

ONE PAGE GUIDE to SCOUTMASTER'S CONFERENCES

4.2.3.5 Unit Leader (Scoutmaster) Conference [Guide to Advancement 2011]

The unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference, regardless of the rank or program, is conducted according to the guidelines in the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009. Note that a Scout must participate or take part in one; it is not a "test." Requirements do *not* say he must "pass" a conference. While it makes sense to hold one after other requirements for a rank are met, it is not required that it be the last step before the board of review. This is an important consideration for Scouts on a tight schedule to meet the requirements before age 18. Last-minute work can sometimes make it impossible to fit

the conference in before then, so scheduling it earlier can avoid unnecessary extension requests.

The conference can provide a forum for discussing ambitions and life purpose and for establishing goals for future achievement, but work left to be completed may be discussed just as easily as that which is finished. If appropriate, an "object lesson" on delayed effort could prove valuable. Ultimately, conference timing is up to the unit. Some leaders hold more than one along the way, and any of them can count toward the requirement.

The Scoutmaster Conference [Scoutmaster Handbook, No. 33009]

The Scoutmaster conference is a visit between the Scoutmaster and a Scout held each time the boy completes the requirements for a rank. It is a valuable opportunity to discuss his activity in the troop and his understanding and practice of the ideals of Scouting. Together they can set goals not only in Scouting but also in his family, school, and community.

A Scout taking part in a Scoutmaster conference will be able to determine if he is ready to go before the board of review. The Scoutmaster can also encourage a boy's advancement in Scouting by reviewing with him the requirements for his next rank. The Scoutmaster conference can be used as a counseling tool at any time and for a variety of other reasons.

GOALS

- Establish trust and understanding between a Scout and Scoutmaster.
- Reinforce the ideals of Scouting.
- Allow the Scout and Scoutmaster to share ideas and ask questions of one another.
- Set goals and outline steps for achieving them.

POINTERS

Tenderfoot through Life - 10 to 15 minutes.

Eagle Scout - 30 minutes.

- Make the conference special. Give the Scout your undivided attention.
- Invite the Scout to share.
- Keep the setting relaxed. (*Don't sit behind a desk or across a table from the Scout.*)
- Conferences can be conducted during troop meetings, outdoor activities, or at the Scout's home.
- A conference should be a private discussion between the Scoutmaster and a Scout, but held in full view of other people.
- Keep the tone positive. If there are areas of improvement to discuss, be sure to bring up behavior and achievements you can praise, too.

Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class

Congratulate the Scout on completing the advancement requirements, and then explain what he can expect when he meets with the board of review. Look over the requirements for the next rank and make sure he understands them

Star, Life, Eagle

- How he feels the troop as a whole is doing, and what he can do to enhance it
- Troop leadership positions he sees for himself
- His view of himself as a role model
 - His part-time jobs or extracurricular activities
 - Merit badges he is interested in earning
 - Special Scouting goals such as O.A. membership, attending a jamboree, or working on a camp staff

SUBJECTS

- Favorite and least favorite subjects in School.
- Sports and hobbies.
- What he liked best about the last troop outing.
- Changes he would like to see in troop meetings.
- How he deals with older boys in the troop.
- Activities with his family.
- How he defines concepts such as Scout spirit, being morally straight, and duty to God.
- What he does in his free time.
- When appropriate, his interest and ability in handling a patrol job such as scribe or quartermaster, or a greater responsibility such as patrol leader.

Conclude each Scoutmaster conference by talking with the Scout about goals he would like to achieve, and help him realize he has the ability to accomplish a great deal. Offer praise for his Scout work. Close the meeting with a handshake as you remind the Scout that you always welcome the chance to visit with him, and that he can talk with you anytime he has a question, a problem, or a success he wants to share.

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