Venturer on working diligently to make a difference in the lives of others, including those in the crew and in the community, through a significant service project and advanced leadership opportunities. The Summit Award moves the experience of Venturing to become more “others-directed.” The experiences grounded in the four areas of program emphasis focus more on the Venturer’s impact on other people.

- **Adventure.** Participate in three additional crew adventures and serve as a mentor to a Venturer who is leading one of them.
- **Leadership.** Serve as a mentor to a Venturer who is leading a crew adventure. Develop additional leadership skills or serve as a crew officer.
- **Personal Growth.** Set and achieve additional personal goals, lead an ethical controversy discussion, and compose a personal code of conduct.
- **Service.** Plan and lead a significant service project to benefit your community.
- **Reflection and Closure.** Complete an Advisor conference and take part in a crew board of review after completing the requirements in adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service.

## Venturing Skills-Based Recognition: TRUST, Ranger, and Quest Awards

For Venturers seeking additional challenges in outdoor adventure, sports and physical fitness, or spiritual life, there are three optional awards available. The TRUST Award (religious experiences) has five categories of requirements that involve learning more about one’s own faith and that of others. The Ranger Award (outdoor adventures) has eight core requirements and a wide variety of electives from which a Venturer chooses four to excel in to help them become a master of the outdoors. The Quest Award (sports and physical fitness) requires 12 projects, four core requirements, and an elective that all promote excellence in sporting and physical fitness.



*TRUST Award*



*Ranger Award*



*Quest Award*

These awards do not require a board of review or Advisor conference. The requirements are signed off by a consultant, Venturing Advisor, or faith community mentor. Once they are completed to the satisfaction of the adult working with the Venturer, the award can be presented—preferably in a crew meeting or court of honor.

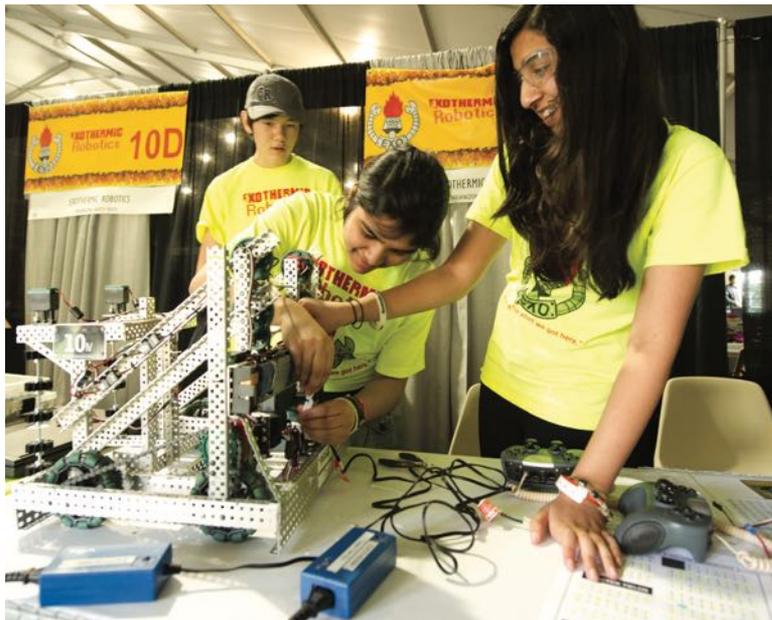
It is intended for the Venturing awards to serve as tools to help a crew develop a dynamic and exciting program that leads to adventures, leadership, personal growth, and service, but some crews may find that these specialty awards also provide a pathway to adventure that can be incorporated into the larger, core awards trail. For example, a crew based around outdoor adventures may find that the Ranger Award provides a structure for a one- to two-year sequence of adventures that as a by-product lead to crew members earning the Discovery or Pathfinder awards. Crews focused on sports could similarly use the Quest Award, and crews focused on religious life could use the TRUST Award.

## Nova and Supernova Awards

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields provide gateways to many exciting careers and hobbies. The Nova and Supernova awards provide recognition for Venturers interested in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or math.

The Nova Awards are introductory awards for Venturers. There are four of them, one for each aspect of STEM: Launch! (science), Power Up (technology), Hang On! (engineering), and Numbers Don't Lie (math). Any interested adult can serve as a Nova counselor by registering with the BSA local council under position code 58. There is no registration fee associated with this position, but Youth Protection training is required.

The Supernova Awards require expertise and advanced learning by the Venturer. These are prestigious STEM awards and will not come easily. Participating in local, state, or national science or engineering fairs, job shadowing, and conducting a number of extensive investigations are some of the requirements. Supernova mentors are adults who have training or career experience in a STEM field. They need to register with the BSA local council under position code 52. There is no registration fee associated with this position, but Youth Protection training is required. The three sequential Venturing Supernova Awards are named after famous scientists and engineers: Dr. Sally Ride, the Wright Brothers, and Dr. Albert Einstein.



Requirements and more information about the Nova and Supernova awards can be found online at [www.scouting.org/stem](http://www.scouting.org/stem) or in the *Venturing Nova Awards Guidebook*, No. 614934.

## Mechanics of Recognition

Challenging awards require some guidelines for administration. The points below are of interest to the Advisor and committee members who help track and coordinate use of the recognition system.

### Past Credit

The requirements for all Venturing awards require the work to be done as a registered Venturer. The purpose of this standard is that the Venturing awards are intended to provide challenge and growth for young adults as part of the Venturing program. Some requirements may call for certification such as Scuba Open-Water Diver, American Red Cross Standard First Aid, or BSA Lifeguard. Current certifications such as these may be used regardless of where they were earned. Eagle Scout, Quartermaster, and Girl Scout Gold Award service projects cannot be used for the Summit Award service project; they must be separate and distinct from each other.

### Multiple Credit

A Venturer may receive multiple credit for similar requirements found within the Venturing program when appropriate. However, because the requirements associated with the program matrix are designed as progressive steps along a path of increasingly challenging standards of adventure, personal growth, and service, the number of opportunities to do this are limited. As an Advisor, look to appeal to a Venturer's better nature and rather than looking for shortcuts to produce recognition, look for opportunities to broaden and strengthen skills through challenging activities—which also will result in recognition of a more meaningful nature.

The specialty awards (TRUST, Ranger, and Quest) do have areas where this may be applicable. For example, a Venturer who becomes certified as a Red Cross first-aid instructor for the TRUST Award could use this to fulfill the Ranger and Quest award requirements as well. The tabletop displays and presentations required for TRUST, Ranger, and Quest awards cannot be used for multiple credit.

### Advisor Conferences

The Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards all require an Advisor conference with the Venturer after he or she has completed all of the other requirements for that particular award. The purpose of this conference is for the Advisor and Venturer to have an open conversation reflecting on what has been learned and what goals the Venturer has.

The goal-setting associated with the personal growth area may be used to guide the conversation.



### Advisor Insight: Development of Faith

The goals and outcomes associated with the Development of Faith area are not required to be shared with an Advisor by the Venturer. The practice of faith and goals associated with that area may be held in confidence by the Venturer.

## Boards of Review

The final requirement for the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards is a crew board of review. The board consists of and is led by the youth's peers in the Venturing crew. Two members of the crew committee should be present during the board of review, but they serve only in an advisory role. The crew Advisor or associate Advisors are not members of the board of review. There is no required number of youth members for the board, but a group of three is most appropriate. Fewer than three members may not fully reflect the important step that the Venturer is taking.

The purpose of a board of review in Venturing is to empower the youth's peers to determine the quality of the Venturer's experience and to encourage the individual to continue in his or her personal development. The Venturer coming before the board of review should come prepared to report on why and how he or she has fulfilled requirements for the award. Crew board members may offer comments about the achievements as well as ideas about possible future goals that can be supported through the crew's adventures and activities.

## Summit Board of Review

For the Summit Award, the board of review will be conducted according to the BSA *Guide to Advancement*.

The board of review must consist of at least five, but no more than six, members. At least half of the board of review members, excluding the chair, must be Venturers currently participating in the program.

The candidate's crew president (or vice president of administration, if the candidate is the crew president) and the chair of the board of review must agree upon the board's final membership makeup. If the chair and the crew president (or vice president of administration) cannot agree, the candidate's Advisor will make the final determination of board membership, including members previously considered by the crew president and chair.

**Board of Review Chair.** The adult chair of the board of review shall be a Venturing-certified member of the district or local council advancement committee or a designated Venturing-certified representative. "Venturing-certified" means that the person has completed Venturing Awards and Recognition training.

**Venturer Representatives.** The board of review should include at least two active Venturers, at least one of whom must be from the candidate's crew. Other Venturing members of the board of review should be selected from the following list.

- A current holder of the Summit Award or Silver Award
- A member of the council, area, or region Venturing Officers Association or equivalent
- A Venturer who currently holds an elected office in a crew
- An Eagle Scout, Quartermaster, or Girl Scout Gold award recipient who is an active Venturer

In the event the chair determines that no Venturer is available who meets one of these qualifications, the crew president may nominate another Venturer from the candidate's crew to serve on the board of review.

**Adult Representatives.** Other than the chair, the board of review should include at least one adult who is registered with the BSA and who participates regularly with the Venturing program at any level.

**Community Representatives.** It is recommended that the board of review involve at least one well-respected adult representative of the community.



### Advisor Insight: Recognition Boards of Review

The content of the Summit board will reflect globally what the Summit Award candidate has gained from his or her experiences in Venturing and plans beyond this achievement. Discussing the Venturer's code of conduct and how it was guided by the overall experiences of being a Venturer and how it may serve as a guide in life beyond the crew should be discussed.





## Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Promoting Recognition

The chartered organization can best promote the Venturing recognition program by celebrating the success of Venturers who achieve these awards. Helping to publicize these accomplishments in the community goes a long way to inspiring the youth. If the chartered organization is a faith community, it could publicize Venturing accomplishments in newsletters or weekly bulletins. A business or civic group could submit newspaper releases or make a posting in their office or building in a public space.

### Adult Recognition Opportunities

Recognition awards for adults should not be viewed as an adult advancement program. Venturing is focused on serving youth. Adult recognitions do set an example of meeting goals and being recognized, but they are focused on completing training courses, serving in a quality matter for a certain amount of time, and advising a quality program for youth. Some awards are bestowed to recognize service to Venturing; these are not to be self-nominated or sought. Remember the principles of servant leadership. It is an appropriate role for members of the crew committee and the chartered organization representative to recognize conscientious and youth-centered service by those who support the crew's program and operation.



*William D. Boyce New-Unit Organizer Award*



*George Meany Award*



*Whitney M. Young Jr. Award*



*¡Scouting ... Vale la Pena! Service Award*



*Asian American Spirit of Scouting Service Award*



*District Award of Merit*



*Silver Beaver Award*



*Adult Religious Emblem*



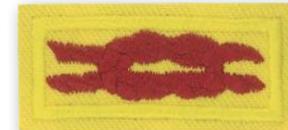
*James E. West Fellowship Award*



*Community Organization Award*



*International Scouter Award*



*Philmont Training Center Masters Track Award*

Nomination forms for these and other distinguished service, tenure, and training awards are available at [http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Awards\\_Central.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Awards_Central.aspx).

# Method: **Adult Association**

**T**he youth officers lead the crew. The officers and activity chairs work closely with Advisors and other adults in a spirit of partnership. The adults serve in a shadow leader capacity. The Advisor is there to support and challenge youth officers to make the best decisions as they learn to lead their colleagues on adventures of ever-increasing challenge and sophistication.

## **The Importance of Adult Association**

In 2002, a committee of youth policy experts at the National Research Council of the Institute of Medicine discovered several features of programs that successfully mentored and prepared youth for the challenges of adulthood and community engagement. The features of successful programs are:

- Physical and psychological safety and security
- Structure that is developmentally appropriate, with clear expectations for:
  - Behavior
  - Increasing opportunities to make decisions
  - Participation in governance and rule-making
  - Development of leadership
- Emotional and moral support
- Opportunities to:
  - Experience supportive adult relationships
  - Learn how to form close, durable human relationships with peers that support and reinforce healthy behaviors
  - Feel a sense of belonging and being valued
  - Develop positive social values and norms
  - Develop skills and mastery
  - Develop confidence in their abilities and to master their environment
  - Make a contribution to their community and to develop a sense of mastering
- Strong links between families, schools, and broader community resources

These features have the potential to exist in every Venturing crew when Advisors mentor youth in personal growth through self-reflection and goal-setting across the areas of Development of Self, Development of Others, and Development of Faith.

These areas of exploration are grounded in the three parts of the Scout Law: duty to God and country, duty to oneself, and duty to others. As an Advisor, you have the opportunity to support growth in young adults as they set and achieve personal goals in these areas during their time in Venturing.



### Advisor Insight: Facilitating Personal Growth Through Adult Association

As a Venturing Advisor, you serve as a positive role model for the members of the crew. Your interest in their well-being and success and your investment of time and interest in their growth is a terrific gift for the members of the crew. You don't have to be perfect, but you do need to be invested in helping them design and lead crew adventures—and be there to help them succeed and to help them make sense of what they learned during their time in the crew.

Some further attributes of effective Venturing Advisors are drawn from research and practices associated with character education. Venturing Advisors support youth through positive character development and education.\* Venturing Advisors seek to support an environment that fosters the following attributes:

- Promote core ethical values as the basis of good character.
- Define character comprehensively to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.
- Use a comprehensive, intentional, proactive, and effective approach.
- Create a caring community.
- Provide Venturers with opportunities to engage in moral action.
- Provide a meaningful and challenging program of adventure that allows all Venturers to succeed.
- Foster Venturers' intrinsic motivation to learn and to be good people.
- Engage crew Advisors as partners in fostering a community focused on learning and ethical growth.
- Foster shared moral leadership and long-term support for character education.
- Engage families and community members as partners in character education.
- Involve adults who appreciate that Venturing is a process more than an outcome.
- Support all members of the crew, with no tolerance for cruelty or bullying.
- Recognize that the example of a friend and mentor is far more effective than that of a scold or rule-maker.

\*Lickona, T., Schaps, E., and Lewis, C. *CEP's Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education*. Washington, D.C.: Character Education Partnership (2003).



## Advisor Insight: Mentoring Young Adults

As a Venturing Advisor, you are in a unique position to be the mentor for young adults in the crew with varying levels of competence and confidence, so getting to know the members of your crew is of the utmost importance. This can be done in a variety of ways, but at some point, a review of every crew member's goals and an Advisor conference are necessary activities for ensuring your ability to support each member's personal growth in a meaningful way. In his book, *Liberty: Thriving and Civic Engagement Among America's Youth*, Richard Lerner suggests that young people will thrive if they develop the "five C's" over the course of childhood and adolescence:

- **Competence:** Intellectual ability, and social and behavioral skills
- **Connection:** Positive bonds with people and institutions
- **Character:** Integrity and moral centeredness
- **Confidence:** Positive self-regard, a sense of self-efficacy, and courage
- **Caring/Compassion:** Human values, empathy, and a sense of social justice

As an Advisor, create a mental checklist of the "five C's" of youth development and use those points to guide your discussion of how the Venturing experience is helping the members of the crew.

Serving as an approachable role model and sounding board for the members of the crew will help build an environment of trust. This will aid the Venturer as he or she begins the process of setting and working toward personal goals.

The leadership style often used in Venturing can be described as "shadow leadership," where the crew officers are "in the light" as they provide leadership to the crew and the Advisor is close to the youth officers but "in the shadows," having prepared the officers through appropriate training and leadership experiences to lead the crew.



## Area of Program Emphasis: Personal Growth

Venturers likely are working through questions regarding their identity, relationships, and values. The transition from childhood to adulthood often includes contemplation of what's between the lines. They are dealing with, more than ever before, circumstances and decisions that may not always be able to be defined immediately as good or bad, right or wrong.

The personal growth area provides an opportunity to help them reflect on their ideas about self and how they view their place or role in the crew, family, school, congregation, or other organization. It encourages them to take an active role in developing into the person they want to become and creates benchmarks for personal reflection, evaluation, and new experiences with support from you and the other crew Advisors.

Personal growth can and should occur in many domains, including but not limited to leadership, health, discipline, communication, responsibility, and relationships. In Venturing, the areas of personal growth can be thought of as categories of growth consistent with the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Activities and behaviors such as being a loyal friend, maintaining a commitment to be helpful and kind to others, and honoring duty to God and country all require skills that can be developed through awareness, attention, and commitment. The goals are personal for each Venturer: If he or she wants to set a personal goal of learning how to play a guitar, he or she should do so. Venturers' goals need to speak to them and their desires.

The personal growth area suggests reflection and development that are consistent with the Scout Law. The three areas of personal growth are categorized as Development of Self, Development of Others, and Development of Faith. Although the areas should be interpreted and personalized to suit each Venturer and his or her specific needs and goals, it may be helpful to think of the areas as addressing different aspects of personal growth.

- **Development of Self** includes analysis of a Venturer's values, morals, strengths, and limitations and a plan to address at least one of those limitations. Development of Self can be a commitment to become physically fit, complete an online computer science course, learn to horseback ride, or accomplish any goal that promotes the development of personal skills and self-improvement.
- **Development of Others** includes an assessment of relationships and how one serves others. Development of Others can be a commitment to organize a clothing drive for a homeless shelter, teach Sunday school for preschoolers, build a storage shed for the crew's equipment, or accomplish any goal that promotes the skill development while serving others.
- **Development of Faith** allows for an opportunity to delve deeper into a Venturer's faith or to expand his or her worldview by exploring spirituality, faith-based practices, and organized religions. Development of Faith could be completion of the TRUST Award, commitment to read a sacred text, organization of or participation in a mission trip, or any goal that promotes personal growth through an exploration of faith.





## Advisor Insight: Leadership Laboratory

Your role is to help use Venturing as a leadership laboratory to help young adult members of the crew become effective, ethical citizens who are competent leaders and decision-makers. The only way Venturers can accomplish this is if they design and lead their program. Your role is to help them accomplish that.

## Helping Youth Set Goals

The purpose of helping youth set goals is a strategic application of Venturing's adult association method: It is to help move young adults toward personal autonomy.

### Setting Goals

The foundation of every Venturer's areas of personal growth will be the results of his or her structured personal reflections and subsequent goals. Completing a structured personal reflection is an effective strategy for becoming aware of one's abilities and limitations, and it is a necessary first step along the journey of personal growth. The structured personal reflection is a process of guiding a Venturer through a series of questions that help him or her think deeply about his or her own life's purpose in a meaningful way. A structured personal reflection also helps identify what is important to the Venturer so that he or she is able to avoid having others impose their values or desires. Through this process, a Venturer will set personal goals in the areas of duty to God and country, duty to oneself, and duty to others.

Following are the suggested questions found in the *Handbook for Venturers* for those embarking on a structured personal reflection. As an Advisor, you may generate additional questions that reflect upon the Venturer's life experiences or crew activities. The process is designed to be open-ended but structured. The sort of guiding questions that are relevant to counseling are idea for this process. Review the "Counseling and Mentoring Strategies" box in the Becoming an Effective Advisor chapter to help you construct questions.

- What do I value?
- What motivates me?
- What is my purpose in life? What do I want out of life?
- What successes and achievements have I had?
- What am I good at?
- What am I not good at?
- What gives me joy?
- What are my current life circumstances?
- Who is someone I admire, and what characteristics does he or she have?  
Do I have those characteristics?



### Advisor Insight: Questions to Ask

Once the questions of the structured personal reflection have been answered, consider having a conversation or a formal Advisor conference in which you discuss the Venturer's answers to the questions. Here are some suggested topics and questions:

- Ask Venturers to explain how their values affect their own sense of self and influence their relationships with others. Ask about specific situations in which values influenced the words they spoke and the things they did.
- Ask Venturers to consider their responses to the questions and inquire if they have been happy with all their decisions and conversations. Are there any situations in which they wish they had acted differently?
- Ask Venturers if they have talked about their answers to the questions with others. Are strengths and limitations consistent with how others view them? It is from the awareness of one's strengths and limitations that achievable goals can be developed in the three areas of personal growth.

The *Handbook for Venturers* recommends using a SMART model to help the youth set goals that they are more likely to achieve. Your familiarity with the goal-setting process described in the handbook will help you guide Venturers to set challenging goals they can achieve.



### Advisor Insight: Mentoring Venturers to Achieve Their Goals

As an Advisor, you can use the tips for goal-writing to help Venturers define their goals. Then consider the following suggestions for mentoring Venturers toward achieving their goals:

- Discuss or brainstorm the steps needed to achieve the goals.
- Encourage Venturers to seek advice from adults or experts outside of the crew if achieving the goal requires a specific skill set you do not have or for which a certified professional is required.
- Review the challenges and possible roadblocks to accomplishing the goals and discuss a strategy for how to deal with them.
- Assist Venturers in breaking down a big goal into several objectives, and then ask them to set a deadline for each objective.
- Encourage regular reporting of their progress. This can be done formally at crew meetings or during an Advisor conference, or informally at the deadline for each objective.
- Talk about advancement or some form of recognition that would be valued by the Venturer upon completion of the goal.

Upon completion of a goal, you should plan to meet with a Venturer for an Advisor conference. During this conference, it will be important to discuss what went well, what didn't go well, and what was learned while working on the goal. In addition, the Venturer should be encouraged to reflect upon the challenges that were faced along the way and the skills that were developed to meet and overcome those challenges.

The next step in the Advisor conference is to have a conversation with the Venturer about his or her life goals and aspirations and how Venturing is or is not providing opportunities to live life as an adventure. It is also important to inquire whether the Venturing experiences are helping to prepare the Venturer for the life he or she wants to live. The answers to these questions can help to form the foundation for the next structured personal reflection and subsequent goals, being sure to address personal growth across the three areas: Development of Self, Development of Others, and Development of Faith.

## Helping Youth Learn From Their Goals

As progress is made, Venturers will come to you looking for ongoing guidance as they work toward their goals and as they achieve them. The conversation that supports this process should be more akin to a counseling session than focusing on a checklist approach to see if the goals have been met. It may be that a challenging goal will not be completely met, but that the learning that is achieved by attempting and not meeting a personal challenge is far more educational than setting a simple goal and achieving it with no difficulty. The focus is to help Venturers learn from setting and attempting goals.

## Ethical Controversies

Ethical controversies are dilemmas based on complex situations in which rendering a decision or action is difficult because different people, based on their principles and values, can view the situation differently. Challenging Venturers to think about ethical controversies is a great way to promote personal growth, because it requires reflections on the teachings of family, clergy, teachers, and others as they consider different points of view and strive to understand why they think and feel the way they do.

In addition to establishing and achieving multiple goals across the three areas of personal growth, Venturers who seek recognition, specifically the Pathfinder and Summit awards, will need to participate in and then lead an ethical controversy. As Advisor, you can solicit ideas for ethical controversies from the crew or individual Venturers based on their collective or personal experiences.



**Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted. It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore, and even deny anything that doesn't fit in with the core belief.**



—*Franz Fanon, French philosopher*

Fanon's quote underscores the importance of rational discussion and the value of helping Venturers learn through participation in ethical controversies. A respectful conversation can show that there are two sides to most questions and that the gray area between right and wrong is sometimes difficult to define. It also provides the opportunity for participants to learn to understand and respect both sides of an argument and to keep emotions in check when responding to a point with which they disagree.

## An Ethical Controversy Discussion

Ethical controversy discussions can be used to discuss ethical standards and dilemmas that apply to your crew's interest areas. The activities can be staged as single activities during one crew meeting, or the crew can explore the ethical issues in depth over several meetings.

Ethical judgments are a part of every profession, hobby, and recreational activity, as well as every relationship. Pose these questions, and others like them, for thought and discussion about relationships or interest areas within your crew.

- Is it right to accept a gift from a supplier who is bidding for an account when you are responsible for choosing the supplier?
- Should it be legal for a police officer to take a second job?
- What do you do when your boss does something illegal?
- Is it right to refuse jury duty?
- When is censorship OK?

Discussions based on questions like this can help your crew tackle tough issues in an interesting, organized, and active way. The questions themselves can easily be adapted to your particular interests.



## *The Ethics Forum*

An ethics forum is a crew meeting devoted to learning about the ethical issues in your crew's career or interest area. Experts invited to speak at the meeting can describe the ethical standards for their profession that are upheld by corporations, trade associations, unions, or other organizations. It is best if they give examples of how those standards are used, explain the consequences of breaking the rules, and explain why the rules are important. The presenters also can give examples of the ethical dilemmas that arise in their professions. These could be dilemmas for which ethical standards have not been written or for which it is difficult to understand how to apply standards.

### Conducting an Ethical Controversy

Ethical controversies are dilemmas without easy answers, dilemmas in which each side might have valid arguments.

The first step in staging an ethical controversy is to organize the activity. Divide the crew into groups of four. Include Advisors and any other adults present. If possible, divide the groups so that Venturers work with people they don't know very well.

Divide each group of four into two groups of two. Give each pair a copy of a position statement, assigning the pairs into opposing sides. It does not matter whether the participants agree with their assigned position.

When teams have been formed, conduct the activity. An ethical controversy activity has five simple steps. Describe and conduct them one at a time. Allow enough time to complete each step before moving on. All groups of four should work on each step at the same time. The entire activity takes from 45 minutes to two hours.

1. **Learn the position.** With your partner, develop as many arguments as possible to support your assigned position. You can work with a pair from another group that has the same topic and position.
2. **Present your position.** Present your arguments to the other pair. In turn, listen closely to their position, making sure you understand their arguments. Clarify your understanding by restating what others say.
3. **Discuss the issue.** Defend your position and critique the opposition. Try to persuade the opposing pair that you are correct, and then listen to their defense and critique. Remember to be critical of ideas, not people.
4. **Reverse positions.** Switch positions with the other pair. Take a few minutes with your partner to review your new position. Present and defend your new position as if you really believe in it.
5. **Try to reach consensus.** Work toward finding a position that all four believe is the correct one. This may be a position already discussed or a completely new one. Change your mind only when you are convinced by rational arguments.

The following table is the beginning of a Venturer listing pros and cons for an ethical controversy about the morality of wealth in which a group of people take a position that the pursuit of wealth is good and the other group believes that the pursuit of wealth is bad. Venturers would do their own research to support their starting position. After discussing the issue, they would then need to develop a list supporting the other side. More examples are available through the Venturing portal at [www.scouting.org/venturing](http://www.scouting.org/venturing).

| Pursuit of Wealth Is Good  | Pursuit of Wealth Is Bad   |
|--|--|
| Personal wealth drives the development of products that can help everyone.   | Accumulation of possessions can be the standard by which others are judged, replacing moral and ethical standards. |
| Wealthy people are able to help others.  | Striving to achieve wealth produces tunnel vision, allowing people to ignore the needs of others.                  |
| Rewards for self-interest and the pursuit of wealth have led to advances that have saved lives (medical, nutrition, sanitation, etc.). | The pursuit of wealth leads to a disregard of the environment and the creation of ecological disasters.            |
| Prosperous people have time to think about higher values. Poverty leads only to desperation.   | The constant pursuit of wealth leads to spiritual and moral poverty.   |

When the activity is over, discuss it as a large group. Ask each group of four how they arrived at their final position. Compare the positions chosen and the arguments used to support them. Reflect on the process, discussing both the activity and how group members related with each other.

### Code of Conduct

Venturers who seek the Summit Award will need to develop a personal code of conduct. This code should reflect the Scout Law but should be personal in nature. Below are a few ideas of what some people have included in their personal code of conduct based on their values and sense of purpose.

- I will promote and demonstrate my ideals through my actions, not by forcing them on others.
- I will promote a higher quality of life for others and myself.
- I will be honest and trustworthy.
- I will respect the ideas, lifestyles, religions, and ideals of others as long as they do not cause harm to others.

As an Advisor, you will be asked to review Venturers' personal codes of conduct and discuss with them ways they are upholding and promoting the principles of their code through their personal and volunteer activities and their relationships. Venturers should be challenged to conduct a regular honest assessment of themselves to determine if they are really living by their code. In addition, they should be advised to embrace and accept challenges by individuals who believe they are not adhering to their code because these challenges can aid in maintaining one's ideals of living an ethical and moral life.



### Advisor Insight: Checking In

Setting and achieving personal goals is not an intuitive behavior. It is something that is learned through practice and the efforts of a concerned adult. Don't use only the time during meetings to work with and mentor Venturers. A "just checking in" email or text can go a long way to building a comfortable and ongoing relationship between an Advisor and the Venturers in the crew. This personal touch is the essential component in establishing and maintaining a culture of personal growth in a Venturing crew.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Modeling Values

The chartered organization representative should seek to act as a role model for the values and beliefs of the chartered organization. In this way, Venturers will positively associate working with the chartered organization with their experience. This both helps the Venturer grow and enables the chartered organization to meet its own goals for youth service.

**“ When your values are clear to you,  
making decisions becomes easier. ”**  
*—Roy Disney*

# Method: **Ideals**

**V**enturers are expected to know and live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law and commit to serving God and country, other people, and themselves. A Venturer measures himself or herself against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and Venturers reach for them, continuously meet the challenge, and answer the question of how these statements of personal value guide their life path.

## **Ideals**

Ideals have been a key element of Scouting since its very beginning. Ideals serve Venturers as a principle or value that may be pursued as a goal. Ideals are important in that they provide a foundation for an ethical code of conduct for those who subscribe to them.

The Boy Scouts of America explicitly references the ideals of Scouting as part of the moral and ethical code developed by Venturers during their time in the Scouting program.

### ***Mission of the Boy Scouts of America***

*The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.*

The ideals of Scouting are embedded in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. They provide an explicit and positive set of stated values for members of the program. As an Advisor, you have the opportunity—indeed, an obligation—to help members of the crew develop their own moral and ethical framework guided by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

### Scout Oath (or Promise)

On my honor I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country  
and to obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake,  
and morally straight.

### Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly,  
courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave,  
clean, and reverent.

## The Ideals Across All Program Levels

Scouting is a single program serving youth and young adults from ages 7 through 20. The ideals of Scouting are a constant across the entire organization, from Cub Scouting through Venturing. Helping youth members understand and apply the ideals to their daily lives is part of the inductive element of Scouting. Adult leaders don't teach the skills directly, as they might for how to tie knots or operate a motorboat, but the lessons learned through the development of these values will last a lifetime.

The motto at each level provides the key for interpreting how to live by Scouting's ideals. For Cub Scouts, the motto "Do Your Best" serves to guide boys to make every effort to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Boy Scouts are challenged to "Be Prepared" to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law. For Venturers, "Lead the Adventure" helps them focus on taking action to live by the values of Scouting's ideals. As Venturers mature, so should their understanding of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The ideals are not just words for children and young adults to follow. They are truly a set of guidelines for leading an ethical life.

## Developing Ethical Values

Ethical values are a function of social interaction and relationships. As young as age 2, children begin observing the social interaction of others in addition to the way they are treated by others. As youth grow, they begin placing their own judgments on others' observed behaviors. They begin deciding which behaviors are good or bad, which are fair or unfair, which are kind or cruel, which are helpful or unhelpful, etc. These judgments occur as the young person observes social interactions.



### Advisor Insight: Ethical Behavior

Youth need to observe the behaviors of others in a variety of situations. Advisors can play a significant role by teaching youth the kinds of behaviors that are appropriate, ethical, and moral and the kinds of behaviors that are unacceptable. All activities in Scouting should reinforce ethical behavior.

As young adults develop their moral compass as a part of leading ethical lives, they begin to see and feel the benefits of each value. They see how living moral values is beneficial to the welfare of others as well as themselves. They witness people getting along with each other as ethical values are lived.

During late childhood and early adolescence, youth begin deciding what kind of people they want to become and be. They begin choosing the types of ethical values that become part of their personal behavior and self-identity. Parents, peers, and important adults—Venturing Advisors, for example—play a significant part in each youth's choice of values.

Once an ethical value has been chosen and instilled in a Venturer and becomes a part of his or her personal behavior and self-identity, he or she becomes internally driven and motivated to live the value when it is appropriate for that value to come into play. Young adults feel responsible for living values and feel guilty when they are not lived. Instilling this responsibility encourages them to live and practice desired values.





## Advisor Insight: Teachable Moments

Developing the ideals as a means for ethical decision-making is largely a process of modeling, reflection, and thoughtful conversation. The teachable moment is an important tool in helping Venturers become more deliberate as they incorporate the ideals of Scouting into their lives.

- Do not lecture.
- Do not preach.
- Use skills of mentoring and counseling to guide understanding.
- Model behaviors.
- Help Venturers recognize that ethical decision-making is a process as well as an outcome.
- Focus on the use of questions for understanding rather than giving advice.
- Keep in mind that progress sometimes is tempered by regression or falling back.
- Use the Scout Oath and Scout Law as a framework for discussion and decision-making and not as secular dogma.
- Use Advisor conferences as a formal opportunity to discuss ethical growth and decision-making.
- Use ethical controversies as a tool to practice and discuss ethical decision-making.
- Keep in mind the ultimate goal: Develop ethical decision-making as an outcome of the program.
- Encourage development of service elements of the program as a concrete expression of "other-directedness."



## Committee Insight: Connecting Youth With Scouting's Ideals

Crew committee members often mentor one or more of the crew officers. The ideals of the Scout Oath and Scout Law can serve as a language through which to discuss issues that youth officers may bring to you. If the treasurer has concerns about fundraising or financially assisting a Venturer, points of the Scout Law such as trustworthy, friendly, and thrifty may be useful to frame the discussion. If a youth officer complains about other youth, points of the Scout Law such as friendly, kind, and cheerful may be useful guideposts. Just as with Advisors, don't lecture a Venturer on these points. But a kindly intended question like "Is there a way to be friendly even if you don't like how he makes decisions?" can be helpful in guiding the Venturer.



**“ Your life will be a blessed and balanced  
experience if you first honor your identity. ”**  
*—Russell Nelson, religious leader*

## Method: Group Identity

**P**eer groups are essential for the growth and development of young adults. Group identity is the shared sense of belonging to a group with common values and serves as a means to build positive group interactions and self-confidence.

Venturing is most effective when young adults gain a positive sense of belonging in their crew. This sense of belonging and group identity might occur by chance, but most often it requires conscious effort on the part of the crew's membership and Advisors.

Group identity consists of many things. As a Venturing crew, the Scout Oath and Scout Law serve as a statement of common values by which all members agree to strive to live. These ideals serve as an entry point into the group identity. But Venturing's appeal to young adults is more likely its sense of adventure and possibly the vision of service to others. A Venturing crew's specific identity will be formed by the types of adventures that its members plan and go on. Admittedly this might change over time, but so do people's individual identities as they grow and gain experience.

People choose to belong to groups that fit their image of who they are. Groups are made up of diverse individuals, so it is important that a Venturing crew nurtures a self-identity that meets the needs of the youth it serves. Nationally, Venturing has a set of core values identified in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. But youth don't join Venturing just to be a part of a national movement; they join because of the appeal of the local crew's adventures. Successful crews purposefully form a group identity that provides a sense of purpose and belonging.

If a Venturing crew focuses on sailing adventures, it makes sense that its group identity will be that of hobbyist sailors. This identity is not going to appeal to all youth, but that is the point. It does appeal to young adults who want to learn how to sail, go on aquatic adventures, and possibly become expert sailors themselves. If a young adult's self-image is of a person who is a rock climber, he or she is going to seek out a Venturing crew or other group that identifies with the traits of climbers. Likewise, a youth ministries crew will have an identity focused on religious principles that will give it unique character and appeal. Venturing crews' identities need to be specific and not so generic that there is no reason to belong to the group.



## A Crew Uniform

An outward sign of group identity can be similar clothing. Venturers who grew up in Boy Scouting or Girl Scouting are probably used to wearing a uniform. This method of group identity provides a group identity with a national organization. The National Council of the Boy Scouts of America does produce a green shirt and gray pants or shorts that can serve as a Venturing uniform, but it is important to realize that young adults ages 14 to 21 are not the same as elementary and middle-school youth in the Scouting program. A national uniform may be appealing because it connects one to a larger movement, but there are many youth attracted to the adventure of Venturing who do not come from this Scouting background. For that reason, Venturing crews are encouraged to select their own “uniform” or insignia to help form a sense of group identity. A crew uniform is not a requirement of Venturing, but it is encouraged. Group identity is decided by members of the crew with guidance from Advisors and committee members. Group identity is about the actions a group takes and the attitude it presents.

Note that for participation in many council, area, regional, and national Venturing activities, a standard BSA Venturing uniform is expected of participants.



Examples of Venturing crew insignia and uniforms:

- Patch on a ski jacket
- Fishing hat for a crew that focuses on fishing adventures
- T-shirt emphasizing a crew’s rock climbing adventures
- Embroidered polo shirt identifying a crew’s connection to its youth ministry group
- Jacket with screen-printed logo on back displaying a crew’s shooting sports specialty
- Shirt, tie, and blazer for some community service and faith-chartered crews
- T-shirt showing the fun side of Venturing STEM activities
- BSA National Supply green uniform shirt with gray shorts or pants

Crews may decide on a formal uniform for ceremonial purposes, such as a shirt and tie or the green uniform shirt, and an informal uniform for crew meetings and adventures.

The decision about the crew's identity and outward displays need to be made by the crew's youth. Adult preferences should not be forced upon members. Remember that as youth membership changes over time, the decision about the crew uniform or identity needs to be revisited to make sure that it still meets the desires of the current members. Just because a group of youth five years ago voted for a specific uniform doesn't mean the current members feel the same sense of identity with it.

Deciding on a crew "uniform" is a first step that may be used to start setting a group identity. It is important that the youth Venturers are the ones choosing the uniform or insignia and not the adults. This doesn't mean that there shouldn't be guidance from adults, the crew committee, and possibly the chartered organization, but it does require that the youth members be given a true voice in determining this outward display of their identity.

When youth are choosing their crew uniform, the Advisor should work with the crew president rather than directly with the entire crew membership. Questions that an Advisor might consider asking the president before the crew solicits youth ideas for a uniform might include:

- Are there members who have strong feelings about what the uniform should be?
- How does the term "uniform" affect how the members view this decision?
- How formal or informal do you think they want the uniform to be?
- How many designs should the crew seek before making a selection?
- Will the designs be anonymous or will the author be identified?
- How is the crew going to decide on the uniform? Majority vote of the membership? Majority vote of the officers? Will voting be at a meeting or online? Is 50 percent enough? Should a higher percentage be required? Should the crew work toward consensus rather than taking a vote?
- How long will this be the uniform? Until there is another vote? For one year? For three years?

The point of the questions should be to encourage the president to think about the process of selecting a crew uniform that will have the support of the crew members. It is also important to think about how to involve those who may not like a particular design that is chosen.



Once submissions have been received, it is a good idea for the Advisor to sit down with the president (and possibly the other officers, depending on the crew) to ask a few more guiding questions. This is a time to help the youth think “big picture” about how others in the community will see the crew’s insignia or uniform.

- Are any of the designs offensive to others in our community?
- Are any of the designs contrary to the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law?
- Will any of the designs add significant cost for members (for instance, if an expensive ski jacket or an embroidered polo shirt with a multicolored design is chosen)?
- Are these designs for formal ceremonies, crew meetings, or crew adventures?
- Will crew members be embarrassed to wear any of these designs?
- Should the adult leaders wear the same uniform or insignia or should it be modified for them?



### Advisor Insight: Assisting Youth in Developing a Positive Group Identity

Our social identity is our sense of who we are based upon our group memberships. The groups we belong to can give us a sense of self-esteem and confidence. Venturing crews should be social groups that share a core set of values based upon serving others, seeking honest adventure, and improving oneself.

Social identity is a mixture of intrapersonal behaviors (within ourselves) and interpersonal behaviors (how we act with others). Crew Advisors should help Venturers to understand that while a crew identity will form naturally over time (and it will probably change and grow), members of the crew are not going to identify themselves 100 percent with the crew and its image.

Crews should be able to cultivate a sense of belonging and identity without needing to also support views of elitism, arrogance, or mockery of others. The crew’s identity will appeal to both novices and experts because they can each find a sense of belonging around a shared hobby while still being able to individually achieve and push themselves.

### *Guidelines for Developing Crew Insignia and Designs*

The crew committee’s role is to support the Advisor and president as they guide the crew’s membership in selecting a crew insignia or uniform. It is important that all adults realize that the decision needs to be made by the youth. If committee members have concerns about the appropriateness of a design, it may be best to share these concerns with the Advisor. This lets the president get any negative or critical feedback from one person rather than feeling ganged up on if several adults have strong feelings.

The chartered organization’s values should be taken into account when a crew decides upon a logo, uniform, or insignia. The president and Advisor should keep the chartered organization representative informed about the process being used to decide upon a design and potential designs. If the chartered organization representative has concerns about the appropriateness of a design, these concerns should be shared with the Advisor. If the chartered organization wishes to have its name be a part of the design, this should be communicated to the Advisor and president before the process begins.



“

**But the real way to get happiness is by giving out happiness to other people. Try to leave this world a little better than you found it and when your turn comes to die, you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best.**

”

*—Lord Baden-Powell,  
founder of the worldwide Scouting movement*

# Method: **Service**

**S**ervice encourages youth to identify a community need and to take action to address that need. Service helps youth make a difference in the world beyond themselves and in the process develop the disposition to put the needs of others first.

Throughout its history, members of the Boy Scouts of America have provided service to others. Service often occurs in small, unassuming ways—Good Turns and acts of kindness by individual Venturers throughout their daily lives. It happens on a larger scale, too, when a Summit Award candidate plans and carries out a major service project, and when members of the crew see a need and step forward with a solution.

Crew service projects encourage Venturers to discover that they have the ability to make positive changes in their communities. They can help protect and improve the environment, too, giving something back to the land they use and enjoy. Crew service projects benefit others while building character and good citizenship in young adults. In many ways, service projects are Venturing at its best.

Benefits of service for young adults fall into several areas. Research summarized through the University of Michigan has affirmed the value of service in these areas:

| Psychological Benefits   | Social Benefits  | Cognitive Benefits   |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Less stress and depression, and more life satisfaction</li><li>• That “feel good” feeling</li><li>• Improved mental health</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trust, cooperation, and citizenship</li><li>• Improved communication skills</li><li>• Positive opportunities for at-risk youth</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Political and civic awareness</li><li>• Exposure to diversity, multiculturalism, and different ways of thinking</li><li>• Critical thinking and problem-solving skills</li></ul> |

The value of service, then, is far more than simply the good that it offers a community receiving the service. It makes a difference for the individuals providing the service.

## Area of Program Emphasis: Service

In addition to serving as a method of Venturing, service is also one of the areas of program emphasis. As such, it also represents an area for personal growth and development. As a Venturing crew Advisor, you have the opportunity to help guide the members of the crew as they make choices about service and serving others. Your disposition and support for service as an important part of the crew's program will communicate much to the crew members as to the value and importance of service.

The *Handbook for Venturers* explores the value and importance of service to others. It also explores important issues related to planning adventures and planning service projects. It is important for you as an Advisor to be aware of that content.



### Advisor Insight: Supporting the Delivery of Service

As most often happens, you are the adult in the room with the youth. Your key responsibilities are to ensure that rules are followed, serve as a mentor and role model for the youth, and train the youth leaders. You are the one who needs to build the culture of service in a crew that doesn't have one through your enthusiasm for service and your inherent vision that adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service happen together. You are also the one who is most likely to see a coming failure, and should be there to help the youth find their path to success or, when necessary, learn the most from their failures. You are the one present when the youth are out serving and need a bit of mature safety consciousness.

### Getting the Youth on Board

Selling the idea of service is a little different from selling the idea of adventure to Venturing-age youth. Whereas adventure can often be defined by the youth themselves and the benefits (fun, social time with peers, new skills) are somewhat obvious, the idea of service isn't as obvious to a lot of youth and the benefits to them may be fuzzy as well. Core ideas for selling the idea of service are outlined in the youth handbook's Service chapter.

What you can add as an adult leader is the development of a culture of service in your crew. How do you know when you have such a culture? When the youth leaders assume that it is part of the crew's normal operations and when they honor themselves for delivering service, then it won't be a chore to serve; it will be a pleasure. Here are some ideas to help develop that culture of service:

- Tell stories of your own experiences giving service to others.
- Arrange for former crew members to tell stories of your crew's past service projects.
- Show pictures of the crew's prior service projects.
- Invite your chartered organization representative to visit and talk about local service opportunities.
- Arrange tours of local community organizations engaged in providing services to those in need.

To get your youth on board, they need to know (a) what constitutes service, (b) what its benefits are, (c) what kinds of community needs exist locally, and (d) that they can help and make a difference.

## Supporting the Planning, Logistics, and Resources

The mechanics of planning and carrying out a service project are outlined in the youth handbook's Planning the Crew's Activities chapter, and many of the steps are similar to planning and carrying out an adventure, especially if the service project is being done in conjunction with an adventure, such as performing a river cleanup during a canoe trip.

Many service projects, however, are quite disjointed from what many youth would consider to be a crew adventure. The location, the people, the objective, the activity, the raw materials needed, the finances, and the safety considerations are very different. Adult leaders need to be adept at comparing and contrasting these considerations and teaching youth how to navigate through the kinds of issues that are somewhat unique to service projects.

The Venturers might need introductions to people in your network of contacts or the chartered organization representative's network of contacts to find a suitable organization and project to consider. If the project requires skills that most of your Venturers don't have but could acquire with some training, then help them secure a consultant who can carry out this training. You might need to do something as basic as giving etiquette lessons to your youth to teach them how to execute a cold call, how to conduct themselves at a first meeting, how to ask for a donation of resources or funding, how to follow up with thank-you notes, and so on.

Quite often, you will need to insist on seeing a written plan so you can assess where there might be holes in the plan. Youth do not have the perspective or experience that adults have, and they often miss things that adults do automatically based on years of experience. Did the youth leader agree to a date for the service project that no one in the crew can make because the SATs are being given that day? Did the youth leader commit to a project that is beyond the people power that the crew can muster? Did the youth forget to plan for feeding or transporting workers? Does the youth leader know what permissions are required to perform the service (e.g., construction permit, property owner agreement, unit tour and activity plan, business license, etc.)?

This is where your experience from years of adulthood comes into play. The youth leaders plan as best they can, and you come in and ask, "Have you considered \_\_\_\_\_?" or "Have you thought about \_\_\_\_\_?" You might need to follow this by saying, "Here is why I'm concerned. . . ." or "Here are some options to think about. . . ."



## Ensuring Safety

While ensuring safety is always important, it can take on a different tenor with some service projects. Youth can be doing activities and meeting people outside their world of experience, which can be both uncomfortable and challenging. Part of ensuring safety in these situations (beyond adhering to the usual Youth Protection policies, using safety gear and practices, following the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, and bringing in a consultant when needed) involves talking to youth and preparing them for new experiences, and then debriefing afterward.

Some of the usual safety practices might need to be reviewed, too. Specifics about tool use during service projects is a category that changes relatively frequently in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, so wise Advisors should thoroughly review that document at least annually.

The *Guide to Safe Scouting* is available online at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org). It includes a Service Project Planning Guidelines worksheet that is written for youth to be able to fill out. This worksheet is useful in safely planning a service project. There is also an Age Guidelines for Tool Use and Work at Elevations or Excavations chart, which gives safety standards such as all youth being approved to use shovels while only youth age 14 and over can use a pickaxe.

## Connecting Service to the Other Areas of Program Emphasis

One beauty of the Venturing areas of program emphasis is that they are all interconnected. Through service, many Venturers will experience personal growth that was completely unanticipated. With help from their adult leaders, they may accomplish a service project far bigger and more ambitious than they could have achieved on their own—making it an adventure (although perhaps one that they didn't expect or perceive would be an adventure at the start). When Venturers take on leadership of a service project, they find that they can make the world a better place in a concrete way. Youth often don't see the connections between these things. You, however, as an adult leader can point out how service supports the other areas and how the others support service, and how the four areas are really a win-win-win-win.

### ***Service and the Other Areas of Program Emphasis***

Service can serve as an area of program emphasis that joins together all the others. Consider the following opportunities and outcomes that service offers in adventure, leadership, and personal growth:

#### **Service as Adventure**

- Challenging crew members to try something new
- Improving crew members' ability to solve problems
- Developing new skills
- Developing planning and leadership skills in a new setting

#### **Service as Leadership**

- Empowering others
- Sharing leadership with those being served
- Humble service versus service for the résumé
- Developing dispositions of servant leadership

#### **Service as Personal Growth**

- Setting goals and meeting challenges
- Sense of empathy for others
- Humility
- Becoming more others-centered
- Meeting new people and learning from them
- Learning from new situations
- Expanding one's sense of duty to others, self, God, and country

## Managing Failure

In youth-led groups, there is always a lot more failure than many adults would like to see. You should not fear failure in general, should allow it to happen at times, and might even want to encourage a bit of failure now and then. When people succeed the first time, they learn something that works, but they are unlikely to have learned *why* it works. When people fail, they almost always learn why they failed.

Failure, despite its hidden value, is not always a good thing. As the adult, you should accept a burden of judgment to know when failure is acceptable and unacceptable. A failed adventure means that your crew doesn't get to have that adventure. If you lost a bit of money, then they learned something about the value of that money. The learning that comes with these failures is likely to outweigh the costs. But if you're going to lose a lot of money, or some members, or some valuable reputation, or your crew's relationship with an important group, then the cost of failure may be too high.

A failure in the delivery of service has two consequences. Most important is the consequence for the beneficiary of the service. Failure in delivering service deprives an organization from the resources or support it was promised. As most of the institutions that receive service from Venturers are nonprofit organizations, the loss of expected service has a serious impact on their ability to accomplish their goals. Lastly, it diminishes the crew specifically and Scouting in general in the eyes of the public when crews do not follow through on their commitments to service.

Failure on a service project also has consequences for the crew. When a service project falls through, the consequence goes beyond the youth and can impact the crew and relationships within the crew. The need for success and the stakes involved in a service project are higher than those for a pure adventure. As an Advisor, it is essential that you convey this to the members of the crew. And you will need to evaluate seriously whether you can and should let the youth fail if it looks like things are going that direction.

## Supporting Planning: Effective Service Projects

As an Advisor, your role is to help crew members identify, plan, and deliver service as part of their experiences in Venturing. The seven-step planning model described in the Building a Crew Program chapter is as helpful for planning service as for planning adventures. Above and beyond the mechanics of the planning, however, an Advisor must be vigilant as to the process that surrounds the planning. The points that follow will help you to support the crew's participation in service to others.

The place to begin developing crew service projects begins with the **annual crew program planning meeting**. Members of the planning team might have ideas of their own for worthwhile efforts the crew could undertake to help its chartered organization, people in the community, or some other group. Advisors are also good sources of ideas, as are chartered organization representatives and neighborhood or community leaders.

Service is an important part of the Venturing program and so it needs to be built into the program plan from the beginning. Some crews find it helpful to build an ongoing relationship with a single organization and deliver service on a regular basis; other crews may take a more ad hoc approach, but still ensure that service remains an ongoing part of the crew program.

Crew service projects also serve to **sustain and grow the crew**. One challenge offered to experienced Venturers in the crew is to devise and implement a crew sustainability service project. This is to ensure that the crew will remain viable as Venturers mature and depart from the crew.

A major service project is a challenge also delivered to the most experienced Venturers in the crew to provide **meaningful community service**. Completing this challenge provides additional opportunities for a Venturer to demonstrate his or her skills as a leader.

### ***Planning***

Use the planning materials in the *Handbook for Venturers* to help in planning service. As with any adventure, the degree to which a team “lives through the process in advance,” the more successful the service project. In particular, consider in advance:

- A stated need
- Being respectful of the client
- Resources available
- Alternatives for how to deliver the service
- Recognizing limitations for delivering service
- Risk management and preparation for the team
- Ensuring adequate participation in the project



As an Advisor, your role is to work with the crew's young adult leaders to deliver service. You will work to ensure that crew service projects are well-planned and properly led, and fulfill the following expectations:

- Be real and significant.
- Be inclusive.
- Be clearly defined.
- Be well-prepared.
- Include reflection and recognition.

### Be Real and Significant

Young adults investing time and energy in volunteer service for others want to know that they are doing something significant. When the project is done, they should be able to look back with satisfaction upon an effort that has made a difference. Busywork projects designed to keep Venturers occupied rather than to accomplish real goals waste their enthusiasm and provide little value to others.

### Be Inclusive

Venturers are far more likely to throw themselves into a service effort if they have taken part in selecting, planning, and organizing it. The annual planning meeting should provide a forum to gather input and commitment to delivering service. Providing service is also a tremendous opportunity for a crew's young adult leaders to gain hands-on leadership experience. As with most other crew activities, Advisors work as coaches and mentors. To the greatest extent possible, the crew leadership should organize and complete service projects.

### Be Clearly Defined

A project should have definite beginning and ending points, with logical steps in between. The purpose of the service effort should be understandable to Venturers who are taking part, and they should have access to the full scope of the work even if their role is to complete just one part of it. A clear goal allows crew members to measure their progress along the way, increasing their sense of participation and their pride in a job well done.

Using the planning tools presented in the *Handbook for Venturers* will help the crew members who are organizing and leading a service project design a detailed plan to deliver service to others, regardless of the type of project.

### Be Well-Prepared

Being prepared for a project often begins long before the day of the effort. With the leadership of the Venturer leading the service project and the guidance of his or her Advisor, crew members can lay the groundwork so that everything is ready when the rest of the participants arrive to carry out the work. Be sure that the Venturer leading the project has mapped out a clear plan in advance. The planning model described in the *Handbook for Venturers* will ensure excellent preparation for the project.

## Include Reflection and Recognition

Reflection is a learning process of careful listening and sharing that allows Venturers and Advisors to assess an experience and get from it the greatest value it has to offer. It can be an effective technique in many teaching situations. Ensure that the Venturer leading the service project leads a reflection session as soon as possible after the service project is completed. It should be conducted in an informal setting and the ground rules should be made clear: No put-downs and no interruptions. Open the reflection with an open-ended question about the service project that the Venturers completed.

Here are a few examples:

- What is something new you experienced today?
- What skills did you use today that you had never used before?
- If we did this again, what could we do to improve the outcome?
- What should we change in order to work together better?

The reflection session should last no longer than 10 to 15 minutes. As Advisor, it is often appropriate to close the reflection in a positive, upbeat manner, summarizing key points stated by the Venturers. This can be a great opportunity to encourage them to think through the experience and recognize how the Scouting ideals served as guidelines as they planned and carried out their service project.

The most important recognition Venturers receive is internal—the confidence built upon having mastered new skills and the self-esteem gained by taking part in worthwhile acts of service. Often, a passing comment of “Nice job!” or “You’re really good at that!” can be the most welcome form of recognition and a powerful boost to a young adult’s self-confidence.

The recognition system used in Venturing serves as a benchmark of progress. While some service projects may be deliberately organized to achieve a recognition goal, for most of the participants, recording time supporting the project to document their progress toward the Discovery or Pathfinder award is often the final part of a service project.

### *Essentials for Service to Make a Difference*

Author Diane Hedin identified the following as essential for acts of service to make a difference for the individuals offering the service. Her studies were carried out in a school setting, but the outcomes are relevant to those supporting Venturers. As a Venturing Advisor, work to guide the young adults that you work with to ensure that the following are present in all service projects the crew contributes to:

- Genuine tasks that both the young people and the community think are worthwhile.
- Opportunities for others to depend on the actions of young people.
- Tasks that challenge and strengthen the students’ thinking—cognitively and ethically.
- Making decisions and having responsibility to affect the direction of the project.
- Working together with adults and youth on common tasks.
- Systematic reflection on the service experience.
- A final product of the students’ effort.

## Service Projects in Venturing

Service is organized in several different ways in Venturing. Keeping these forums for service in mind during annual program planning will ensure that opportunities for community service are present for all members of the crew.

### Ongoing Service

Based on the values of conducting service identified in this chapter, service should be realized as a regular part of the crew program. Planning to deliver service during the annual planning conference will ensure that it remains an ongoing part of the crew's program. Many crews find that they build an ongoing relationship with an organization and that service for that institution becomes a regular part of the crew's annual program.



As an Advisor, work to encourage non-crew service as well. Much of the fun and pleasure of Venturing comes from the experiences shared by members of the crew, whether in a meeting, on the trail, or doing good works together. Many Venturers provide service to others through youth organizations associated with their religious body, through other clubs, or through service learning experiences in schools. It is important to encourage in Venturers the value of service whatever the forum for delivery. Scouting provides many opportunities to engage in service, but the real impact comes when youth provide service to others because they have learned it is the right thing to do. Scouting provides an opportunity to take on the habit of delivering service and working to ensure that it becomes a part of their life.

Take care as an Advisor to ensure that service provided by the crew and its members are recorded. The recognition system sets service hour thresholds for the Discovery Award (24 hours) and Pathfinder Award (36 hours).

### Crew Sustainability Service

The purpose of the crew sustainability service project is evident: to ensure that the crew continues on after members of the crew grow older and age out of the crew. From the point of view of an Advisor, it is important to help crew members see that this type of project is an investment in others: Without this sort of conscientious planning and service, many crews tend to wind down and disband when the initial group of members grows too old. If this type of service can be likened to a plant, a Venturing crew should operate like a perennial, growing stronger every year, rather than an annual, which blossoms once and then needs to be started again from a seed.

### *Crew Sustainability*

The word "sustainability" has taken on a meaning over the last few decades that emphasizes ecological and energy conservation concerns. Those meanings have a long history in Scouting as well. In the context of a Venturing crew, sustainability is "the capacity to endure." The goal of the sustainability service project is to help a Venturing crew endure beyond the tenure of the current cohort of Venturers.

As with all types of service, the crew sustainability project serves as both an outcome (sustaining the crew) and a process (identifying a need and acting on it, leadership development, etc.). It serves as an excellent opportunity to practice the sort of leadership skills that are of value for leading an adventure at the Pathfinder Award level as well as preparing for the community service project required for the Summit Award.

As an Advisor, there are a few points to consider as you counsel a crew member in the design and delivery of this service project.

- **Fun.** As with anything the crew does, it should be fun: fun in planning, fun in delivering the experience, and fun in looking back at what was done.
- **Challenging.** The project should challenge and test the crew member designing and leading it.
- **Impact.** The project should have an impact. It should make the crew stronger and should meet a need to help the crew find long-term success. For many sustainability projects, it will be a chance to create a positive first impression for the crew, for Venturing, and for the larger Scouting program.

What counts as a sustainability service project? The main assessment comes from the three points above: Does it have an impact, does it challenge the crew member, and is the project and its outcome fun? Creating a flier to publicize the crew might be helpful, but as marketing experts remind us, “paper informs, people inspire.” A flier would be part of a larger and more challenging project to help sustain and grow the crew. Several examples in the *Handbook for Venturers* offer a reasonable standard to aspire to.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Ideas for Service

If a crew wants to perform service but doesn't yet have a specific idea of the service to execute, the first place the crew will likely turn is to the chartered organization. Prepared chartered organization representatives will have some ideas at hand for service that teens can perform for their organization individually or as a group. Chartered organizations commonly have ties to other organizations that need service, too.



## Summit Award Service Project

Guidelines for helping a Venturer develop his or her Summit Award service project are available in *Guide to Advancement*. Here is the text of the requirement:

Since earning the Pathfinder Award, plan and conduct a service project as described in the Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook. Before you start, have the project proposal form from the workbook completed and approved by those benefiting from the effort, your Advisor, and designated crew or ship youth leadership. This project must be a different service project than one carried out for the Eagle Scout Award, the Sea Scout Quartermaster Award, or the Girl Scout Gold Award.

The Summit Award candidate must use the Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook to present the documentation and planning for the capstone service project. The workbook outlines the process for organizing and carrying out the service project.

Some content from the workbook is worth considering here as it will help you guide and mentor the young adults who take on this challenge. They need to be aware that the project can be for any religious institution, any school, or your community. It is important to note, however, that the Boy Scouts of America has recently redefined “your community” to include the “community of the world.” Normally, “your community” would not refer to individuals, although a council or district advancement committee may consider scenarios in which an individual in need can affect a community. It is then a matter of identifying a source representing the “community” who will provide approvals. For more information, see the *Guide to Advancement*, section 9.0.2.5.

An Internet search can reveal hundreds of service project ideas. A project doesn’t have to be original, but it could be. It might be a construction, conservation, or remodeling project, or it could be the presentation of an event with a worthwhile purpose. Guide the Venturers to seek input from you, other crew Advisors, teachers, a religious leader, or the leaders of various community organizations to uncover ideas. In any case, help the Venturer ensure the project presents a challenge that requires leadership, but also something that can be accomplished with unskilled or semiskilled helpers and within a reasonable period of time.



### Committee Insight: Supporting the Delivery of Service

Service is often about performance, and performance often needs special skills and tools that your committee members may have. Even the largest service projects are commonly executed close to home, so participation in service events is usually easier for committee members than participation in adventures. Service usually requires worker bees, and committee members can get their hands just as dirty as the youth can!

# Part III: **Program Resources** and **Administration**





**“ Adventure should be 80 percent ‘I think this is manageable,’ but it’s good to have that last 20 percent where you’re right outside your comfort zone. Still safe, but outside your comfort zone. ”**

*—Bear Grylls, British Explorer, youngest Chief Scout of the United Kingdom*

# Building a Crew Program

**O**f the many responsibilities of a Venturing crew Advisor, helping the members of the crew design and implement their own program of fun and adventure is perhaps the most important. Supporting them in the development and implementation of their program will call into play many personal skills: coach, mentor, and guide, as well as trusted friend and Advisor.

The program the crew develops also serves a significant role in applying the methods of Venturing.

| Method                         | How It Plays Out   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Adult Association              | You serve as a guide, coach, and mentor throughout the process. The success of the endeavor comes largely through your support of the crew's leadership in designing and leading the adventure.  |
| Group Activities and Adventure | Group activities and adventure are what attract young adults to Venturing and keep them involved. A well-designed and well-implemented program is essential for this method to work well.  |
| Leadership                     | Crew members will organize and implement the crew program, providing opportunities to test and grow their skills as leaders.   |
| Service                        | As an ongoing part of the crew program, service is both an activity and an ethic to be developed to support others.  |
| Ideals                         | The ideals provide an ethical framework for making choices during the activities and adventures.   |
| Group Identity                 | Successful activities—and, often, activities that allow the crew to overcome challenges as they become successful—serve to bring the group together and provide a foundation for its identity as a team.   |
| Venturing Recognition          | Advancement and recognition provide benchmarks to measure progress through the adventures and activities. The adventures are the point because of what they teach the members of the crew—but recognition provides encouragement to continue and marks progress. |

## Qualities of a Good Program

Every crew wants a successful and satisfying crew program. How can you achieve that kind of program for your crew? Every program will be different because every crew is unique, but certain things contribute to that uniqueness.

A good crew program:

- Demonstrates a good match between the Program Capability Inventory forms and the Venturing Activity Interest Surveys.
- Addresses the needs and interests of the crew members.
- Reflects a balanced program.
- Involves as many crew members as possible through the course of the year in (1) suggesting ideas for activities, (2) planning the activities, and (3) participating in the activities.
- Is a dynamic and action-oriented program, changing and adjusting through the year to the growth and development of crew members.
- Is based on careful, consistent planning by the Venturers.
- Emphasizes new skills, new ideas, new experiences, and new challenges.

Visit [www.scouting.org/Youth/ContinueAdventure/Venturing](http://www.scouting.org/Youth/ContinueAdventure/Venturing).

Planning a year's program is the focus of the next section. Some people think that planning is the dull part of an activity; it isn't. Brainstorming ideas is fun—if you really brainstorm. Seeing your new program take shape is satisfying. And learning how to plan might be the thing you look back on in the years ahead as one of the most important things.

## Program Planning

Planning a program is often likened to living the experience in advance. The better and more detailed the planning, the better the implementation of the crew's program. As an Advisor for the crew, you don't lead the events. Instead, your role is to support the crew as they design, plan, and implement the annual crew program.



*Program planning sequence*

The planning process has three phases: annual program planning, a program planning conference, and the implementation of the program.

The *Handbook for Venturers* is the key document to support the planning process. Be sure that you review those materials before working with the crew leadership and crew members to begin the planning process.



## Annual Program Planning

Annual program planning also helps the crew officers map out weekly and monthly programs. Having a specified outcome in mind supports the weekly and monthly activities that lead to that adventure.

Having a yearly plan is vital—and it can be a lot of fun to put together. The yearly or annual plan is important for a variety of reasons:

- It enables the crew leadership to achieve the crew’s vision. If there is a major adventure planned, they can build goals for training and preparation into the annual plan.
- An annual plan allows Venturers and Advisors to mark their individual calendars. You may find participation in the crew’s activities increases when people know what to expect.
- An annual plan enables the crew’s president to start the process of finding Venturers to serve as activity chairs who will be responsible for making more detailed plans for and leading each trip or activity the crew plans to take during the year.
- The plan ultimately determines what the crew will be doing throughout the year.
- By planning ahead, you can make sure the crew will have activities that match the crew members’ interests.
- A clear planning process has clear lines of responsibility and areas for the Advisor to support the crew’s president and other officers in the planning and implementation process.

In many crews, the annual program planning process begins with the selection of a new slate of crew officers. This allows a crew to begin by planning a schedule for meetings and other activities that will start in the fall. But of course, each crew can be different. The key is to help your crew officers as they look ahead for the year and develop a plan.

The first step in guiding the youth officers in building their crew’s annual program is to begin the process by “planning to plan.” You need to start by helping the president and the vice president of program identify the Venturers who will help develop the plan, gathering resources, considering alternatives, and laying the groundwork for the detailed program planning to follow. Carrying out the organizing steps will allow you to support the crew with the steps in the planning process.

When it comes to developing an annual program plan, the initial preparation process involves three steps.

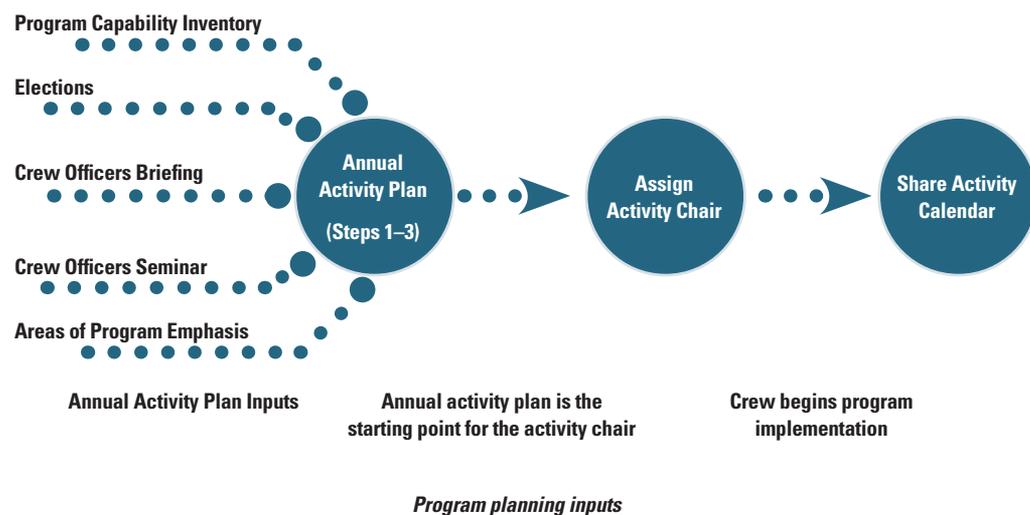
**Step 1.** The crew Advisor holds a crew officers briefing immediately after the crew’s annual election and starts the program planning process. The Advisor reviews the process, goals, and what each officer needs to do to prepare for the next step. Crews with more experience may find that experienced youth officers, with guidance from the crew’s Advisor, are ready to lead this briefing.

**Step 2.** Work with the new president to gather the following information:

- Key school dates such as holidays and exams
- Community event dates, including proms, homecomings, and graduations
- The chartered organization’s key dates
- Personal dates that may affect your crew’s activities, such as the Advisor’s anniversary cruise
- Key district and council dates
- Data from completed Program Capability Inventory sheets from parents and others who might offer resources
- Data from Venturing Activity Interest Surveys from each member
- Last year’s annual plan, if you have one
- Crew priorities and goals
- Venturers’ recognition records
- Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit award requirements

**Step 3.** After everyone has completed the Venturing Activity Interest Survey, hold the annual crew officers seminar, where officers plan the coming year’s program.

- Align program plan with Venturing areas of emphasis.
- So you have plenty of uninterrupted time for the process, it is recommended that this be conducted in a retreat setting over a weekend. This could be the most important meeting of the year—help your officers do it right!



## The Venturing Areas of Program Emphasis as a Planning Tool

The Venturing areas of program emphasis should serve as a helpful point of reference for your crew’s planning. They should be used to identify things that crews might wish to take part in—service projects, adventures, building leadership, and setting goals—to help members of the crew set and achieve goals that will support their personal growth. They should serve as tools for year-round program planning for the members of the crew.

Use the requirements for each award level as tools to help your crew leadership set some program goals for each year. Having an annual program in place helps you guide the members of the crew in setting aside the time to be active participants preparing for an annual adventure. It also helps you support the content of the meetings and weekend adventures that lead to success in the crew’s annual adventure.

The Venturing recognition system provides benchmarks of progress for the opportunities that your balanced program offers. An active program, grounded in all four areas of program emphasis, makes it easy to track your progress via the recognitions that culminate in the Summit Award.

### Adventure

Participation in adventures is at the heart of the Venturing experience. As the crew plans its annual program, you will certainly pay attention to what the crew’s interests are. Use these interests to guide the crew officers as they set a program goal for a significant annual adventure. Many of the activities the crew will organize will serve to implement the annual superactivity. If the crew is planning a 10-day canoe trip in the Canadian wilderness, it will be important to prepare for that adventure by building up endurance as a canoeist, mastering low-impact and lightweight camping skills, and possibly even raising some funds as a crew to help support that adventure.

| Tier I  | Tier II   | Tier III  |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowling night</li> <li>• Watch-and-learn STEM night</li> <li>• Campfire/hayride</li> <li>• Sledding</li> <li>• Visit a natural history museum</li> <li>• Climbing wall</li> <li>• Camporee staff</li> <li>• Swimming outing</li> <li>• Attend a play or performance</li> <li>• One-day bike ride</li> <li>• First-aid training</li> <li>• Crew skill or leadership training</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running a Special Olympics event</li> <li>• Organizing and staffing a Scout camporee or day camp</li> <li>• Weekend bike ride</li> <li>• Weekend trip to museum or performance, with required travel</li> <li>• Weekend canoe trip</li> <li>• Weekend climbing adventure on real rock faces</li> <li>• Staging a music and dance event for a retirement home</li> <li>• Crew skill or leadership training</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50-mile backpacking trip</li> <li>• Directing a science-themed Cub Scout day camp</li> <li>• Trip to a weeklong arts festival</li> <li>• Weeklong home-building service project</li> <li>• Organizing a weeklong camp for disabled youth</li> <li>• Weeklong urban museum tour</li> <li>• 1,000-kilometer bicycle tour</li> <li>• 10-day canoe expedition</li> </ul> |

## Leadership

Leadership in Venturing takes place in a variety of settings. There are members of the crew who have been selected as leaders. There are members of the crew who will be serving as leaders for various adventures. These are two important ways to learn and apply skills of leadership. There are also training courses available to help youth officers learn the skills in a structured setting. Planning dates for training should be a priority for the crew, and giving crew members and crew officers the opportunity to take part in BSA and other adventure-based leadership training should also find its way into the crew's annual program.

Take into consideration training needs for effective crew leadership and recognition.

- **Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews** should be offered annually or semiannually to help orient new crew members.
- **Crew Officers Orientation** is available online; new crew members should be made aware of this by the crew's leadership.
- **Goal-Setting** and **Time Management** training should each be offered at least annually by the crew or through local council resources.
- **Project Management** training also should be offered at least annually by the crew or within the local council to assist crew members in organizing crew activities.
- **Mentoring** training also should be made available as a crew-level course or through the local district or council.
- **First-aid training** is one of the essential adventure skills. Building a basic first-aid training course into the crew's annual program is important to provide new crew members with needed skills.

## Personal Growth

Crew member goals in personal growth will influence both the crew's annual program and what crew members gain as they participate in crew activities. Look at the opportunities present during the crew's annual program planning meeting to help plant some seeds for the ways in which youth will reflect on their skills, abilities, and interests and take charge of their own destiny as they set personal challenges to meet and learn from. As noted in the *Becoming an Effective Advisor* chapter, using questions and teachable moments will support the personal growth process better than offering advice or war stories of how it was when you were a young adult.



Take into consideration the following personal growth opportunities when planning the annual program:

- **Ethical controversy activities:** These can be used as crew activities as well as opportunities for Venturers to lead these sessions.

Some program resources such as the TRUST Award, the Ranger Award, and the Quest Award are useful for helping Venturers build skills in pursuit of their adventures. The Ranger Award, in particular, is well-suited to help a crew prepare for outdoor adventures by setting program goals that will help them gain a comprehensive set of outdoor skills.

## Service

Service is a commitment to others and so forms an important part of Venturing. As the youth plan the annual program, there are opportunities to deliver service to others as a part of the crew program. Service, especially as youth take on the challenge of leading service projects as a Venturer, provides additional opportunities to build leadership skills.

As one of the areas of emphasis in Venturing, a strong program of service is essential.

Consider the following as part of the crew's annual programming needs:

- **Service hours:** 24 hours of service are required to earn the Discovery Award; 36 hours of service are required to earn the Pathfinder Award.
- **Summit Award service projects:** Anticipate crew members who are seeking this award and will be organizing a project to meet this requirement.
- **Crew sustainability projects:** Organize multiple opportunities to provide service that supports the operation and longevity of the crew.



## Crew Officers Seminar

The crew officers seminar is a training and planning seminar for newly elected officers. It is led by a crew officers seminar facilitator provided by your council or district (if available), with the assistance of the Advisor, associate Advisors, and crew president. (See the sample Crew Officers Seminar Agenda in the *Handbook for Venturers*.) This is an extremely important session because it provides in-depth training for officers and, in the seminar, you develop your year's program of activities.

The objectives of the crew officers seminar are

- To have the youth officers learn their position responsibilities
- To build a working leadership team
- To acquaint the officers with Venturing leadership skills
- To plan the crew's program of activities for the coming year

This is the first time that the youth officers will actually undertake their leadership responsibilities. This hands-on seminar will allow them to plan their program and clarify the expectations and goals for the crew. They will make important decisions and consider how to share their program and get the entire crew committed to it. That is why this seminar is so important; it is an experience that, in one day, parallels the kind of leadership they will need to exercise through the coming year. It is recommended that the crew officers seminar be held in a retreat setting such as going on a weekend campout or to a motel. Have some fun while planning, and don't rush the process. It is probably the most important step this group of youth officers can take. What they do during this event will affect the whole crew.

## Program Planning Conference

Try to involve as many crew members in annual planning as possible. Planning a yearly program might even need to take place over several crew meetings. Start with these ground rules for your crew's conference and work to ensure that the crew officers who will be leading this discussion are ready to go with their responsibilities:

- It is important to respect one another's views. Listen and don't interrupt.
- Keep focused on your task, which is to plan the annual program. Don't get sidetracked.
- Use the planning model to keep everyone on track and to be sure that you address the questions. This will help you to deal with unintended consequences.
- Write out your ideas so everyone can see them.
- Be in agreement.

**Step 1.** The president and/or Advisor (depending on the crew's experience level) leads a discussion on the crew's goals for the coming year. Write the goals on a flip chart or dry erase board and narrow them down to a final list of goals for the year.

**Step 2.** Brainstorm ideas of what the crew might do based on the Venturing Activity Interest Surveys. Write them on a flip chart. Remember, don't critique the ideas while brainstorming.

**Step 3.** Evaluate the ideas the crew has developed to see if they match the Program Capability Inventory. Do you have the resources needed for each idea? The crew votes on the chosen programs.

**Step 4.** Expand the basic program by adding support programs and activities leading toward the big activities or activity. Align program plans with recognition requirements to track progress and achievement by Venturers.

**Step 5.** Draft the plan and calendar, including big activities, meetings, support activities, and key dates that apply. Officers approve the final calendar. Identify the activity chair and assign activity managers.

**Step 6.** Distribute the annual plan and calendar to the Venturers, their families, and the chartered organization representative.

These tasks will require Advisors to follow up with youth officers to ensure that the tasks are being addressed. The checkup should not undermine trust, but should ensure that commitments to share information are met.

The creation of the annual activity plan is the starting point for the activity chair for each event. At this point, it is up to this Venturer to ensure that the process moves forward, which begins with sharing the event calendar with members of the crew and their families.

Ensure that good notes are taken during the event. The Advisor who supports the crew secretary may wish to take notes in parallel to ensure that accurate notes are captured.

After each activity, do a critique/debriefing on what went well, what didn't go well, and what the crew can do differently next time. After each step, put the notes in the crew history file. These updates will help during your next planning cycle.

The plan will be a living, breathing document. For it to have real value, work with the crew officers to follow it. Share it with everyone, and review it regularly to see if modifications have to be made.

## Annual Planning Resources

The Boy Scouts of America provides websites with resources to assist crews in their annual program planning. It can be helpful to review and apply these as you and your crew build the annual program.

- Annual Program Planning, <http://www.scouting.org/venturing/programplanning.aspx>
- Guide to the Crew Annual Program Planning Conference, <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/venturing/index.htm>
- Planning Your Crew's Annual Budget, <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/510-276.pdf>
- Program Capability Inventory, <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/510-012WB.pdf>
- Venturing Activity Interest Survey, <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/venturing/pdf/510-013WB.pdf>
- *Fieldbook*, No. 33104
- *Handbook for Venturers*, No. 33494
- *Venturing Awards and Requirements*, No. 34784

## Role of the Activity Chair

The activity chair for an activity is selected by the crew president and Advisor and is responsible for planning, promoting, and staging the activity. For relatively simple activities, the activity chair alone may be sufficient to carry out these three responsibilities. However, some activities in a crew are more complicated. For these, the activity chair recruits a committee and, depending upon the activity, receives help from the Advisor, crew committee, and consultants. For example, if the activity is a bowling night, the activity chair probably can organize, promote, and run it alone. However, if the activity is a waterskiing party, then the activity chair might need other Venturers and adults to help with things such as equipment and transportation. Work with the activity chair to use the PCI to find adults who could serve as consultants, obtain equipment, provide instruction, and supervise safety procedures.

When a committee works with the activity chair to plan an activity, the chair and the committee should go through the seven planning steps together. The steps are outlined in the next section of this chapter. It is the responsibility of the chair to be sure that the activity planner is filled out and filed with the crew records. A crew Advisor will work to support the activity chair.

## Crew Planning and Individual Planning

The Venturers in the crew will also need to make their own individual plans when it comes to participating in crew adventures. For example, Venturers may need to ask themselves: What skills, clothing, or personal equipment do I need to have to be able to participate? What money do I need to earn and save? How will I earn that money? How will I manage my time so I can participate in Venturing while still meeting school or work responsibilities and still taking advantage of other activities important to me? Crew members in high school and college will probably wonder when they will do their schoolwork if they go on their crew's weekend trip. Ensuring that the overall program plan takes these considerations into account will help create a program that is fully subscribed by most members of the crew.

In making plans for the crew, help them think about what those plans will mean for all the members of the crew. Although each Venturer will have different priorities and interests, the focus of the crew could keep members engaged with Venturing on a weekly basis.

## A Note on Consultants

Consultants can be a great asset to an activity. Because these adults have been recruited by your crew committee, crew officers and activity chairs need not hesitate to ask them for help. The activity chair should explain the activity to the consultant who is helping and find out how the consultant's expertise can be helpful for the activity. In addition, the activity chair should review with the consultant what is expected of him or her and what equipment or supplies are needed, if any. After this discussion, the activity chair should follow up with a letter, phone call, or email to the consultant summarizing their discussion, so that there is no misunderstanding. Encourage them also to thank the consultant after the activity is over. Remember, though, the adult is there to help, not to chair the committee.

## Program Implementation: Using the Program Planning Model

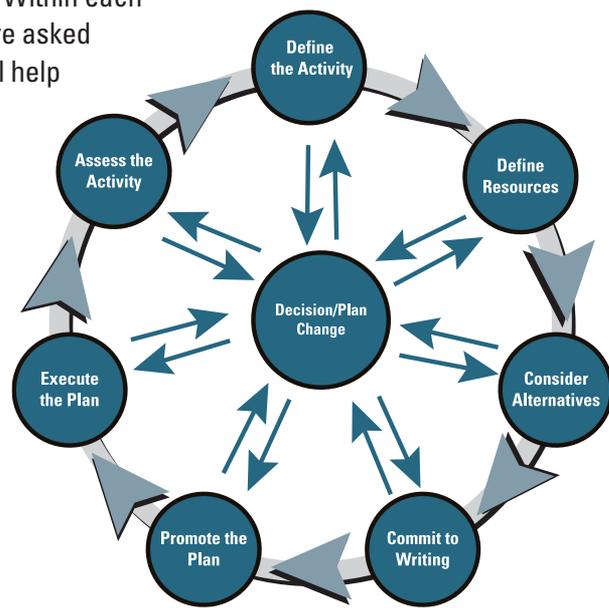
The annual activity plan helps the crew identify what the members wish to do each program year. The next step is to build a plan that will help organize the crew in bringing the adventure to life. The seven-step model below offers a series of steps that require event chairs and crew officers to make a set of decisions as to the best way to move forward. Within each step in the process, crew officers are asked to respond to some prompts that will help them make sound decisions as they organize the crew's adventure.

The decision points along the way are important for Advisors as they work with Venturers in organizing the crew's program. The seven decision points represent points along the way that give the crew officers an opportunity to gauge the progress of the plans. Suggested questions and points for discussion and follow-up are given at each point in the process.

### Define the Activity

The program planning meeting conference served to define the activity. This is the overall outcome for the crew's annual program. Intermediate activities along the way will serve to build the crew's skills to the point where they are ready to take on the ambitious adventure.

Start by having crew members think about what they would like to do. Generate ideas. Consider what your crew has done before, but also try to think about new activities that relate to your crew members' interests. Also allow time at the beginning of your planning meeting for crew members to offer their own ideas of activities to do. In developing ideas, it's best to encourage as many ideas as possible, so don't worry about judging anyone's idea at this stage.



*Seven-step planning process*

The following questions are meant to help the crew officers and event chairs consider options at each point in the process. The answers to the questions will ensure that they are prepared to bring the event to life. The questions are flexible enough to work for any adventure. Ideally, the crew leaders will be asking and answering the questions along the way to guide their planning and identify changes or alternatives that need to be considered.

**What has to be done?** What is the nature of the event? What will it take to make it happen? What resources need to be acquired to move the project into action? Questions of this sort need to be addressed at the beginning.

**When is it to be done?** Working with crew officers as needed to establish a timeline to complete the project is important. Backdating tasks that need to be completed leading up to an adventure or other project is especially critical for Tier II and Tier III adventures.

Decisions:

- **Who does it?** This is an important part of establishing accountability for the project. Do those responsible for implementing their part of the adventure have the needed skills? If not, how does the crew help them acquire those skills? What other support do they need to implement their part of the adventure?
- **Where, when, and how?** Answering these questions will establish location(s), set a timeline, and answer questions regarding implementation of the adventure.
- **Is everything clear?** Ensure that the message is clear. Creating an initial written draft of the project—including the vision for success and implementation details—will help the chair get ready for planning the adventure in detail and implementing it. Have the adventure mentor review the plan for completeness and accuracy.

## Define Resources

**Time available.** Is there enough time to prepare for the event? What about the timing of the event? Can the vast majority of your crew participate in preparation for the event and the event itself? The creation of a backdating calendar helps identify critical implementation points along the way.

**Skills in your crew and from consultants.** What skills are present in your crew? What skills are present among consultants who have already worked with your crew? Are there prospects for additional or new consultants to help the crew members attain the needed skill level before the crew leaves on the adventure?



**Tools.** What does the activity look like? Does the crew have needed tools and gear on hand? If the crew is going canoeing, for example, can an outfitter support the crew's needs or does the crew need to raise money to purchase and acquire gear? For a service project, can the crew borrow tools from friends and family members, or will the agency you are serving provide what the crew needs?

**Financial.** What does it take to carry out this adventure? Is it realistic for each member to pay for the adventure individually, or should the crew carry out some fundraising events? Will the fundraiser bring in the needed profits to implement the activity being planning?

**Other issues.** School calendars? Summer jobs? Interest level in the crew? Is sufficient adult leadership in place? What other issues related to resources need to be considered? As your crew gets more proficient at planning adventures, you will likely add to this list of other concerns that reflect how your crew operates.

### Consider Alternatives

Once the crew has generated a lot of ideas, they need to discuss them. Crew members should discuss what they see as the advantages and disadvantages of the different ideas. If some of the ideas have been done before, how well did crew members like those activities? How does each possible activity relate to your crew's interests and goals? What resources would your crew need to pursue the proposed activities? Are all of them allowed under the *Guide to Safe Scouting* for Venturing crews to do? (Some ideas that crew members might think of are not authorized, such as bungee cord jumping, parasailing, and laser tag and paintball shooting games where simulated firearms are pointed at individuals.) Evaluate the ideas the crew has developed to see if they match the Program Capability Inventory. Does the crew have the resources needed for each idea? Vote on the chosen programs. Are there alternatives that would work as well—or better?

**Based on these deliberations, make a plan to proceed.** The crew needs to make some decisions about what activities to include in its yearly program. In discussing and evaluating their ideas, some activities might have received a lot of enthusiasm, while others none at all. The crew members might wish to vote on activities and select those that interest the most members of the crew.

Expand the basic program by adding support programs and activities leading toward the big activities or activity.

**Resource issues.** What resource issues identified above suggest that an alternative plan is needed?

What if an emergency takes place leading up to the event—or during the event? How prepared is the crew to handle changes in circumstances? Encourage crew members to be methodical when looking at their plan and the alternatives that may be “forced” on the crew.

**How does the alternate plan stack up?** Does the alternative make more sense, based on resources? Can you accomplish the same goals on an adventure close to home rather than traveling? Are there service opportunities in your home community, for example, that you can accomplish without investing funds in travel and lodging?

**Make a decision to proceed.** Gain the participation and commitment of members of the crew, the Advisors, as well as parents or guardians, and commit to making the adventure take place.

## Commit the Plan to Writing

Draft the plan and calendar, including big activities, meetings, support activities, and key dates that apply. Once the crew has decided on the activities that will be part of its program, the next step is to identify dates for the activities and communicate what was decided. It helps if a yearly calendar of meetings and activities is circulated to the rest of the crew, such as by email, or posted on the crew's website. Officers approve the final calendar. Assign activity managers. Distribute the annual plan and calendar to the Venturers, their families, and the chartered organization representative.



Be sure that the crew officers are prepared to write down their plan, review it, and share it. The plan can be written on paper or shared as an email message, but writing it down and reviewing it with others is an important part of ensuring that the plan is good to go. It is important to publish the plan and the timeline and make certain that everyone is ready to go. Likewise, ensure that the officers follow up with key dates and times in the plan to make sure there is guidance and accountability to implement the adventure. Make sure there are regularly scheduled status checks to ensure that the plan is executed properly.

Of course, not all activities will need an extensive set of written documents in order to carry it out. A Tier I adventure, for example, might need only a statement on a permission slip detailing basic information—such as a straightforward who-how-what-when-where message—is all that is needed to let everyone know about the trip. Sometimes the plan for a crew meeting can simply be “written” in the form of an email to all of the crew's members. One of the challenges Advisors and youth have is in their preferred means of communication. Working to build a culture of consistent communication through multiple media is essential, as is developing the understanding that messages need to be read and responded to in a timely manner.

## Promote the Plan

Work with the youth officers and event chairs to create a plan and promote the event. Work with officers to be sure that the information shared in support of the activity is accurate and complete. Be sure that there is a point of contact to allow questions to be answered. Ensure that a reasonable timeline for promotion has been established. Adventures that may take a week of a Venturer's time need at least four months of lead time, and if significant funds need to be raised, nearly a calendar year may be appropriate. Consider the tools to use when communicating the adventure: social media, paper handouts? Keep in mind how your audience prefers to communicate. Follow up with multiple messages to keep the excitement building. And remember: Paper (and electronic messages) informs participants, but the crew's efforts to enthusiastically share the same information in person will inspire people to participate.

Remember that while making a plan is important, it is essential to communicate that plan with others. Once the crew has developed the annual plan and calendar of events, share it with all the members of the crew and with their families, too.

## Execute the Plan

Having a calendar of events is an important accomplishment that will put the crew on the road to adventure. But it is only the first step. Now that the plan has been devised, crew officers and event chairs will need to start making more detailed plans for each meeting, adventure, project, and event. To put your annual program plan into action, your crew will need to identify activity chairs for each individual activity. Identifying Advisors for each of the youth officers and the event chairs can provide the needed support to implement the plan. More specific planning and preparation will ensure that the crew's overall annual plan gets put into action.

And when it is time: Implement the plan. Have fun. Take lots of pictures. Tell lots of stories. Celebrate everyone's success.

## Assess the Activity

Plan ahead of time to assess the plan for the adventure. Has the activity chair met planning and implementation deadlines? Have regular assessment checkpoints along the way to ensure that the adventure plans are making progress. And at the end, debrief the entire experience with the members of the crew. What went well? What should be changed? What has been learned?

Take good notes throughout the process. After each activity, encourage the activity chair to carry out a critique/debriefing on what went well, what didn't go well, and what you can do differently next time. After each step, be sure that the notes are recorded in the crew's history file. These updates will help during the next planning cycle.

For the plan to have real value, the crew officers and event chairs must follow it, share it with everyone, and review it regularly to see if modifications need to be made.

**Planning phase.** As the crew officers and event chairs are still planning, ensure that they take a break from time to time to evaluate progress. If they have a stated vision for their adventure, use that picture of success to judge along the way whether they continue to be pointed toward implementing that vision.

**During adventure and after adventure.** Regular status checks during the adventure and a reflection at the end of the adventure will help the crew officers keep the adventure on track and learn from the adventure. Each successive crew adventure should run more smoothly as the crew leaders apply what was learned when planning and implementing this activity.

## Crew Officer Meetings: Planning Crew Meetings

Up to now, the focus has been on the importance of planning crew adventures, activities, and service projects. Planning has also been influenced by the areas of program emphasis in the program matrix to ensure that a comprehensive program is available to the members of the crew. To deliver an ambitious program, a lot of planning takes place at crew meetings. But making crew meetings productive also takes planning itself. This is the purpose of the crew officers' meeting.

As one of the Advisors of the crew, your responsibility may be to work in support of the Venturers planning and leading a crew meeting. Help them develop the disposition that it is valuable to think through your crew meeting ahead of time. Each meeting needs a purpose. That purpose will, of course, vary from crew to crew, and from meeting to

meeting. Some crews meet once a week, while others meet once a month. But no matter how often the crew meets, each meeting's purpose will depend on your crew's goals and its upcoming activities. Meetings will involve discussion and decision-making, but they also can involve active skills training, service activities, and games.

The officer responsible for a meeting should formulate a plan or agenda that takes into account the crew's goals, input from other officers, and any advice from the Advisor. Once an agenda is developed, it helps to make it available at the meeting for everyone to see.

| Regular Crew Meeting Agenda  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Time   | Activity  | Leader  |
| 3 min  | Opening ceremony, call to order, and introduction of guests | Crew president                                  |
| 10 min   | Old business  |   |
|  | Minutes from previous meeting                               | Vice president for communications, or secretary |
|  | Treasurer report  | Treasurer                                       |
| 10 min   | Crew officer reports  |   |
|  | New Business  |   |
|  | Discussion: Issues that need resolution                     | Crew president                                  |
|  | Registration of new members                                 | Vice president for administration               |
| 45 min   | Promotion of upcoming events                                | Vice president for program                      |
|  | Crew Advisor comments                                       | Crew Advisor                                    |
|  | Crew activity program                                       | Activity chair                                  |
|  | Review of materials needed                                  |   |
|  | Introduction of presenters                                  |   |
| 2 min  | Carry out plan or conduct activity                          |   |
| 5 min  | Date, place, and time of next meeting                       | Crew president                                  |
|  | Closing   | Assigned crew member                            |
|  | Advisor Minute or Officer's Minute                          | Advisor or officer                              |
|  | Refreshment and fellowship                                  |   |
| After the meeting: the Advisor and crew president confirm plan for next officers' meeting. Crew president follows up with youth activity chair to double-check all arrangements. |   |   |

The key is to develop and use a meeting plan or agenda that helps the crew officers and the crew make meetings both productive and fun. Encourage focusing as much of the meeting as possible on hands-on learning and doing, minimizing the amount of talking and filing reports. Make time spent at the crew meetings also part of the adventure!

### ***Tips for Crew Meetings***

- Be sure that fun is part of every meeting.
- Keep crew meetings active.
- Be sure that there are activities of interest for everyone on the crew.
- When planning your meeting, think of it as five to seven short activities instead of one long meeting.
- Be sure that meetings help you to meet your crew's annual program goals.
- Use the meetings to prepare for significant adventures.
- Keep the business parts of the meeting brief.
- Don't hold a meeting just for the sake of holding a meeting.
- Keep track of recognition requirements along the way.
- Be sensitive to crew members' time constraints from school, jobs, and extracurricular activities.
- Team-building games and initiative games provide rich opportunities for crew members to learn to work together better—and have fun at the same time.
- Follow up with reminders and action items through email, phone, text, or social media.
- Your crew leadership, supported by Advisors, should work together to ensure that every meeting is well planned and ready to go.

### ***An Advisor Comments on the Power of Adventure***

In August of 2009, I had the privilege of attending the Powder Horn resource management course. During the two-weekend course, I went horseback riding, rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, scuba diving, and more. During the scuba portion of the course, my mask leaked and I thought, I will never do this again! That fall, the crew and ship youth completed the Venturing Activity Interest Survey. The majority of the youth expressed an interest in scuba. WHAT????!!

In February of 2010, 16 youth and adults completed the first part of the Open Water Diver certification. WOW! I was included in that group. The summer of 2010, we completed our Open Water Diver certification at Haigh Quarry in Kankakee, Illinois. During spring break of 2011, 17 of our youth and adults traveled to the Florida Sea Base on Islamorada in the Florida Keys to dive. I would like to thank the youth who pushed me to try something "out of the box"! Today, I logged my 34th dive and completed the Underwater Naturalist certification!

—Julie D., Crew 7 Advisor, Champaign, Illinois

## Developing a Dynamic Program

The program the Venturers create during the crew officers seminar is simply their initial program for the year. They should constantly fine-tune the program of activities throughout the year. That is what makes a program dynamic. The following things should encourage them to stop and reassess the program:

- **Additional responses to the PCI.** The PCI is a form that should be used continually. Give a PCI form to any adult who potentially could help the crew. The added information you receive from these responses could affect activities you would like to do.
- **Venturing Activity Interest Surveys.** Give Venturing Activity Interest Surveys to members on a regular basis. Doing so allows officers to check their initial program against new or changed interests, with other suggestions for activities, or with the interests of new members. If crew members know the officers are on the lookout for new activities, they are more likely to suggest ideas that come to their minds during the year.
- **Growth and development.** You and the crew members will change and grow throughout the year. What seemed like an excellent idea at the beginning of the year might not seem as meaningful six months later. Crew members might have additional ideas that better address where the crew is at these later points in time. Realize the importance of this new insight and awareness, and adjust the program accordingly.

### *Adventures and Activities as Leadership Laboratories*

Becoming a leader is not only a goal for youth officers but also one of the methods of Venturing. The goal of a Venturing program is to give every member leadership opportunities. Being an activity chair represents that kind of opportunity. Just as you work as an Advisor to hand off the leadership of your crew to the young adult members, you also look for opportunities to give leadership responsibilities to the members.

Crews that are focused on results tend to have a preponderance of adult leadership. Crews that are focused on the process of leadership development are more fully led by youth.

An activity is a hands-on experience in which all the members do something. A ski trip, volleyball game, sports medicine workshop, dance, service project, swim party, fitness test, or ethics debate are examples of activities. One-day or one-evening activities (Tier I adventures) are great starting places for Venturers to build success and experience before they take on the challenge of leading a Tier II or Tier III adventure.



### Advisor Insight: Youth-Led Program

Remember that the youth officers and members need to be the driving force behind developing your crew's program. While a more direct role for adult leadership may be necessary as a crew is forming (or re-forming), remember to back off and let the youth leaders drive the program planning process.

## 100 Ideas for Venturing Crews

Not sure where to start? How about sharing this list with your crew officers and members and see if anything jumps out!

| Outdoor Adventures                                     | Sports  |
|--|---|
| 1. Bike hike on country roads                          | 1. Field hockey   |
| 2. Swimming at a lake or beach                         | 2. Softball   |
| 3. Sailboat sailing                                    | 3. Ice hockey on a frozen lake                                    |
| 4. Catamaran sailing                                   | 4. Inline skating race  |
| 5. Canoeing expedition                                 | 5. Triathlon (swimming, biking, and running)—make your own course |
| 6. Whitewater rafting                                  | 6. Biathlon—skiing or running with shooting sports stations       |
| 7. Whitewater canoeing                                 | 7. Golf outing  |
| 8. Caving  | 8. Ice golf (with a tennis ball on a safely frozen lake)          |
| 9. Rock climbing                                       | 9. Badminton  |
| 10. Ice climbing                                       | 10. Water polo  |
| 11. House boat trip                                    | 11. Rowing  |
| 12. Snow camp  | 12. Disc golf   |
| 13. Ice fishing  | 13. Pistol/rifle/shotgun shooting                                 |
| 14. Scuba diving                                       | 14. Racquetball   |
| 15. Backpacking  | 15. Table tennis  |
| 16. Fishing trip                                       | 16. Lacrosse  |
| 17. Ropes/COPE course                                  | 17. Fencing   |
| 18. Zip-lining   | 18. Bowling   |
| 19. Snowmobile trip                                    | 19. Swimming races  |
| 20. Ice skating  | 20. Judo  |
| 21. Cross country skiing                               | 21. Tai chi   |
| 22. Downhill skiing                                    | 22. Aikido  |
| 23. Waterskiing  | 23. Javelin   |
| 24. Horseback riding                                   | 24. Shot put  |
| 25. Fly-fishing  | 25. Discus throw  |
| 26. Mountain biking                                    | 26. Curling   |
| 27. Camping under the stars                            | 27. Figure skating  |
| 28. Sleep in wilderness survival shelters              | 28. Bobsled   |
| 29. Go someplace where you can see the Northern Lights | 29. Tennis  |
| 30. Go someplace where you can see the Southern Cross  | 30. Darts   |

| Service  | Things to Learn  |
|--|--|
| 1. Lend a hand on a farm for a weekend—see where our food comes from                             | 1. EMT or first responder first aid                      |
| 2. Meals on Wheels   | 2. Lifeguarding  |
| 3. Spring/fall cleanup for elderly neighbors   | 3. Hunter education                                      |
| 4. Safe driving campaign   | 4. Historical re-enactment                               |
| 5. Food drive  | 5. Edible plants   |
| 6. Support a blood drive   | 6. Become U.S. Sailing instructors                       |
| 7. Place wreaths on tombs in a cemetery on holidays  | 7. Search and rescue                                     |
| 8. Recognize local veterans  | 8. Treating water in the wilderness                      |
| 9. Buddy up with elementary school students to read  | 9. Wilderness first aid                                  |
| 10. Eating disorder awareness information  | 10. Bird calls   |
| 11. Book drive   | 11. Identify local plants by sight                       |
| 12. Perform the national anthem or lead the Pledge of Allegiance for a group other than the crew | 12. Identify local animals by track or sight             |
| 13. Cultural awareness clinic  | 13. Ballroom dancing                                     |
| 14. disAbilities awareness clinic  | 14. Folk dancing   |
| 15. Visit elderly and special needs adults   | 15. American Indian dancing                              |
| 16. Sports clinic for elementary or middle school youth  | 16. Faith walk (visit various diverse faith communities) |
| 17. Soap box derby for youth with special needs  | 17. Cook without utensils over an open fire              |
| 18. River cleanup  | 18. Learn some constellations                            |
| 19. Prairie restoration  | 19. Geocaching   |
| 20. Hiking trail maintenance   | 20. See planets through a telescope                      |



### Committee Insight: Youth-Led Program

Committee members who have served in Girl Scout troops, Cub Scout packs, and Boy Scout troops may be used to a more active adult role in determining the unit's program. It is important that the crew program in Venturing be youth-led (with adult guidance). If the crew committee feels that there are possible safety or program issues with events, these should be shared with the Advisor and president so that they can take further action. A committee veto is probably not the best method of handling situations like this; it could lead to resentment by the crew members. Rather, letting the Advisor and president know concerns and asking them guiding questions to take back to the crew membership will hopefully allow them to come to the conclusion about canceling or modifying what might be an inappropriate program.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Youth-Led Program

The crew program should be driven by the youth leadership and guided by the Advisors. The chartered organization may wish to make an annual request for service projects related to the organization. Remember that a request with reasons is probably more attractive to Venturers than a mandate in exchange for being the chartered organization.

“ All of us, at certain moments of our lives,  
need to take advice and to receive help  
from other people. ”

—Alexis Carrel (1873–1944),  
*pioneering French surgeon and biologist*

# How To . . .

**T**his chapter deals with situations that you might face in a Venturing crew in which some how-to suggestions could be helpful. These include how to organize a crew, how to earn money, how to brainstorm, how to conduct a Tier III adventure, and how to recruit new members.

You might want to add other how-to areas that you discover are useful for your crew. That way, your crew will have a written record from year to year of these other how-to areas from which future officers might benefit. It is recommended that the secretary put any additional how-to examples in a similar format.

## **How to Organize a Crew**

Even though the majority of this guidebook deals with the future and how you guide the youth leaders in your crew, it is important to know how a crew should be started. Below are the steps that your chartered organization should have taken. By the way, the chartered organization is the organization that actually owns your crew. It could be a religious organization, a club, a business, or another organization.

1. Your chartered organization made a commitment to the Boy Scouts of America to charter a Venturing crew.
2. An organizing committee recruited and approved the Advisors and committee for the crew.
3. The new crew committee went through a new-crew orientation and training.
4. A Program Capability Inventory (PCI) was completed with adults from the chartered organization and other interested adults to find out what they could contribute to the crew's program. For example, the PCI indicates that one of the adults in the chartered organization is an experienced private pilot and owns his own plane. The committee might ask him if he could provide orientation flights for the new Venturers at the crew's third meeting. The results of the PCI became the basis for planning the first few months of the crew's program (until Venturers could plan their own program).
5. An invitation was sent to young people to attend an open house (the first crew meeting, where potential new Venturers are invited to join the crew).
6. The chartered organization was presented a charter for your Venturing crew by the Boy Scouts of America.

7. Crew officers were elected and trained. Then they began planning and presenting your crew's program.

These steps are designed to give your crew a solid foundation, both from an organizational standpoint and from a view to establishing a Venturing spirit.

## How to Earn Money

Many crews decide to purchase equipment, take a trip, or plan a special project that requires additional funds. Venturers who pay their own way will appreciate the equipment or trip more than those who don't. The decision to plan a money-earning project should be made by the entire crew. Once a money-earning project has been approved, all the members should participate in the project.

Crews should not seek contributions because this violates the policy of paying your own way and is against BSA policy.

A frequently asked questions document concerning fiscal policies and procedures for BSA units is available online at [http://www.scouting.org/filestore/financeimpact/pdf/Fiscal\\_Policies\\_and\\_Procedures\\_for\\_BSA\\_Units.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/financeimpact/pdf/Fiscal_Policies_and_Procedures_for_BSA_Units.pdf).

## Planning a Money-Earning Project

In planning a money-earning project, your crew should follow these guidelines:

- **Determine whether you really need the money.** First, review your current budget to be sure that members' dues will not be sufficient for your needs. If they aren't, determine how much money you need to raise for which specific needs. Then develop a specific budget based on your needs and goals.
- **Be realistic.** Consider carefully what your members will actually do. Venturers have not been very successful with selling products door-to-door. Crews are more successful with one-time projects, such as a dinner or car wash.
- **Decide how funds will be accounted for.** Decide in advance whether all funds raised will go into the crew general funds, into individual Venturer accounts (within the crew account) based upon hours worked and profits made, or a percentage into the crew general funds and the balance into individual Venturer accounts. Venturer accounts belong to the crew and can be used by a Venturer only to defray his or her share of costs of crew activities.
- **Look for a need.** Find out whether there is a service or project your community or chartered organization might need. Ask questions—you might be surprised. Some organizations in your community may be delighted to pay your crew to do a special project or service as long as the project doesn't put someone out of work.
- **Get families involved.** Parents and other adult family members are excellent resources for ideas. They might also be willing to provide leadership or assistance.
- **Review your money-earning project** with BSA policy and your chartered organization to be sure the project is appropriate. The BSA money-earning policy is:
  - The plans and the dates for your project will not conflict with any programs of your chartered organization, BSA local council, or United Way.
  - Your plan should be in harmony with local ordinances, free from any stigma of gambling, and consistent with the ideals and purposes of the BSA.
  - If a commercial product is to be sold, it should be sold on its own merits and not merely on the basis of "helping Venturing."

- Those selling need to act as individuals without attempting to capitalize on the goodwill of Venturing to promote sales.
- The buyers, even if they are family and friends, should be able to receive their money's worth from the product, function, or service.
- The project should be carried out in a manner that does not infringe on the rights of other Scouting units in the same area or on the right to a livelihood of local business people and their employees.
- If any contracts need to be signed, they should be signed by an individual without binding or committing the Boy Scouts of America in any way.
- **Beware of promotional schemes** or questionable product sales gimmicks.
- **Carefully check out the product** and the reputation of its supplier before you become involved.
- **Develop a plan for your money-earning project.** Once you decide on a project, write a specific plan detailing who does what and how the money is handled. Be sure that crew members, parents, your chartered organization, and your BSA local council understand and approve your project. Submit a Unit Money-Earning Application, No. 34427, to your BSA local council. This is for your protection.
- **Obtain all necessary approvals before beginning your project.** Be sure to obtain any necessary licenses and other permissions in advance and be sure to comply with health regulations.
- **Complete a project appropriately.** After the project is completed, thank those involved, return any unsold products or borrowed equipment, and provide for proper accounting of funds.

### Ideas for Money-Earning Projects

The following ideas are for crew projects, not individual employment efforts. All funds for goods and services should be paid to the crew to avoid conflict with tax and employment laws. The crew is a nonprofit organization; individual members are not. Be sure the financial arrangements of your project do not violate child labor laws, income- or sales-tax regulations, or employment regulations. This is another reason to obtain approval of your Unit Money-Earning Application from the BSA local council.

- Wash cars (perhaps at an employee parking lot), wash private airplanes (at a small airport), or wash boats (at a marina). Employees could pay as they come to work so that the crew would have all day to wash and/or wax the vehicles.
- Control traffic; park cars; operate a checkroom, nursery, or concession stand; sell programs, take tickets, serve as ushers, and perform other services at community or sports events, including cleanup when activities are over.
- Stage a pancake breakfast, spaghetti dinner, or similar event. Aim for the unusual such as wild game dinners, chili cook-offs, barbecues, and so on.
- Offer a birthday party service. Plan games, dress as clowns, provide refreshments, supervise activities, and so on.
- Organize a color guard, drill team, band, dance group, or other entertainment for conventions or community affairs. Be sure the chamber of commerce and convention bureau know you are available.
- Produce a play, carnival, fashion show, or booth show, selling tickets or space to other organizations.

- Conduct or be part of a garage sale, rummage sale, auction, flea market, swap meet, or other similar activity. Operate garage sales for neighborhoods or community organizations on a commission basis.
- Operate a Christmas tree lot, including making and selling wreaths, door decorations, or other holiday items. Wrapping gifts at a booth, a retail store, or a mall is another service that a crew can provide to raise funds.
- Check with owners of vacant property for cleanup or beautification projects.
- Perform services for businesses or organizations, such as stuffing envelopes, assembling kits, and so on.
- Collect aluminum, paper, glass, or other recyclable materials. Be sure you have a source that will buy your collections, and find out how the recyclables must be prepared.
- Sell Scouting show tickets. Participate and show others what your crew does.
- Mow, rake, weed, trim, and clean up yards of homeowners or businesses.
- Clean stadiums, fairgrounds, or other facilities after public events.
- Distribute newsletters or promotional fliers (don't necessarily endorse their product or cause).
- Operate a weekend kennel, walk dogs, or provide other pet-related services.
- Shovel snow and treat icy walkways or parking lots.
- Sell magazine subscriptions.
- Design and sell T-shirts and similar promotional items.
- Perform household repairs, cleaning, painting, and similar services.
- Take photos at dances or conventions.
- Organize ski swaps, part sales, or similar functions for a commission or booth rental.
- Clean irrigation ditches, gates, or drains.
- Sign up with temporary service bureaus.
- Wash and maintain boats in marinas while owners are away.
- In resort areas, check and provide outside maintenance of vacation homes.
- Construct and maintain fences for farmers or ranchers.
- Operate a coffee/food service at construction sites, freeway rest areas, or harvest locations.
- Organize a high school fashion show for a department store.
- Help people planning to move with packing, loading, garage sales, and cleanup.
- Maintain yards of vacant homes that are for sale. (Check with real estate agencies.)



- Clean private beaches for resorts or homeowners.
- Sell programs or souvenirs at parades or celebrations.
- Offer to decorate floats for parades.
- Offer to run day care centers, staff day camps, help at summer camps, or help with similar events for churches and community organizations.
- Put on plays or run activities for youth groups.

| Sample Budget          |                 |                   |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Expenses               | Amount per Crew | Amount per Person |
| Food                   |                 |                   |
| Housing                |                 |                   |
| Travel                 |                 |                   |
| Equipment              |                 |                   |
| Tickets or fees        |                 |                   |
| Insurance              |                 |                   |
| Incidentals            |                 |                   |
| TOTAL EXPENSE          |                 |                   |
| Income                 |                 |                   |
| Crew treasury          |                 |                   |
| Individual fees        |                 |                   |
| Money-earning projects |                 |                   |
| Other income*          |                 |                   |
| TOTAL INCOME           |                 |                   |

*\*Include any pledged donations of food, gas, or equipment.*

## How to Brainstorm

Brainstorming is an essential part of good thinking, and it is also an essential part of coming to good decisions. How does brainstorming help you think better and make better decisions?

First, it helps you get out good ideas and information. Second, it fosters creativity; it encourages people to see possibilities. Brainstorming causes you to stretch—to not stop at the first thing that comes to your mind but to keep thinking. Third, it encourages everyone in a group to participate.

Brainstorming is a part of many Venturing activities, like developing the year’s program of activities. This how-to section offers some suggestions to help make brainstorming happen. Consider some suggestions to apply to yourself and some guidelines to apply to a group brainstorming together.

## Individual Suggestions

The following are some suggestions to help you get in the mindset to brainstorm.

- Relax. Let pictures freely come to your mind.
- Concentrate on what you're brainstorming about. Try to get everything else off your mind and focus on the subject at hand.
- Don't criticize or judge your own ideas internally. If you do, you'll start hesitating and being too careful.
- Take creative risks; think in terms of no limits.
- Believe in and use your own experiences as a springboard for ideas. Each person has all the experiences he or she needs for brainstorming.

## Group Guidelines

Now you're ready. The next step is to help create the right kind of environment for the group to brainstorm together. You contribute to this kind of environment when you:

- Encourage as many ideas as possible.
- Don't judge ideas (as good or bad) during brainstorming. That comes later.
- Don't look ahead to making decisions; stay totally in the brainstorming mindset.
- Build on one another's ideas.
- Encourage participation from everyone in the group.
- Don't worry about the words you're using to express an idea. Simply try to describe the picture you're seeing.
- List the ideas that your group comes up with so that you don't lose them.

When you engage in brainstorming, think about the two words that make up this word. Once you experience brainstorming, you'll realize that it is like a storm in the brain. Ideas begin to flow that you never knew you had—and one idea breeds another idea, and that idea breeds yet another.

## How to Conduct a Crew Parents' Night

One of the most successful and important programs developed by crews is an annual crew parents' night. This is a good opportunity to show off crews to the parents of Venturers, many of whom might not know much about Venturing, and to share information about adventures and activities.

### Objectives

The objectives for a parents' night include the following:

- To give Venturers a chance to show their parents what they have done in the crew.
- To recognize the crew's chartered organization for its time, expense, and workforce.
- To inform parents about Venturing and involve them in future program planning.
- To share adventure and activity information.

## Parents' Night Suggested Agenda

The meeting place depends on the crew, chartered organization, and specialty. Make it as interesting as possible.

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 6:45 p.m. | Set up meeting location, chairs, displays, room arrangements, decorations, welcome signs, name tags, etc.   |
| 7:10 p.m. | Welcoming committee, consisting of two crew members and two committee members, arrives. They arrange the area for signing in and handing out name tags.   |
| 7:30 p.m. | Gathering time. Parents and crew members gather and view displays and demonstrations.   |
| 7:45 p.m. | Meeting begins. Crew president, crew Advisor, and head of the chartered organization welcome the parents and make introductions.  |
| 7:55 p.m. | Tour of chartered organization facility (optional); one group or several, as needed.  |
| 8:15 p.m. | About Venturing:<br>Presentation by crew officers and members. A visual (if possible) and verbal explanation of your crew's operation. The report should present the crew's organization, its relationship to the chartered organization, specialty activities, and participation in council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purpose of Venturing</li><li>• Boy Scouts of America and Venturing</li><li>• Scouting unit—Venturing crew</li><li>• Crew committee</li><li>• Chartered organization</li><li>• How crew was organized</li><li>• How the council is financed—request for parents' support of the Friends of Scouting program (optional support for the BSA local council)</li><li>• Questions and answers</li></ul> |
| 8:30 p.m. | Venturing activities. Highlight the crew's upcoming adventures and activities with dates, costs, preparation, etc.  |
| 9:00 p.m. | Adjournment—refreshments and fellowship   |

### Promotion Ideas

Make every effort to get all the parents of active Venturers to attend. Ideas that crews have used include formal invitations sent to parents, personal letters from the Advisor or chartered organization, telephone committees, and good salesmanship by Venturers in urging their parents to come.

### Program Planning

The crew committee, Advisor, and officers select a suitable date during February or March. The key leadership of the chartered organization should be involved in planning the program.

Make every effort to show the best that the chartered organization and crew have available—displays, slides, tours, and demonstrations. The program should be carefully reviewed with crew members and committee members.

Get everyone involved. Invite the top executive of the chartered organization. Most executives will be delighted to tell parents about their crew. Have hands-on activities. Let parents do the things that Venturers do, like rappelling. Make the meeting interesting and fun.

## How to Recruit New Members

Successful Venturing crews must make regular efforts to find and recruit new members. The following methods may help.

- **Venturing Activity Interest Survey.** Many councils conduct a Venturing Activity Interest Survey of high school students. The names and addresses of those in your crew's program area should be available. The crew president should write a personal letter to each, inviting them to an open house or other special crew function. Follow up with a reminder phone call just before the meeting.

An alternative to the survey is to contact nearby high schools to see whether the counselor has names of students who might be interested in what your crew does. The counselor might be willing to give you the names, distribute letters of invitation, or even arrange a meeting after school for those who might be interested.

- **Publicity or Promotion.** Many crews place meeting notices or posters in schools, churches, or young adult centers. Newspaper publicity could feature your crew and invite those interested to attend an open house. Crews may put up notices in ski or outdoor equipment stores; gyms (for sports crews); and malls or other appropriate locations. Some crew members even make 30-second promotional videos for their school TV systems.
- **Personal Contact.** Ask each crew member to list three to five prospective members on cards. The administrative vice president sorts the cards and eliminates duplication. The names are reviewed at a crew meeting, and those who know the people best are assigned to invite them to a meeting. Don't assign more than three prospects to a crew member. Set a target date for the contacts to be completed, with regular reports on progress.
- **Recruiting Tips.** When prospective members visit your crew, make them feel welcome. See to it that crew members circulate among the prospects and encourage them to join. Get names, addresses, and phone numbers. Call them right after the meeting and invite them to the next meeting. Keep careful track of who came, and be sure they know you want them to join and when your next meeting takes place. Avoid any jokes about initiations or voting on new members, as this might turn off prospects. Also, avoid inside jokes. The Advisor or associate Advisor might call the prospect's parents to tell them about the crew and to encourage their son or daughter to join.

Recruiting new members should be an ongoing process. Most crews experience a turnover in membership. Members move, get jobs, or graduate and are unable to continue in your crew. Watch your attendance, contact members who miss two or three meetings, and continually encourage crew members to look for and invite prospects.

## How to Plan Tier III Adventures

The *Handbook for Venturers* has detailed guidelines for planning adventures. The points in this section may provide the Advisor a quick orientation to the process.

The highlight of a crew's program should be its adventures. Tier III adventures require extensive planning, preparation, and skill development prior to participation; are at least four days in duration, and are far outside youths' comfort zone (this is typically a once-per-year summertime "superactivity"). Examples include a 50-mile backpacking trip, directing a science-themed Cub Scout day camp, a trip to a weeklong arts festival, a New York City museum tour, or organizing a sports camp for disabled youth.

A Tier III adventure requires more than normal planning and preparation. The first step is to select an adventure that all crew members want to do. Then make the decision and commit to it. The money, equipment, leadership, and transportation seem less challenging once the commitment is made. If your crew is new, keep the superactivity simple so that it will be a success. Be sure to guide youth to pick an activity that is within the capability of your crew members.

The following considerations need to be a part of the planning.

### Youth Protection

1. Any suspected case of sexual or other abuse in the Venturing program must be reported to the local authorities and the council Scout executive (or the Scout executive's designated representative) immediately. The Scout executive will take appropriate action for the safety of the Venturers, make appropriate notification, and follow up with investigating agencies.
2. Two-deep leadership is required on all Venturing trips and outings. This is a minimum requirement; additional supervision may be necessary depending on the nature of the activities and the size of the group. When the activity is coeducational, adults of both sexes must accompany the group, and at least one of those individuals must be registered as an adult member of the BSA.
3. One-on-one contact between adults and youth crew members is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, the meeting should be conducted in view of others.
4. Males and females are required to have separate latrines and bathing and sleeping accommodations. If it becomes necessary to share any facilities, special care should be taken to prevent violations of personal privacy. Likewise, youth and adults must shower at different times. Youth members under age 18 should shower separately from youth ages 18 and over.
5. Adult leaders should respect the privacy of youth members in situations such as changing into swimsuits or taking showers, intruding only to the extent required for the health and safety of crew members. Adult leaders should protect their own privacy in these situations.
6. During Venturing trips and outings, adult leaders may not sleep in the same quarters as youth members except when the adult is the parent or guardian of the youth.
7. Proper attire is to be worn for all Venturing activities. For example, skinny-dipping or revealing bathing suits are not appropriate as part of a BSA activity.
8. Proper equipment and safety procedures are required for all Venturing activities. Care must be taken to ensure that no crew member is coerced into activities for which he or she is not adequately prepared.
9. Bullying and physical hazing are prohibited and may not be included in any BSA authorized activity. Initiations and secret organizations are prohibited as part of Venturing or any Scouting program.

10. The roles of volunteer adult leaders in the Venturing program require that clear boundaries be established between adult leaders and youth members. For this reason, fraternization—the formation of peer-based social relationships between adult and youth members—is not permitted. This prohibition extends to Venturing crew members who register as adults after their 21st birthday.
11. Discipline used in Venturing should be constructive and reflect Venturing’s values. The use of corporal punishment in any form (spanking, slapping, hitting, belt lines, etc.) is prohibited. If a crew member behaves in ways that interfere with the crew’s operation, he or she may be suspended from the program. Many Venturing crews develop codes of conduct that establish their own boundaries for acceptable behavior. Crew members are more likely to obey rules if they help to develop those rules.

### **Date**

Schedule your Tier III adventure well in advance, preferably a year. This will allow crew members to fit it into their personal and family plans. Be sure that your crew committee, members’ parents, and the chartered organization are aware of and approve of your plans.

### **Location**

Make any necessary reservations well in advance, and be sure to find out whether any deposits are required. Get all confirmations in writing, and be sure there aren’t any hidden costs, rules, or surprises.

### **Equipment**

Determine and make a list of the equipment needed, the equipment the crew must secure from other sources, and the equipment the members need to have for the adventure. Determining these equipment needs should be done well in advance so that crew members have ample time to obtain the needed items.

### **Food**

Food is an important consideration. Determine and make a list of where you plan to eat; who has responsibility for planning the menus, purchasing, and cooking the food; the equipment that will be needed; and how much it will cost. Be sure that the menu includes nutritious foods.

### **Lodging**

Determine where you will stay and what members need to bring if the adventure involves lodging. Look into staying at military bases, Scout camps, hostels, churches, and with other crews. Make definite plans, and obtain reservations well in advance.

### **Budget**

Determine how much your adventure will cost, how you will pay, and whether you need to pursue any money-earning projects. Break down the cost per member, and determine how you will pay along the way.

### **Health and Safety**

If your adventure involves physical activity, make plans to get crew members in shape and have medical checkups by a physician. Include safety, first aid, learn-to-swim, and related subjects at crew meetings. Plan a shakedown trip or cruise to familiarize everyone with procedures and equipment. Consider sunburn, proper foot care, altitude, first-aid supplies, and emergency procedures.

## Insurance

If your crew doesn't have a health and accident policy, obtain short-term insurance for the trip (available through your BSA local council). Be sure to take along the necessary forms and claim numbers.

## Tour Information and Plans

Submit a completed tour and activity plan to your BSA local council. You are encouraged to use the online submission system at [MyScouting.org](http://MyScouting.org).

## Parents' Night

One of the most important aspects of a successful Tier III adventure is parental involvement. Without parent knowledge of the adventure and the expenses and preparations involved, most Venturers wouldn't even be allowed to go. Early in the planning process, hold a parents' night meeting where you tell parents about your detailed adventure plan. Include costs, trip itinerary, adult supervision, equipment needs, etc. You need parental support!

## Communication

Be sure those at home know your schedule and how to contact you in case of an emergency. In addition, be sure you have emergency telephone numbers of parents.

## Working With Young Adults: Issues Faced by Venturing-Age Young Adults

Venturing-age youth are in an exciting period in their lives that is full of potential, but this period also can involve difficult issues and emotions. It is important that Venturing adult volunteers have some basic knowledge about these issues, but remember that leaders should encourage and support youth and families to seek professional counseling if necessary. A caring heart is an asset for a volunteer, but many of these situations require advanced training and education to best support youth. New science continues to inform us about mental health issues. One important finding is that the brain does not resemble the functioning of an "adult brain" until a person is in his or her 20s.

Thus, while Venturing youth may be considered adults by society (and probably themselves) at 18, it is worth noting that some of the analysis of risk, decision-making skills, and other factors related to mental health are still maturing as these young people develop in their third decade of life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup><http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/the-teen-brain-still-under-construction/index.shtml>



### Advisor Insight

Caveat: This part of the manual is designed to inform you, not to alarm you. As Advisors, we are concerned about the well-being of all young adults, and sometimes our most important role is to know what actions to take on behalf of our charges. The most important response is often recognizing when additional help is needed.

## Mental Health Concerns

| Anxiety <sup>2</sup>  | Signs and Symptoms  |
|---|---|
| <p>Everyone faces anxiety in the course of their daily lives. It helps us to cope with stress. Venturing youth are likely to face anxiety over exams, college admission, or interactions with peers.</p> <p>Unfortunately, sometimes anxiety can become excessive and lead to a disabling condition. This should not just be dismissed as something that youth “need to learn how to deal with.” Examples of anxiety disorders include obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, social phobia, specific phobia, and generalized anxiety disorder. Some symptoms may emerge in childhood, but they can also first show themselves in the teen years. One national survey found that about 8 percent of youth ages 13-18 have an anxiety disorder. Their symptoms often began around age 6.</p>                             | <p><b>Mood Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being in an overly silly or joyful mood that is unusual for the child. This is different from times when he or she is just being silly and having fun.</li> <li>• Having an extremely short temper and unusual irritability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Behavioral Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleeping little but not feeling tired.</li> <li>• Talking a lot and having racing thoughts.</li> <li>• Having trouble concentrating or paying attention; jumping from one thing to the next in an unusual way.</li> <li>• Talking and thinking about sex more often than usual.</li> <li>• Behaving in risky ways more often, seeking pleasure a lot, and taking part in more activities than usual.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>Advisors aware of Venturers with anxiety disorders should keep this in mind as the crew plans for a variety of adventures. A friendly conversation on the side with the Venturer and a buddy could be important if the crew plans for adventures involving confined spaces, heights, or other elements that may induce anxiety. The Advisor should make it clear to the entire crew that Venturing practices “challenge by choice” and that hazing or harassment (even meant as friendly cajoling to get someone to try something) is not acceptable. Venturers who do not have anxiety disorders may also feel apprehension about some adventures. It is important not to minimize anxiety as “something to get over.” Always be alert of Venturers showing panic-like symptoms on an adventure.</p> |   |

<sup>2</sup><http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/anxiety-disorders-in-children-and-adolescents/index.shtml>

| Bipolar Disorder  | Signs and Symptoms   |
|---|--|
| <p>One anxiety disorder is bipolar disorder, which is also known as manic-depressive illness. While young people normally go through periods of ups and downs, people suffering from bipolar disorder have severe swings between these moods. Symptoms of bipolar disorder are known to often emerge in the late teens and early 20s with at least half of cases beginning before age 25.<sup>3</sup> Bipolar disorder does tend to run in families, but most children with a family history of the disorder will not develop it.<sup>4</sup> Young people normally do go through various mood cycles, so it should not necessarily be assumed that any teen showing mood swings has bipolar disorder.</p> <p>People with bipolar disorder experience distinct and intense periods called “mood episodes.” Extreme changes in energy, activity, sleep, and behavior are associated with these mood episodes. Manic episodes involve extreme joy or overexcitement. Depressive episodes are characterized by extreme sadness or hopelessness. There are also mixed states.</p> | <p><b>Mood Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being in a sad mood that lasts a long time</li> <li>• Losing interest in activities once found enjoyable</li> <li>• Feeling worthless or guilty</li> </ul> <p><b>Behavioral Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaining about pain more often, such as headaches, stomachaches, and muscle pains</li> <li>• Eating a lot more or less than usual and gaining or losing a lot of weight</li> <li>• Sleeping or oversleeping when these were not problems before</li> <li>• Loss of energy</li> <li>• Recurring thoughts of death or suicide</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>Advisors should protect the privacy of Venturers who may be diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The swings in mood may be distracting to other crew members, so the Advisor should be prepared to guide youth leaders to create a trusting atmosphere for everyone in the crew. While Venturers should be capable of monitoring any prescribed medication, an Advisor should be aware of Venturers taking these medications.</p>   |  |

<sup>3</sup>Kessler RC, Berglund P, Demler O, Jin R, Merikangas KR, Walters EE. “Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication.” *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 2005 Jun; 62(6): 593–602.

<sup>4</sup>Nurnberger JI, Jr., Foroud T. “Genetics of bipolar affective disorder.” *Curr Psychiatry Rep*. 2000 Apr; 2(2): 147–157.

| Depression <sup>5</sup>  | Signs and Symptoms  |
|--|---|
| <p>Clinical depression is more than just feeling the blues. There are many normal behavioral changes as young people grow, so it can be difficult to tell if a person is depressed. According to the National Comorbidity Survey—Adolescent Supplement, about 11 percent of young people 13-18 suffer from depression. Girls do tend to experience depression more than boys, but youth of both genders can be at risk. Also, the risk rises as the young person gets older, and youth with a same-sex orientation or with questions regarding their sexuality are also at higher risk.</p> <p>Treatment for depression can include both talk therapy and medications.</p> <p>It is also important to realize that depression can coexist with other mental health issues. Anxiety disorders can lead to depression. Alcohol and other substance abuse and/or dependence can also coexist with depression.</p> | <p>General signs of depression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” feelings</li> <li>• Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism</li> <li>• Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness</li> <li>• Irritability; restlessness</li> <li>• Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable</li> <li>• Fatigue and decreased energy</li> <li>• Difficulty concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions</li> <li>• Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping</li> <li>• Overeating or loss of appetite</li> <li>• Thoughts of suicide; suicide attempts</li> <li>• Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems that do not ease even with treatment</li> </ul> <p>Signs of depression in young people may include some of the following as well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulking</li> <li>• Getting into trouble at school</li> <li>• Being negative or grouchy</li> <li>• Feeling misunderstood</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>Advisors should communicate with families if concerns arise, but respect the privacy and independence of the Venturer. Signs of depression may become apparent during longer timeframes of some adventures. Advisors cannot treat depression themselves, but it is important that families be made aware so that professional help can be sought.</p>  |   |

<sup>5</sup><http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/depression/index.shtml>

| Suicidal Thoughts   | Signs and Symptoms  |
|---|---|
| <p>Suicide is one of the most difficult topics to talk about with others, especially Venturing-age youth. Sadly, in 2009, suicide accounted for 14.4 percent of all deaths and was the third leading cause of death for those ages 15-24. Males are four times more likely than females to die by suicide.<sup>6</sup></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself</li> <li>• Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun</li> <li>• Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live</li> <li>• Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain</li> <li>• Talking about being a burden to others</li> <li>• Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs</li> <li>• Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly</li> <li>• Sleeping too little or too much</li> <li>• Withdrawing or feeling isolated</li> <li>• Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge</li> <li>• Displaying extreme mood swings</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>It is important to take action if you notice any of these signs and have the feeling that suicidal thoughts may be involved. Emphasize that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). There is also a website at <a href="http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org">www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org</a>. Educating youth and families about the availability of these resources may save a life even if you don't personally notice their symptoms.</p> |   |

<sup>6</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS): [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars).

| Substance Use, Misuse, and Abuse   | Signs and Symptoms   |
|--|--|
| <p>Substances can lead to physical dependence, psychological dependence, or both. Physically addictive substances change the body in ways that cause the person to physically crave the substance. Other substances cause a psychological dependence where the person feels the need for the pleasure of the substance even though there is no physiological addiction. Use of substances can also lead to tolerance, which means that the person will need more of the substance to produce the same effect.</p> <p>Venturing-age youth are likely to like to engage in testing boundaries and questioning traditional authority and values. This can include experimentation with a variety of substances. Preaching about the evils of substance abuse is not likely to sway a young person's beliefs. It is also important to note that sharing stories of famous celebrities who have overcome addictions can sometimes send the implicit but misleading message that "well, you might make bad choices, but it all works out in the end."</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skipping school</li> <li>• Drop in grades</li> <li>• Drop in motivation or energy level</li> <li>• Lack of interest in physical appearance such as clothing or personal grooming</li> <li>• Excessive efforts to maintain privacy (while noting that teenagers are naturally going to want more privacy than they did as a child)</li> <li>• Stealing money or sudden requests without reasonable explanations</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>Parents and adult volunteers are effective in helping to decrease the incidence of substance abuse by 50 percent by following some general guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking and listening regularly</li> <li>• Being directly involved in the young person's everyday world (more applicable to parents)</li> <li>• Making it clear that you do not want him or her drinking or using drugs</li> <li>• Setting limits</li> </ul> <p>Venturing leaders have the responsibility to set an example of "a Scout is clean" and being "mentally awake" for youth crew members. Avoid preaching about substance abuse; rather, demonstrate how adventures in the outdoors and productive service to others provide a joy that cannot be created by substance use.</p> <p>If substance use arises in the crew, an Advisor needs to calmly handle the situation by confiscating the substances (and handling as required by local council rules and state laws), maintaining the safety of the youth (e.g., do not let them drive under the influence), and communicating with families. A conference with the crew's Advisors may be warranted before the member continues with crew activities (as per the crew's agreed-upon rules).</p> <p>Venturing exists to help young adults develop into well-adjusted adults. It is also committed to the well-being of all youth members, which includes ensuring that Venturing activities are drug, alcohol, and tobacco free.</p> |  |

<sup>7</sup><http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/drug-addiction/DS00183/DSECTION=symptoms>.

## Information on Specific Substances<sup>7</sup>

| Marijuana and Hashish  | Barbiturates and Benzodiazepines   |
|--|--|
| <p>Cannabis compounds can cause a psychological addiction. While this is not the same as a chemical dependence, the person feels a need to regularly use the drug.</p> <p>Signs of use and dependence can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heightened sense of visual, auditory, and taste perception</li> <li>• Poor memory</li> <li>• Increased blood pressure and heart rate</li> <li>• Red eyes</li> <li>• Decreased coordination</li> <li>• Difficulty concentrating</li> <li>• Increased appetite</li> <li>• Slowed reaction time</li> <li>• Paranoid thinking</li> </ul> | <p>These drugs are prescribed for central nervous system disorders. They are depressants.</p> <p>Signs of use and dependence can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drowsiness</li> <li>• Slurred speech</li> <li>• Lack of coordination</li> <li>• Memory problems</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Slowed breathing and decreased blood pressure</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Depression</li> </ul> |

| Methamphetamine, Cocaine, and Other Stimulants   | Club Drugs   |
|--|--|
| <p>This class of drugs includes amphetamines, methamphetamine, cocaine, and methylphenidate (Ritalin). Methamphetamine, also known as “meth,” is a particularly dangerous drug that is highly addictive and causes a number of short-term and long-term health consequences.</p> <p>Signs of use and dependence can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euphoria</li> <li>• Decreased appetite</li> <li>• Rapid speech</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Restlessness</li> <li>• Depression as the drug wears off</li> <li>• Nasal congestion and damage to the mucous membrane of the nose in users who snort drugs</li> <li>• Insomnia</li> <li>• Weight loss</li> <li>• Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and temperature</li> <li>• Paranoia</li> </ul> | <p>Club drugs are drugs commonly used by teens and young adults at clubs, concerts, and parties. Examples include Ecstasy (MDMA), GHB, Rohypnol (“roofies”), and ketamine. GHB and Rohypnol are especially dangerous because they can cause seizures, coma, and death in high doses. They both also worsen memory and have become known as “date-rape drugs.”</p> <p>Signs of club drug use and dependence can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exaggerated feeling of great happiness or well-being (euphoria)</li> <li>• Reduced inhibitions</li> <li>• Heightened or altered sense of sight, sound, and taste</li> <li>• Amphetamine-like effects (with ketamine and Ecstasy)</li> <li>• Decreased coordination</li> <li>• Poor judgment</li> <li>• Memory problems or loss of memory</li> <li>• Increased or decreased heart rate and blood pressure</li> <li>• Drowsiness and loss of consciousness (with GHB and Rohypnol)</li> </ul> |

<sup>7</sup><http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/drug-addiction/DS00183/DSECTION=symptoms>.

## Information on Specific Substances<sup>7</sup>

| Hallucinogens—LSD   | Hallucinogens—PCP  |
|---|--|
| <p>Signs of LSD use include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hallucinations</li> <li>• Greatly reduced perception of reality, for example, interpreting input from one of your senses as another, such as hearing colors</li> <li>• Permanent mental changes in perception</li> <li>• Rapid heart rate</li> <li>• High blood pressure</li> <li>• Tremors</li> <li>• Flashbacks (a re-experience of the hallucinations—even years later)</li> </ul> | <p>Signs of PCP use include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hallucinations</li> <li>• Euphoria</li> <li>• Delusions</li> <li>• Panic</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Aggressive, possibly violent behavior</li> </ul> |

| Narcotic Painkillers  | Inhalants   |
|---|---|
| <p>Opioids are narcotic, painkilling drugs produced naturally from opium or made synthetically. This class of drugs includes heroin, morphine, codeine, methadone, and oxycodone (OxyContin). If these medications are prescribed by a doctor, they should be taken exactly as directed. A dose should not be increased without first talking to the doctor who prescribed it.</p> <p>Signs of narcotic use and dependence can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced sense of pain</li> <li>• Sedation</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Constipation</li> <li>• Slowed breathing</li> <li>• Needle marks (if injecting drugs)</li> </ul> | <p>The signs and symptoms of inhalant use vary depending on what substance is inhaled. Some commonly inhaled substances include glue, paint thinners, correction fluid, felt-tip marker fluid, gasoline, cleaning fluids, and household aerosol products. When inhaled, these products can cause brief intoxication and a decreased feeling of inhibition. Long-term use may cause seizures and damage to the brain, liver, and kidneys. Inhalant use can also cause death.</p> |

<sup>7</sup><http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/drug-addiction/DS00183/DSECTION=symptoms>.

## Energy Drinks<sup>8</sup>

Research presented at a recent American Heart Association conference indicates that energy drinks disturb the heart's natural rhythm and raise blood pressure, increasing the risk of sudden cardiac death (AHA abstract No. P324). This and other disturbing scientific evidence about the consumption of energy drinks among youth caused a group of medical experts to write a letter to the FDA (March 19, 2013).

The letter expressed their doubts that energy drinks are safe for youth. These drinks are a concern for all of us due to their popularity among youth. Energy drinks currently capture 47 percent of the international beverage market. It is estimated that as much as half of the drinks are consumed by adolescents and young adults (*MedPage Today*, March 2013).

Because energy drinks are classified as dietary supplements, the USDA does not regulate or limit their caffeine content or other ingredients. In comparison, soft drinks are classified as food; therefore, they are regulated.

Caffeine content is not the only concern (some energy drinks have roughly the same amount of caffeine as a cup of coffee). Other unregulated additives, primarily taurine and guarana, may potentially increase the caffeine's potency.

One popular—and dangerous—use of energy drinks among some youth is combining them with alcohol.

Until it is determined that energy drinks are safe, experts recommend youth use caution when consuming them.

### **Venturing Advisor Action**

The crew committee may want to discuss local feelings about the use of energy drinks. It is important that if they believe a crew policy should be adopted that the youth members have their voices heard. Energy drinks can be quite popular in some circles.

<sup>8</sup><http://www.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/FallWinter2013Newsletter.pdf>

## Eating Disorders

Young people often struggle with their body image. This is true of both young men and young women. A Venturer should indeed be “physically strong,” but it is important that young people understand that people have different body structures and genetic predispositions. Obesity is indeed a national problem as well, but healthy eating and physical activity need to be separated from unrealistic body images. About 2.7 percent of young people between 13 and 17 years of age suffer from eating disorders. Boys suffer from eating disorders as well as girls, but girls are more than two and half times as likely as boys to have an eating disorder.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>[http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1EAT\\_CHILD.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/statistics/1EAT_CHILD.shtml)

| Body Image Concerns for Young Women <sup>10</sup>   | Body Image Concerns for Young Men  |
|---|--|
| <p>Maintaining a healthy body image during adolescence is often difficult for young women. Factors that might harm a young woman’s body image include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural weight gain and other changes caused by puberty</li> <li>• Peer pressure to look a certain way</li> <li>• Media images that promote the ideal female body as thin</li> <li>• Having a mother who is overly concerned about her own weight or her daughter’s weight or appearance</li> </ul> <p>Consequences of a negative body image:</p> <p>If a female Venturer does not live up to the image in her head, she might begin to feel inadequate and ashamed of her body—even if she’s not overweight. This can increase the risk of mental health concerns, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Eating disorders</li> </ul> <p>Sometimes a negative body image leads to skipping meals or a cycle of dieting, losing weight, and regaining weight, which can further harm self-esteem.</p> | <p>Young men view their body differently from young women, which influences their fitness goals. Young men tend to focus on a desire for a muscular, hairless body. Their exercise routines are designed to increase their physical bulk and they are more likely to shave or use other means to remove hair from their bodies. In addition, the desire for well-defined muscles may be associated with the use of steroids as well as nutritional supplements whose value has not been established.<sup>11</sup></p> <p>Influenced by amateur and professional athletes, some young men may use ergogenic aids that claim to enhance sports performance. There is little available information regarding effectiveness or safety in competitive or noncompetitive adolescents and young adults. Common ergogenic aids include nutritional supplements, anabolic steroids, and HGH. While physicians can evaluate these products and recommend their use or nonuse, many athletes report that their most common sources of dietary and supplement information to be their trainer or coach, a family member or friend, and magazines and books, with physicians and nutritionists ranked last. While most adolescents are less likely to seek information about ergogenic benefits from medical professionals, they may seek information about side effects if their physician is open to discussion and is perceived as nonjudgmental.<sup>12</sup></p> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>Advisors can help by being aware of changes in the appearance and fitness-related behaviors of the youth who participate in the crew. Venturers working on the Quest Award may be able to present information to make others aware of these issues. Conversation about these issues, as with other issues in this section, can feel awkward, but youth need good, honest information about what healthy appearances really are.</p>   |  |

<sup>10</sup><http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-body-image/ART-20044668>

<sup>11</sup><http://jmh.sagepub.com/content/1/4/307.abstract>

<sup>12</sup><http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2722611/>

| Anorexia Nervosa <sup>13</sup>  | Signs and Symptoms  |
|---|---|
| <p>People with anorexia nervosa see themselves as overweight even though they are underweight. Eating and weight control become obsessions with the young person often weighing themselves constantly and eating only small quantities of certain or all foods. Anorexia can become life-threatening, so it is important that signs are noticed and help is obtained.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme thinness</li> <li>• A relentless pursuit of thinness and unwillingness to maintain a normal or healthy weight</li> <li>• Intense fear of gaining weight</li> <li>• Distorted body image, a self-esteem that is heavily influenced by perceptions of body weight and shape, or a denial of the seriousness of low body weight</li> <li>• Lack of menstruation among girls and women</li> <li>• Extremely restricted eating</li> </ul>   |
| Bulimia Nervosa and Binge-Eating Disorder <sup>14, 15</sup>   | Signs and Symptoms  |
| <p>Bulimia nervosa involves binge-eating episodes (eating of unusually large amounts of food, often with a feeling of no control) followed by a form of extreme compensation. This can include forced vomiting, use of laxatives, excessive exercise, or a combination of these practices. People with bulimia nervosa often maintain a normal weight or may be overweight. They often keep their practices secret.</p> <p>A person with binge-eating disorder has lost control over his or her eating. Unlike bulimia, this is not followed by a practice such as forced vomiting or use of laxatives. They may experience guilt, shame, or distress about their binge-eating, which can lead to further binge-eating.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronically inflamed and sore throat</li> <li>• Swollen salivary glands in the neck and jaw area</li> <li>• Worn tooth enamel or increasingly sensitive and decaying teeth as a result of exposure to stomach acid</li> <li>• Acid reflux disorder and other gastrointestinal problems</li> <li>• Intestinal distress and irritation from laxative abuse</li> <li>• Severe dehydration from purging of fluids</li> <li>• Electrolyte imbalance (too low or too high levels of sodium, calcium, potassium, and other minerals), which can lead to a heart attack</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Venturing Advisor Action</b></p> <p>Advisors who notice behaviors consistent with these disorders while on adventures should kindly share concerns with the Venturer and/or his or her family in a calm and caring manner. Do not sound judgmental but rather share your concern. At Venturing meetings, it may be helpful to set a tone of acceptance toward all body types through Advisor's minutes that may reflect on how "physically strong" takes different appearances. Venturers working on the Quest Award may also be resources in terms of presenting on this topic.</p>  |   |

<sup>13</sup><http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/eating-disorders/index.shtml>

<sup>14</sup>American Psychiatric Association (APA). "Let's Talk Facts About Eating Disorders." 2005. Available online at <http://www.healthyminds.org/Document-Library/Brochure-Library/Eating-Disorders.aspx>.

<sup>15</sup>Lasater L, Mehler P. "Medical complications of bulimia nervosa." *Eating Behavior*, 2001; 2:279-292.

**“ Someone is sitting in the shade today  
because someone planted a tree a  
long time ago. ”**

*—Warren Buffett,  
American businessman and philanthropist*

# Crew Finances

A Venturing crew must have a budget and a treasury. The money to operate the crew comes from the Venturers and their parents or guardians. Self-reliance is part of the character development spelled out in the aims of Scouting, a goal that can be advanced by encouraging each crew member to pay his or her own way for dues, uniforms, and personal equipment, and to take part in money-earning projects to meet the crew's needs.

## The Crew Budget

Building a responsible budget for a crew is a four-stage process:

1. The crew treasurer, president, scribe, and Advisor consider the crew's expenses and prepare a rough draft of a budget to cover them.
2. The crew officers review the proposed budget and put it into final form.
3. The crew committee approves the budget.
4. The budget is presented to the Venturers and their parents or guardians.

## What Are Crew Expenses?

The budgetary needs of crews will vary depending upon the nature of their activities and the needs of their membership. The following are some expenses that every crew can expect:

### Crew Charter Fee

The annual charter fee that must accompany a crew's charter application helps defray the cost of general liability insurance carried by the Boy Scouts of America.

### Registration

The annual registration fee for each youth and adult member may be prorated for a new member joining between crew registrations.



### **Program Materials**

These expenses include membership and rank insignia, crew flags, equipment, group camping and other gear, and supplies. Activities such as hikes, campouts, summer camp attendance, high-adventure and superactivity opportunities, and other crew activities are usually financed by the crew members and their families over and above the dues program.

### **Accident Insurance**

Each crew should be covered by accident insurance to help meet the costs of medical treatment in the event of an accident. Insurance fees generally run only a few dollars a year per person. Application forms are available through your local council service center and may be included in the charter renewal kit. Follow the instructions in the forms to send applications and premiums directly to the appropriate insurance company.

### **Reserve Fund**

It is wise to establish a reserve fund to meet the crew's unexpected expenses.

### **Dues and Records**

Operating a crew requires financial investment by the members of the crew. Your crew may request dues or an annual participation fee to cover program, registration, and other expenses, or your crew may build those fees into fundraising activities. Clear communication as to the process the crew uses should be part of the orientation interview with new Venturers.

The crew treasurer should work with his or her Advisor to collect, deposit, and record payment of dues and other fees. It should be noted that the collection of dues should not be done in a manner that would keep a young adult from joining a crew.

1. The crew treasurer collects payments and records the amounts in the Crew Record Book.
2. The crew treasurer submits the dues to the crew Advisor or other member of the advising team.
3. The committee member who supports the crew treasurer deposits the payment into the crew's checking account.

Every crew should have a checking account at a local bank. Most crews require two signatures for drawing checks, although Advisors are often provided with a petty cash fund to make small purchases as needs arise. The crew treasurer monitors the crew's cash flow and pays all crew bills by check.

## Fundraising Projects

The dues paid by Venturers are usually not enough to cover the costs of the program their crew is planning.

One way to make up the shortfall is with a crew fundraising project. Ideally, fundraising projects not only earn money but also advance the cause of Venturing by giving crew members involvement in meaningful activities. Venturers who build and sell birdhouses, for example, can learn about bird species in their area and master basic carpentry skills in addition to trying their hand at marketing a product of real use to the public. Other successful fundraising projects include:

- Collecting recyclable paper, cans, and plastic bottles
- Conducting auctions, rummage sales, and yard sales
- Providing lawn care services
- Washing cars
- Putting on pancake or spaghetti suppers, fish fries, and other community meals
- Selling Christmas trees, wreaths, and other seasonal items
- Caring for pets when animal owners are away
- Monthly child care night for families associated with the chartered organization



Fundraising projects must be carefully planned. When considering a fundraising idea, use the following checklist to test its value to the crew and its members, and to determine if it complies with the values of Scouting:

- Does the fundraiser serve a real need? Venturers, their families, and the community quickly tire of too many moneymaking campaigns or fund drives without a clear purpose.
- Has your chartered organization, crew committee, and local council approved the project, the dates when it will occur, and the methods by which it will be achieved?
- Are the dates set so that there will be no competition with other fundraising programs of your chartered organization, BSA local council, or the United Way?
- Is your plan free from any suggestion of gambling? Is it fully consistent with the ideals of the BSA?
- If a commercial product will be marketed, will it be sold on its own merit without reference to the needs of Scouting? (The Venturing uniform must not be worn when crew members are selling commercial products.)



- If the crew will sell tickets for any function other than a Scouting event such as a crew supper, will they be sold by the crew members as individuals without depending on the goodwill of Scouting to make the sale?
- Will buyers get their money's worth from the product or service?
- Does the money-earning project respect the boundaries of other crews and their fundraising efforts?
- Are you reasonably certain that the crew's plan will not compete with local businesses or jeopardize opportunities for people who need work?
- Does the plan protect the name and goodwill of the Boy Scouts of America? Is the plan designed so that the BSA and its symbols cannot be capitalized upon by promoters of shows, benefits, or sales campaigns?
- Fundraising contracts must in no way bind the BSA local council or the BSA organization to any agreement or financial responsibility. If contracts are to be signed, will they be signed by a person acting as an individual without any reference to the Boy Scouts of America?

When a fundraising project has been thoroughly considered, submit a Unit Money-Earning Application to your local council service center well before the proposed date of the project.

### Incentives for Venturers

A key to successful fundraising is to make the effort satisfying and rewarding for the Venturers themselves. The activity itself can be fun and at the same time a good learning experience. The crew members should also have a clear understanding of how the money will be used. Some crews help Venturers raise money to participate in crew adventures or save for personal camping gear by crediting dollars or points to each Venturer based on his or her participation in the fundraiser.

### Friends of Scouting Finance Campaign

Each year the district finance committee or the crew committee will conduct a Friends of Scouting campaign—a presentation to parents and guardians of Venturers to request their financial support of the local council. The presentation can be done in conjunction with a special family night program or a crew recognition event. As Advisor, your positive, enthusiastic support will send a clear message to parents, guardians, and members of the crew committee and chartered organization that the local council plays a vital role in providing opportunities for training and program development.

**“ It is literally true that you can succeed best and  
quickest by helping others. ”**

*—Napoleon Hill (1883–1970), American author  
and early authority on personal success*

# Resources and Support

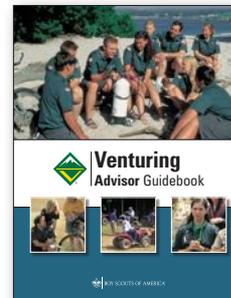
**V**enturing is not a program to be carried out in isolation. A variety of resources is available to help support the youth officers in running a successful program. This chapter contains an overview of resources that will help you become an effective Venturing Advisor.

## Program Materials

***Venturing Advisor Guidebook.*** This *Venturing Advisor Guidebook* is your key tool for serving as an Advisor or committee member for a Venturing crew. The content of this book focuses on the skills and resources needed to deliver Venturing from a youth development perspective.

***Handbook for Venturers.*** The handbook is the essential program document. It is designed for youth members of the crew (as well as Advisors and committee members). This handbook describes how a Venturing crew operates and how to organize a youth-led program of fun through adventure, leadership development, service, and personal growth experiences. As an Advisor for a Venturing crew, you should own a copy of this handbook as well.

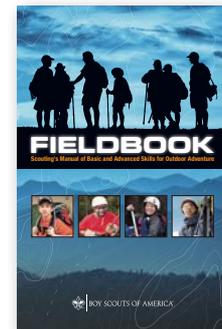
***Venturing Awards and Requirements.*** This resource contains materials that support the entire range of Venturing awards and recognitions. It contains requirements and support information for the Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards; for supplemental and optional recognitions, such as the Ranger, Quest, TRUST, Nova, and other awards; and other program enrichment materials. While young men who are Venturers can also work on the Eagle Scout Award, those requirements, including requirements for all merit badges, are found in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book.



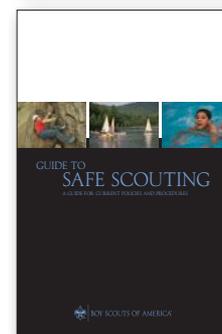
**Program Features for Troops, Teams, and Crews.** A three-volume series of resources has been developed to provide support content for a variety of program needs.



**Fieldbook.** The *Fieldbook* has served generations of Scouts and Venturers as a key resource to support outdoor adventure. A comprehensive reference, this handbook includes sections on trekking, preparation and adventures, appreciating our environment, and more.



**Guide to Safe Scouting.** The purpose of the *Guide to Safe Scouting* is to prepare members of the Boy Scouts of America to carry out Scouting activities in a safe and prudent manner. Limitations on certain activities should not be viewed as stumbling blocks; rather, policies and guidelines are best described as steppingstones toward safe and enjoyable adventures.



**Venturer Nova Awards Guidebook.** This book provides requirements and information for the Nova and Supernova awards. These awards help Venturers explore and develop abilities in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).



## Advisor Support

Every Advisor relies upon the time and energy contributed by many people. Parents, guardians, the crew committee, members of the chartered organization, and other interested individuals help ensure that a crew has quality leadership, a strong program, and the resources for young men and women to make the most of their Venturing experience.

Beyond those local volunteers providing a foundation for each crew, a network of Scouters and BSA professional staff fill out the larger picture and give continuity to the Scouting program throughout the nation. Each part of this network can offer Advisors a particular kind of support, and each will, at times, be an invaluable resource. This section of the *Venturing Advisor Guidebook* gathers essential information about resources and support in one place.

## Local Council Resources

To guarantee efficient organizational management and to recognize regional differences, the United States is divided into nearly 300 local councils. Each council has been granted a charter by the Boy Scouts of America to provide Scouting to youth in a certain geographic area. Every local council grants charters to qualified and interested organizations, which in turn may operate Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, Sea Scout ships, and Venturing crews. By accepting its charter, a local council agrees to provide the following:

- Year-round training, service, and support for each unit
- Training and support to the chartered organization representative, the person acting as the primary link between the unit's chartered organization and the local council
- Guidance and methods for unit committees seeking and selecting quality leaders
- General liability insurance to cover the chartered organization
- Camping facilities, a service center, and a professional staff to assist each Scout unit in every way possible
- Respect for the aims and objectives of each chartered organization
- Scouting resources to help the organization meet those objectives

### Council Executive Board

A local council is operated by an executive board composed of volunteers who are community leaders. The board is responsible for the fiscal management of the local council and for the quality of its Scouting program. The executive board employs the council Scout executive.



### Chartered Organization Representative Insight: Council Executive Board

The chartered organization representative is a voting member of the local council and its executive board. This role helps ensure that the local council leadership is grounded in the insights and values held by the bodies that charter Scouting units.

### Council Scout Executive

The council Scout executive serves as the council's chief executive officer/executive director and manages its day-to-day operations. Among the Scout executive's duties are hiring and training professional, clerical, and camp staffs.

### District Executive

Each district is served by a full-time professional Scouter called the district executive, who works with the district committee and the commissioner staff to support your crew. District executives are deeply interested in their crews. They are also versed in the resources available within a district and can connect Advisors to those individuals and committees best able to respond to particular situations.

### Council Service Center

Your council office is sometimes called a service center. Its staff is ready to answer the needs of Scout leaders, providing them with information on activities, training, advancement, camp reservations, and literature. Some large councils also operate

satellite offices for easy access, and most are able to mail, email, or fax requested materials. Many local council service centers also feature a trading post or Scout shop offering the full line of BSA uniforms, equipment, and literature.

### Council Camp

Every council is charged with providing year-round camping facilities for youth in the council. Council camps often serve as a geographic focal point of a council, steeped in decades of memories and tradition. Most camps operate summer programs, and some are available during other times of the year for weekend crew camping. Many are set up to facilitate special programs including winter camping and COPE courses. Some councils have several camp properties with a variety of program options, including weekend programming of interest to Venturers. Many councils operate a week of programming for Venturing crews, including special high-adventure treks.



### *Venturing Officers Association*

The purpose of the Venturing Officers Association (VOA) is to provide support and guidance to maintaining and growing the Venturing program within a local council. Some councils also support a district-level Venturing Officers Association.

VOAs provide training for Venturers and Advisors, programming for crews, and monthly or quarterly forums to bring together youth and Advisors for discussions and presentations of common interest. These forums are often held in conjunction with monthly district roundtable training. The VOA is led by a VOA president elected from Venturers in the local council and supported by a VOA Advisor and professional staff advisor.

### District Committee

Most BSA councils are divided into several geographic areas called districts. Each district has a district committee and a commissioner staff composed of key volunteer Scouters. Their duty is not to make policy but rather to implement the goals of the council and to work through chartered organizations to ensure the success of troops, teams, ships, crews, and packs. A district committee does this by forming a number of subcommittees, each specializing in one of these areas of Scouting. These may include:

- Training
- Advancement/recognition
- Camping
- Activities/civic service
- Finance
- Membership

A chair for each subcommittee is recruited by the district committee chair.



### *District Committee Chair*

As the top volunteer in a district, the district committee chair provides leadership in district meetings and takes a leading role in district activities. This person serves a one-year term and may be re-elected to additional terms. Districts may also have vice chairs to handle special events and projects and to serve in the absence of the chair.

### District Training Committee

The training committee provides various levels of an ongoing training program for the district:

- Joining training and orientation training is the first phase of preparing incoming leaders to undertake the responsibilities of their new positions. As the name implies, Fast Start begins soon after a leader is recruited. Youth Protection training is required to join the Boy Scouts of America.
- Position-specific training is usually offered several times a year. Many districts augment the basic offering with supplemental training in areas such as outdoor skills.

The training committee is also responsible for youth leader training and can provide information on other training opportunities, including Wood Badge courses and those offered at national high-adventure bases. The training committee assists units in recording the training histories of all volunteers in the district and coordinates granting training awards when requirements have been met.

### District Advancement and Recognition Committee

The advancement and recognition committee does the following:

- Promotes advancement within all of the district's crews and maintains records of each crew's progress
- Maintains a current list of BSA-registered merit badge counselors for Boy Scouts; sometimes members can also be contacted for Venturing recognition needs
- Assists crews with boards of review and courts of honor
- Serves as a source of information on special recognition programs such as the District Award of Merit

For detailed information on advancement policy and procedure, committee members and other Scout leaders can refer to the *Guide to Advancement*.

### District Camp Promotion and Outdoor Committee

The camping committee promotes camping and other outdoor activities. Committee members are often rich sources of information about camping and hiking destinations, high-adventure opportunities, and BSA policies and procedures involving safety and health.

### District Activities and Civic Service Committee

Members of the activities and civic service committee plan districtwide events including camporees, mall shows, recognition dinners, and other activities designed to enhance the success of crews. Each February the committee may also promote Scouting Anniversary Week at the district level.

### District Finance Committee

The finance committee ensures that the district raises its share of the council budget and interacts appropriately with community funding organizations such as the United Way. A member of the finance committee may assist a crew committee member in conducting an annual Friends of Scouting campaign, encouraging each Scout's family to support the council financially. The committee also considers and approves crew fundraising projects and can assist crews in finding money for special causes such as camper scholarships and equipment.

### District Membership Committee

The membership committee helps recruit new participants into Scouting, keeps records of crew membership, and encourages the organization of new units. An important part of the committee's work is maintaining healthy relationships with chartered organizations that have chosen Scouting as their youth program.

### District Commissioner Staff

The district commissioner staff is the service team of the district, the group that makes "house calls." The district commissioner heads this staff and is responsible for recruiting and training its members. The district commissioner may be aided by several assistant district commissioners overseeing specific geographical areas of the district. They, in turn, oversee several unit commissioners, each responsible for three or more units.

### Unit Commissioners

A unit commissioner is an Advisor's friend in helping to get resources and information. Most commissioners have had Scouting experience to back them up in helping you and your crew succeed. A unit commissioner will probably call on you periodically and may ask to visit a crew meeting or crew committee meeting. Welcome these contacts and use them as opportunities to get questions answered and to gain fresh insights on improving your program. A unit commissioner will also be very helpful as you go through the process of charter renewal.



### Advisor Insight: District Roundtable or Venturing Forum

The monthly roundtable, organized by a district roundtable commissioner, brings together Scouting leaders from all Scouting units in the district to share program ideas, successes, and solutions to problems. This also includes a gathering of all Venturing leaders in the district—most often referred to as a "Venturing forum." If you are new to Venturing, seek to find those who have many years of experience in Venturing and learn from them. Get their contact information and ask if you can call them when you have questions. On the other hand, if you are a Venturing leader with many years of experience, you may be called on to assist others in the district who are new and can learn from your experience.

### Other Duties of the District Commissioner Staff

In addition to providing crew leaders with solutions and support, members of the commissioner staff fulfill these functions:

- **Charter renewal process.** Ninety days before the end of each crew's charter year, the council will provide an application for charter renewal that includes a listing of youth and adults registered as active in the BSA. The unit commissioner and crew committee will use it to conduct a current membership inventory 60 days before the renewal date and as a resource during a charter renewal meeting 45 days before renewal. The charter renewal meeting involves the unit commissioner and all the adult Advisors of a crew. The agenda includes identifying crew members and Advisors who will be reregistered, noting adult leadership vacancies to be filled, signing renewal papers, arranging for payment of renewal fees, applying for Journey to Excellence recognition, and making plans for the upcoming year.

- **Charter presentation.** The completion of a crew's charter renewal is a good time to remind chartered organization members that the BSA is grateful to have been chosen as the organization's youth program. This could be done by involving uniformed Venturers in presenting the new charter to the head of the chartered organization at a full meeting of the organization. This may also be a good time to inform parents of the crew's annual program plan and outline needs for additional adult leadership and participation on the crew committee or as consultants.

## Internet Support

Many local councils have a Web page with up-to-date information on events and activities. The following resources are available at the BSA's website (<http://www.scouting.org>):

- Program support materials for Venturing crews
- Forms and documents
- Online training
- Reference materials
- Information on awards and recognition

## Area and Region

Areas are made up of clusters of seven to 13 councils. Across the nation, groups of areas make up one of four regions—Northeast, Southern, Central, and Western. Information on Venturing adventures and events is available throughout the nation and is organized by area and regional Venturing leadership. Training courses at the area level, especially where councils are small, are helpful in providing leadership training and recreational activities that bring together Venturers and Advisors from multiple councils.

## National Council

The National Council of the Boy Scouts of America develops program and program support materials to aid you as a Venturing Advisor. Some direct opportunities for working with the national organization come from annual training conferences at the Philmont Training Center in New Mexico and the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia. Additional opportunities come from training of interest to Venturing leaders hosted at the Florida Sea Base during its winter conference program.

## National Venturing Committee

The National Venturing Committee provides support and oversight for Venturing program support, including support of the National Venturing Youth Cabinet.

## National Venturing Youth Cabinet

The National Venturing Youth Cabinet are the youth leaders of the Venturing program. These youth are the national Venturing president, two national Venturing vice presidents, national Sea Scout boatswain, and the four regional Venturing presidents. They represent Venturing and Sea Scouting for their regions and the national committees.



**“ The biggest adventure you can take is to  
live the life of your dreams. ”**  
*—Oprah Winfrey*

# Venturing Recognition: The Trail to the Summit

## Venturing Award Requirements



1. Participate in a crew activity outside of a crew meeting.
2. Participate in an interview conducted by your crew president and your Advisor.
3. Complete Personal Safety Awareness training.
4. State your intention to join the crew by participating in an induction ceremony during which you repeat and commit to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law and the Venturing motto: Lead the Adventure.



# Discovery Award Requirements



## Adventure

1. Participate in at least two Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level.
2. Complete the following:
  - a. A standard CPR course, such as American Red Cross—First Aid/CPR/AED for Schools and the Community or the American Heart Association—Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, or an equivalent course.
  - b. A standard first-aid course such as the American Red Cross—Standard First Aid or equivalent course.

## Leadership

3. Complete the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews course (or an equivalent).
4. Complete the Goal-Setting and Time Management training courses.
5. Complete Crew Officers Orientation.

## Personal Growth

6. Complete a structured personal reflection, and use this reflection and what you learned from the process to prepare for goal-setting and as part of your Discovery Award Advisor conference. Explore one of the following areas: Development of Faith,<sup>1</sup> Development of Self, Development of Others.
7. In consultation with your Advisor, establish at least one personal goal, and achieve it. The goal should be grounded in the area you explored in Discovery Award Personal Growth requirement 6.

## Service

8. Participate in service activities totaling at least 24 hours. Up to half of the service may be delivered personally; the rest must be delivered through crew service activities.

## Advisor Conference and Board of Review

9. Since earning the Venturing Award, participate in a conference with your Advisor.<sup>2</sup> As a part of this conference, discuss with your Advisor the challenges you faced and what you learned in fulfilling Personal Growth requirements 6 and 7.
10. After your Advisor conference, successfully complete a crew board of review.

<sup>1</sup> Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

<sup>2</sup> Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

# Pathfinder Award Requirements



## Adventure

1. Participate in at least two additional (for a total of at least four) Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level. Serve as a leader for one of the adventures.

## Leadership

2. Complete Project Management training.
3. Since earning the Discovery Award, plan and give leadership to a Tier II or Tier III adventure. Work with a youth mentor to ensure that you have organized the adventure in advance, that you are prepared for contingencies, and that you have prepared the members of your crew to take part. In some cases, you may need to confer with an external consultant to assure the adventure is feasible for your crew. The adventure must take place over at least two consecutive nights. If an event lasts more than four nights, an additional Venturer may share in planning and leading the adventure. If two Venturers plan the adventure, they should work with their mentor to ensure that the workload is divided fairly between the two leaders. At the close of the adventure, lead a reflection with the participants in the activity to determine what was learned and how it helped them to work together as a more effective team. An experienced Venturer should serve as your mentor for the adventure.<sup>3</sup>

4. Complete one of the following:
  - a. Since earning the Discovery Award, serve actively as crew president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, guide, historian, den chief, or quartermaster for a period of at least six months.<sup>4</sup> At the beginning of your term, work with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president) to set performance goals for the position. Any number of different positions may be held as long as the total length of service equals at least six months. Holding simultaneous positions does not shorten the required number of months. Positions need not flow from one to the other; there may be gaps in time. Once during your term of office, discuss your successes and challenges with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president).

OR

- b. Participate in or serve on staff for leadership training such as National Youth Leadership Training, Kodiak Challenge, National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, Order of the Arrow National Leadership Seminar, Sea Scout SEAL Training, or Wood Badge (for Venturers 18 or older). You may also participate in non-BSA leadership training courses such as those delivered by the National Outdoor Leadership School, if approved by your Advisor.

<sup>3</sup> If the crew does not have any youth mentors who have earned the Pathfinder Award and completed Mentoring training, an Advisor or associate Advisor may serve as a mentor to meet this requirement.

<sup>4</sup> Venturers may substitute district, council, area, regional, or national Venturing officer or cabinet positions for the positions listed in this requirement.

## Pathfinder Award Requirements



### Personal Growth

5. Since earning the Discovery Award, explore the two areas (Development of Faith,<sup>5</sup> Development of Self, or Development of Others) that you did not explore previously. Based on what you discover, prepare a set of personal reflections or thoughts on the subjects. Use your reflections and what you learned from the process to prepare for fulfilling Personal Growth requirement 7 and for your Pathfinder Award Advisor conference.
6. Participate in an ethical controversy discussion activity that includes an extension into conflict resolution.
7. In consultation with your Advisor, establish at least two personal goals, and achieve them. The goals should be grounded in the areas you explored in Pathfinder Personal Growth requirement 5.

### Service

8. Plan, organize, and give leadership to a project designed to sustain and grow your crew. Submit the plan to your crew president (or Advisor, if you are president), and explain how you think it will encourage more young people to join Venturing.
9. Participate in service activities totaling at least 36 hours. This in addition to the 24 hours of service required to earn the Discovery Award. Up to half of the service may be delivered personally; the rest must be delivered through crew activities.

### Advisor Conference and Board of Review

Upon completion of the Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service requirements, compete the following.

10. Participate in an Advisor conference. As a part of this conference, discuss with your Advisor the challenges you faced and what you learned in fulfilling Pathfinder Personal Growth requirements 5 and 7.
11. After your Advisor conference, successfully complete a crew board of review.

<sup>5</sup> Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

# Summit Award Requirements



## Adventure

1. Participate in at least three additional (for a total of seven) Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level. To earn the Summit Award, a Venturer must have participated in at least one Tier III adventure and served as a leader during one adventure.

## Leadership

2. Complete Mentoring training prior to initiating mentoring relationships.
3. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, mentor another Venturer in the planning and implementation of a crew, council, area, regional, or national Venturing activity (see Summit Adventure requirement 1). Work with the youth enough to ensure he or she is ready to lead and has organized the appropriate resources, is prepared for contingencies, and has developed an itinerary, conducted training to support the adventure, and mitigated risk before and during the adventure. Participate in the adventure and provide feedback on how the adventure was conducted.
4. Complete two of the following.
  - a. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, serve actively as crew president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, guide, historian, den chief, or quartermaster for a period of at least six months.<sup>6</sup> At the beginning of your term, work with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president) to set performance goals for the position. Any number of different positions may be held as long as the total length of service equals at least six months. Holding simultaneous positions does not shorten the required number of months. Positions need not flow from one to the other; there may be gaps in time. Once during your term of office, discuss your successes and challenges with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president).
  - b. Participate in or serve on staff for leadership training such as National Youth Leadership Training, Kodiak Challenge, National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, Order of the Arrow National Leadership Seminar, Sea Scout SEAL Training, or Wood Badge (for Venturers 18 or older). You may also participate in non-BSA leadership training courses such as those delivered by the National Outdoor Leadership School, if approved by your Advisor. This must be a different training course than you completed for Pathfinder Award requirement 4(b) or Summit Award requirement 4(c).
  - c. Lead the delivery of Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews for members of your Venturing crew or another local Venturing crew or for a local district or council training event. After leading the training course, discuss with your crew Advisor how you believe you helped build the skill set of your crew and what you learned by organizing the training course.

<sup>6</sup> Venturers may substitute district, council, area, regional, or national Venturing officer or cabinet positions for the positions listed in this requirement.

# Summit Award Requirements



## Personal Growth

5. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, complete a structured personal reflection. Use this reflection to prepare for goal-setting and as part of your Advisor conference. Explore two of the following areas: Development of Faith,<sup>7</sup> Development of Self, or Development of Others. You may explore two different areas or explore one area twice.
6. Create a personal code of conduct. This code of conduct should be guided by your explorations in the areas of faith, self, and others.
7. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, lead an ethical controversy and conflict resolution scenario with members of your Venturing crew.

## Service

8. Since earning the Pathfinder award, plan and conduct a service project as described in the Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook. Before you start, have the project proposal form from the workbook completed and approved by those benefiting from the effort, your Advisor, and designated crew or ship youth leadership. This project must be a different service project than one carried out for the Eagle Scout Award, the Sea Scout Quartermaster Award, or the Girl Scout Gold Award.

## Advisor Conference and Board of Review

Upon completion of the Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service requirements, complete the following.

9. Participate in an Advisor conference. As a part of this conference, share your code of conduct with your Advisor, and explain how your explorations of faith, self, and others and your goal-setting exercises influenced the development of your code.
10. After your Advisor conference, successfully complete a crew board of review.

<sup>7</sup> Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

## Summit Board of Review

For the Summit Award, the board of review will be conducted according to the BSA *Guide to Advancement*.

The board of review must consist of at least five, but no more than six, members. At least half of the board of review members, excluding the chair, must be Venturers currently participating in the program.

The candidate's crew president (or vice president of administration, if the candidate is the crew president) and the chair of the board of review must agree upon the board's final membership makeup. If the chair and the crew president (or vice president of administration) cannot agree, the candidate's Advisor will make the final determination of board membership, including members previously considered by the crew president and chair.

**Board of Review Chair.** The adult chair of the board of review shall be a Venturing-certified member of the district or local council advancement committee or a designated Venturing-certified representative. "Venturing-certified" means that the person has completed Venturing Awards and Recognition training.

**Venturer Representatives.** The board of review should include at least two active Venturers, at least one of whom must be from the candidate's crew. Other Venturing members of the board of review should be selected from the following list.

- A current holder of the Summit Award or Silver Award
- A member of the council, area, or region Venturing Officers Association or equivalent
- A Venturer who currently holds an elected office in a crew
- An Eagle Scout, Quartermaster, or Girl Scout Gold award recipient who is an active Venturer

In the event the chair determines that no Venturer is available who meets one of these qualifications, the crew president may nominate another Venturer from the candidate's crew to serve on the board of review.

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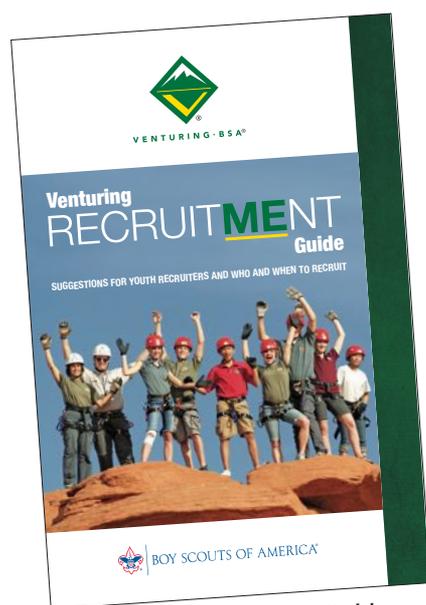
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# Venturing Recruiting Toolbox

Check out a wealth of resources you can use when planning your crew sustainability projects:

- The Venturing Recruitment Guide: Suggestions for Youth Recruiters and Who and When to Recruit, No. 523-506, available in printer-ready and printer-friendly versions
- Customizable flyers and posters that allow you to enter your crew meeting information before printing
- Printable brochures designed to excite your guests to the possibilities that await them in Venturing
- A Fast Facts sheet to help you introduce Venturing to your guests



*Venturing Recruitment Guide*



*Venturing BSA Brochure*

**For more information and links to all these resources (and more!), visit <https://www.scouting.org/programs/venturing/crew-resources/marketing-toolbox>**

## Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country  
and to obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong,  
mentally awake, and morally straight.

## Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful,  
friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful,  
thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

## Venturing Motto

Lead the Adventure.

**Prepared. For Life.®**



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