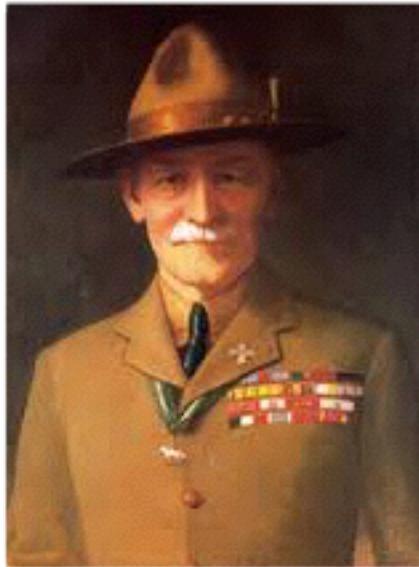


Lord Robert Baden-Powell's

# LETTER TO A PATROL LEADER



*What I have often told to gatherings of Patrol Leaders, I repeat now to you who read this; namely, that you have great power to do good or to do harm to the Scouts placed under your charge. It largely depends on your character and your example to them which way they go.*

*There are three steps you should take:*

First, win your boys by making yourself their friend and helper.

Secondly, influence them by your example in conduct and in doing things.

Thirdly, control them with your good sense and by keeping them to the teaching of the Scout Law.

*Your key to success is to thoroughly understand the inner meaning of the Scout Law, to carry it out in all that you do and thereby to give the lead to your boys.*

# Your Duties as Patrol Leader

When you accepted the position of patrol leader, you agreed to provide service and leadership to your patrol and troop. No doubt you will take this responsibility seriously, but you will also find it fun and rewarding. As a patrol leader, you are expected to do the following:

Plan and lead patrol meetings and activities.

- Keep patrol members informed.
- Assign each patrol member a specific duty.
- Represent your patrol at all patrol leaders' council meetings and the annual program planning conference.
- Prepare the patrol to participate in all troop activities.
- Work with other troop leaders to make the troop run well.
- Know the abilities of each patrol member.
- Set a good example.
- Wear the Scout uniform correctly.
- Live by the Scout Oath and Law.
- Show and develop patrol spirit.







# Weekly Patrol Meeting Plan

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Week \_\_\_\_\_

Activity	Description	Run by	Time
Opening _____ minutes			
Business _____ minutes			
Skill/Activity _____ minutes			
Closing _____ minutes			
After the meeting _____ minutes			

# Patrol Spirit

## Patrol Song

Record your patrol song here:

## Patrol Cheer

Record your patrol cheer here:

# Ten Tips for Being a Good Patrol Leader

- 1) **Keep Your Word.** Don't make promises you can't keep.
- 2) **Be Fair to All.** A good leader shows no favorites. Don't allow friendships to keep you from being fair to all members of your patrol. Know who likes to do what, and assign duties to patrol members by what they like to do.
- 3) **Be a Good Communicator.** You don't need 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 what's going on.
- 4) **Be Flexible.** Everything doesn't always go as planned. Be prepared to shift to "plan B" when "plan A" doesn't work.
- 5) **Be Organized.** The time you spend planning will be repaid many times over. At patrol meetings, record who agrees to do each task, and fill out the duty roster before going camping.
- 6) **Delegate.** Some leaders assume that the job will not get done unless they do it themselves. Most people like to be challenged with a task. Empower your patrol members to do things they have never tried.
- 7) **Set an Example.** The most important thing you can do is lead by example. Whatever you do, your patrol members are likely to do the same. A cheerful attitude can keep everyone's spirits up.
- 8) **Be Consistent.** Nothing is more confusing than a leader who is one way one moment and another way 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.** The best way to get credit is to give it away. Often a "Nice job" is all the praise necessary to make a Scout feel he is contributing to the efforts of the patrol.
- 10) **Ask for Help.** Don't be embarrassed to ask for help. You have many resources at your disposal. When confronted with a situation you don't know how to handle, ask someone with more experience for some advice and direction.

# Learning About Leadership

"Learning About Leadership" is adapted from *Patrol and Troop Leadership*, the handbook on leadership development written for Patrol Leaders and published by the Boy Scouts of America in 1972.

## Why Leadership?

In most football teams the quarterback is the team leader. Why is that? Is there something magic about the position? Does he automatically become the leader -- the guy who makes the team go -- when he is named quarterback by the coach?

No, there's more to it than that. Lots more. Usually he is named quarterback because he's already a leader. He's already the kind of guy the other players like to follow.

And if the coach is wrong about him, he probably won't stay quarterback very long. If he can't lead the team, he won't have much value even if he can hit a receiver at 40 yards. Because every successful team must have a leader.

That goes for your Scouting team, too -- your patrol and your troop. In fact, if the patrol and troop are to succeed, you need several leaders. Guys like yourself who want to try "quarterbacking" in Scouting. One of the aims of your local council Junior Leader Training Conference is to show you how to become a better leader.

Let's begin by being honest about it. This handbook is not going to make you a good leader. You are not going to find 5 or 10 simple rules to follow to become a good leader. If leadership were as easy as that, almost everyone would be a good leader. And you know that most people are not.

There are no rules for leadership. But there are certain skills that every good leader seems to have. You learned about them at your local council Junior Leader Training Conference and have practiced some of them in your troop at home.

Some of these skills you may already have even without knowing it. That's the funny thing about leadership -- a good leader doesn't necessarily know how he does it. He just does what comes naturally and the others follow him. Although he may not know it, he has mastered the skills of leadership.

This doesn't mean we guarantee that you'll be elected student council president next year. Or that you will be the Super Bowl quarterback 15 years from now or President of the United States in 35 years. But we do guarantee that you can make yourself a much better leader in just a few weeks or months.

## What Is Leadership?

Leadership is a process of getting things done through people. The quarterback moves the team toward a touchdown. The senior patrol leader guides the troop to a high rating at the camporee. The mayor gets the people to support new policies to make the city better. These leaders are getting things done by working through people -- football players, Scouts, and ordinary citizens. They have used the process of leadership to reach certain goals.

Leadership is not a science. So being a leader is an adventure because you can never be sure whether you will reach your goal -- at least this time. The touchdown drive may end in a fumble. The troop may have a bad weekend during the camporee. Or the city's citizens may not be convinced that the mayor's policies are right. So these leaders have to try again, using other methods. But they still use the same process the process of good leadership.

Leadership means responsibility. It's adventure and often fun, but it always means responsibility. The leader is the guy the others look to get the job done. So don't think your job as a troop leader or a staff member will be just an honor. It's more than that. It means that the other Scouts expect you to take the responsibility of getting the job done. If you lead, they will do the job. If you don't, they may expect you to do the job all by yourself. That's why it's important that you begin right now to learn what leadership is all about.

Wear your badge of office proudly. It does not automatically make you a good leader. But it identifies you as a Scout who others want to follow -- if you'll let them by showing leadership.

You are not a finished leader. No one ever is, not even a president or prime minister. But you are an explorer of the human mind because now you are going to try to learn how to get things done through people. This is one of the keys to leadership.

You are searching for the secrets of leadership. Many of them lie locked inside you. As you discover them and practice them, you will join a special group of people-skilled leaders.

Good exploring -- both in this handbook and with the groups you will have a chance to lead.

### **The Tasks of Leadership**

In this section, we will consider several common statements about the people who serve in leadership positions throughout our world. After you have read the statement, decide for yourself whether you feel it is true or false and why you think it is.

Here is the first one. True or false?

***The only people who lead have some kind of leadership job, such as chairman, coach, or king.***

Do you think that's true? Don't you believe it. It's true that chairmen, coaches, and kings lead, but people who hold no leadership position also lead. And you can find some people who have a leader's title and ought to lead. But they don't.

In other words, you are not a leader because you wear the leader's hat. Or because you wear the patrol leader's insignia on your uniform. You are a leader only when you are getting things done through other people.

Leadership, then, is something people do. Some people inherit leadership positions, such as kings, or nobles, or heads of family businesses. Some are elected: chairman, governor, patrol leader. Some are appointed, such as a coach, a city manager, or a den chief. Or they may just happen to be there when a situation arises that demands leadership. A disaster occurs, or a teacher doesn't show up when class begins, or a patrol leader becomes sick on a campout.

Try this statement. Is it true or false?

***Leadership is a gift. If you are born with it, you can lead. If you are not, you can't.***

Some people will tell you that. Some really believe it. But it's not so.

Leadership does take skill. Not everyone can learn all the skills of leadership as well as anyone else. But most people can learn some of them -- and thus develop their own potential.

You don't have to be born with leadership. Chances are, you weren't. But you were born with a brain. If you can learn to swim or play checkers or do math, you can learn leadership skills.

How about this statement. True or false?

***"Leader" is another word for "boss."***

Well, what do you mean by "boss"? A guy who pushes and orders other people around? No, a leader is not one of those. (But some people try to lead this way.)

Or do you mean a boss is somebody who has a job to do and works with other people to get it done? This is true. A leader is a boss in that sense.

True or false?

***Being a leader in a Scout troop is like being a leader anywhere else.***

This one is true. When you lead in a Scout troop, you will do many of the same things as any leader anywhere.

The important thing now is Scouting gives you a chance to lead. You can learn how to lead in Scouting. You can practice leadership in Scouting. Then you can lead other groups, too. The skills you will need are very much the same.

### **What Does a Leader Deal with?**

Every leader deals with just two things. Here they are: the **job** and the **group**.

The **job** is what's to be done. The "job" doesn't necessarily mean work. It could be playing a game. It could be building a skyscraper. It could be getting across an idea.

A leader is needed to get the job done. If there were no job, there would be no need for a leader.

The **group**, such as a patrol, is the people who do the job. And in many cases, the group continues after the job is done. This is where leading gets tough, as you'll see later.

Think about this situation. Mark has a lot of firewood to split. There he is, all alone with his ax. He's got a job to do. Is he a leader?

We have to say in this situation that Mark won't be leading. Why? No group. There's nobody on the job but Mark.

Here's another example. Danny and three of his friends are on their bikes. They have no place to go. They're just riding slowly, seeing how close they can get to each other. Is Danny -- or any one of the others -- a leader?

From what we know, we have to say no. Why? No job. There's a group of friends, but nothing special to be done. You don't need a leader for that. (You don't need a group, either.)

### **The Job of a Leader**

A leader works with two things: a job and a group. You can always tell when a leader succeeds, because:

1. The job gets done.

2. The group holds together.

Let's see why it takes both.

Frank was elected patrol leader. That same week, the patrol had a job cleaning up an old cemetery.

It was Frank's first leadership position, and he wanted it to go right. In his daydream he could see the Scoutmaster praising him for the great cleanup job. So when Saturday morning came, Frank and the patrol went over to the cemetery, and Frank started to get the job done.

He hollered. He yelled. He threatened. He called them names. He worked like a tiger himself. It was a rough day, but the cemetery got cleaned up.

Frank went home sort of proud, sort of mad, and very tired.

"How'd things go, Frank?" the Scoutmaster asked a few days later. "Good."  
"No problems?"

"No." Frank wondered what he meant by that.

"Oh! Well, a couple of the boys in your patrol asked me if they could change to another patrol. I thought maybe something had gone wrong...."

And that was how Frank learned that getting the job done isn't all there is to leadership. He had really given the group a hard time, and now they wanted to break up.

Almost anybody with a whip and a mean temper can get a job done. But in doing it, they usually destroy the group. And that's not leadership. The group must go on.

Another new patrol leader called a meeting at his house. Everybody seemed to be hungry when they came. So they got some snacks from the kitchen. Then they tossed a football around. It began to get dark, and one by one they went home. Everybody had fun. But the patrol meeting -- the job -- never started.

One of the following statements is the message of this section. Which one?

- a. Nice guys finish last.
- b. Mean guys finish last.
- c. Leaders get the job done and keep the group going.
- d. Leaders have a special title or badge that makes others like to follow.

We'll take the third one. Will you?

## **What Affects Leadership?**

Leadership is not magic that comes out of a leader's head. It's skill. The leader learns how to get the job done and still keep the group together.

Does this mean that the leader does the same things in every situation? No. Here's why. Leadership differs with the leader, the group, and the situation.

**Leaders** -- like other people are all different. No leader can take over another leader's job and do it the same way.

**Groups** are different, too. A great football coach might have difficulty leading an orchestra. A good sergeant might be a poor Scoutmaster. So when a leader changes groups, he changes the way he leads.

**Situations** differ, too. The same leader with the same group must change with conditions. A fellow leading a group discussion needs to change his style of leadership when a fire breaks out. As a Scout leader, you probably can't lead the group in the rain the same as you do in the sunshine.

An effective leader, then, must be alert at all times to the reaction of the members of the group; the conditions in which he may find himself; and be aware of his own abilities and reactions.

## **Leadership Develops**

Picture a long scale like a yardstick. On the low end, there are no leadership skills. On the other end, there is a complete set of leadership skills.

Everyone is somewhere between those ends!

Where do you find yourself at this time? Unknowingly, you may be further up the scale than you realize. As a staff member you'll now have the opportunity to find out.

## **How Will You Know You are Improving?**

You learn leadership best by working with groups. That is something like learning swimming best by getting into the water.

Yet you can't keep track of your progress without a guide. You must know and understand what you are trying to learn. This means you have to know what the skills of leadership are.

### **HOW TO PASS ON INSTRUCTIONS**

- 1) Line up your patrol and stand facing them. Do not start talking until you are sure you've got their attention. If necessary, bring them to attention, then stand them at ease or let them squat.
- 2) If you have been given written instructions to pass on, read them out loud to the patrol. Read slowly. Keep glancing up in case anyone's attention is wandering. Never allow anyone to peer over your shoulder.
- 3) When you have put all your scouts "in the picture", give each one a definite job to do. If you can hand him his part of the instruction in writing, so much the better.
- 4) When you start working, remember that you are responsible for five or six pairs of hands -- not just one. If you become too deeply involved in the actual work yourself, you may immobilize yourself as a leader. Keep your own hands in your pockets until you see that every other pair of hands in the patrol is busy -- then you can join in. In other words, bring your own hands into action LAST.
- 5) When working with the patrol, try to occupy a position that will enable you to keep an eye on the work of the others.

### **OTHER HELPFUL HINTS**

- 1) Never give an order unless you are certain it will be carried out; Then, always check to be sure that it was carried out.
- 2) Never give unnecessary orders.
- 3) Be sure that you know the results that you want.
- 4) Your instructions should be as brief as possible, clear as daylight
- 5) Select the right person for the job.
- 6) Check for understanding.
- 7) Check for progress:  
    either make periodic inspections of the work-in-process or have the person check back with you.

### **HINTS FOR HANDLING A GROUP**

- 1) Don't start talking until you have the attention of the entire group. Just stand up and wait for the chatter to subside. Don't rap for attention. Someone will see you standing there, ready to begin, and will do the shushing for you.

- 2) Talk to the entire group. If you direct your attention exclusively to one or two you are eager to impress, the others will sense they are being ignored and start acting up to gain attention.
- 3) Don't let one person monopolize everyone's time.
- 4) Don't stand for whispering, talking or horseplay in your group. Stop and wait for the mannerless person to quit.
- 5) Don't "scold" -- just keep things so interesting that competition can't develop.
- 8) Never raise your voice to outshout someone who's trying to interrupt you. Keep talking till you've made your point -- but lower your voice. People will automatically strain to hear you and will tune out the loudmouth.
- 9) If things start to get out of hand -- stop -- then ask for cooperation, then go ahead.
- 10) Pause, occasionally, always at the end of a sentence to let your words sink in and to look around at your listeners.
- 11) NEVER allow anyone to stand behind you or peer over your shoulder.

***To keep Scouts alert -- ASK QUESTIONS -- do this to keep their attention - not in order to embarrass anyone.***