

Green Bar Bill's Patrol Corner

Ten Tips for Being a Better Patrol Leader

What does it take to be a good patrol leader? Here are 10 keys to effective leadership that Scoutmasters can provide to a boy about to assume a role important both to the quality of Scouting experience his patrol receives and to his own personal development.

1. Be a good communicator. You do not have to have a commanding voice to be a good leader, but you must be willing to step out front with an effective "Let's go!" A good leader knows how to get and give information so that everyone understands.

2. Keep your word. Don't make promises you can't keep.

3. Be fair to all. A good leader shows

no favorites. Don't allow friendships to stand in the way of being fair to all members of your patrol.

4. Be flexible. Everything won't always go as planned. Be prepared to shift to "Plan B" when "Plan A" doesn't work.

5. Be organized. At patrol meetings, record who is responsible for each task, and have the duty roster filled out prior to going on a camp-out.

6. Delegate. Some leaders assume the job will not get done unless they do it themselves. Most people like to be challenged with a task. Let them try doing things they haven't tried before.

7. Set the example. Whatever you do, your patrol members are likely to do the same. Having a cheerful attitude

can help keep everyone in good spirits.

8. Be consistent. Nothing is more confusing than

a leader who is one way one moment and the opposite a short time later. If your patrol knows what to expect from you, they will more likely respond positively to your leadership.

9. Give praise. Often, "Nice job!" is all the praise necessary to make a Scout feel he is making a worthwhile contribution.

10. Ask for help. When confronted with a situation you don't know how to handle, ask someone with more experience for some advice and direction. ☺

Troop program ideas and methods for improving patrol teamwork, adapted from material by the late William (Green Bar Bill) Hillcourt or from other sources, appear periodically in this column.