

Troop 351 Scoutmaster Conference Summary

Scouts MUST come "PREPARED" for their Scoutmaster conference. We inform them that it is just like a job interview. If the SM lets a scout show up to the troop committee for a Board of Review unprepared not only does it reflect on him but his supporting ASM's and the troop.

Here in the Scouts, we pride ourselves on "Setting a good example".

Be Prepared for a Scoutmaster Conference:

- Full Class "A" uniform with the patches and insignias representing his current rank and position.
- Uniform must be clean and in order.
- Neckerchief with a respectful neckerchief slide. No rubber bands, clips and so on.
- Boy Scout Belt
- Merit badge sash only. No OA sashes are to be worn for SM Conferences or BoR as those are not OA ceremonies or official activities.
- OBS, (Official Boy Scout) socks if wearing OBS shorts.
- Any other awards such as medals and such

Also:

- Current Scout Handbook
- All requirements signed off with initials of the youth leader and the full date of each requirement signed off. Full date means day, month and year.
- A TroopMastrer IPR, Individual Progress report. This report should be generated by the scout. Training on TM is available. Each scout should be able to use and manage their profile on TM.
- A letter indicating the scouts required service hours MUST be submitted to the advancement chair for placement into the system **prior to the SM conference** so an IPR can be generated and a permanent record of those service hours are recorded.

The "Scoutmaster" with the addition of another ASM(s) will perform the scoutmaster conferences. If the scoutmaster is unavailable and a conference is requested for a lower rank, the ASM will clear it with the Scoutmaster to perform the conference himself with another ASM.

The Scoutmaster and only the Scoutmaster will perform the upper rank conferences. Upper rank is defined as Star, Life and Eagle.

If anyone has any questions regarding this procedure which has been in place for some time now, please feel free to contact the SM at any time and it would be his pleasure to discuss it with you further.

Thank you for your support.

The Purpose of the Scoutmaster Conference

According to the Boy Scouts of America charter, the purpose of Boy Scouting is to develop in a young man the ability to do things for himself and for others; to train him in outdoor skills; and to teach him patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues. We use the methods of Scouting—including advancement, the outdoors, and adult association—to accomplish these goals. The Scoutmaster conference allows the Scoutmaster to review these benchmarks:

- The Scout's growth in his understanding of Scouting's ideals
- How the Scout applies these ideals in his daily life and in the troop
- The requirements of the Scout's next rank so that he can be properly encouraged

Why does the Scoutmaster engage in this one-on-one review? The relationship between a

Scout and his Scoutmaster is important for the troop's health and for the Scout's success. The Scoutmaster must watch the troop's dynamics to see who is showing leadership, who is holding back, who is shy, who is working with the younger boys, who is skilled in outdoor activities, etc. Further, the Scoutmaster must watch the individual Scout to determine whether he is advancing, whether he is having fun, and whether he seems eager or uneasy.

These functions are not easily performed if a Scoutmaster delegates a Scoutmaster conference to assistants. In a boy-led troop, the Scoutmaster does not assert his authority, but guides and counsels every Scout so that the troop can function well and serve the purposes of Boy Scouting. The Scoutmaster conference is one of the primary ways the Scoutmaster does this. In large troops, delegating this function may be necessary, especially when large numbers of Webelos Scouts are joining the troop. In these cases, an experienced assistant Scoutmaster can fill in to conduct the Scoutmaster conference. Remember, however, that this first Scoutmaster conference is vital to the new Scout's development. Even in a large troop, a Scoutmaster should not delegate a conference with any candidate for Star, Life, and Eagle.

When and Where to Hold a Scoutmaster Conference

The Scoutmaster conference should be held in a quiet place that is conducive to give and take between the Scout and Scoutmaster. There should be no possibility for embarrassing the Scout. Remember that the BSA Youth Protection policy requires that one-on-one sessions between a youth and an adult be visible and accessible by other people.

Some possible meeting places include a quiet corner of the Scout meeting hall during a troop meeting or, in a larger troop, a hallway outside the troop meeting area. At a campout, on a hike, or at summer camp are good times for a Scoutmaster conference as long as the Scout and Scoutmaster remain visible to the other adults and Scouts. An ideal place for a Scout's first Scoutmaster conference might be at the boy's home, where he may be more comfortable and better able to express his hopes and desires.

Because the conference is designed to provide direct give and take between Scout and Scoutmaster, both for the Scout's good and for the good of the troop, a Scoutmaster conference can take place any time, especially when a Scoutmaster senses that a Scout needs a conference or if the Scout asks for one. Of course, each rank advancement requires that a boy have a formal Scoutmaster conference.

Types of Scoutmaster Conferences

A Scoutmaster conference is simply a chance to talk to a Scout about how he is doing, how he feels about the troop and his role in it, how he is advancing, and how he is striving to live up to Scouting's ideals. Consequently, a Scoutmaster conference can take place anytime and for any reason. Some reasons to have a Scoutmaster conference may include:

- A Scout's lack of advancement
- A perceived trouble between the Scout and others in the troop
- A certain event at the last campout or troop meeting

The required Scoutmaster conferences for advancement should not be perceived any differently than any other conference. Making a Scoutmaster conference an advancement requirement affords every Scout at least one opportunity at each rank level to meet with his Scoutmaster in this personal way. Each rank involves progressively greater mastery of Scouting skills and advancing leadership growth. Therefore, the advancement Scoutmaster conferences should reflect the Scout's increasing maturity.

Another issue to be considered at the Scoutmaster conference is the concept of Scout spirit, which is part of the advancement process.