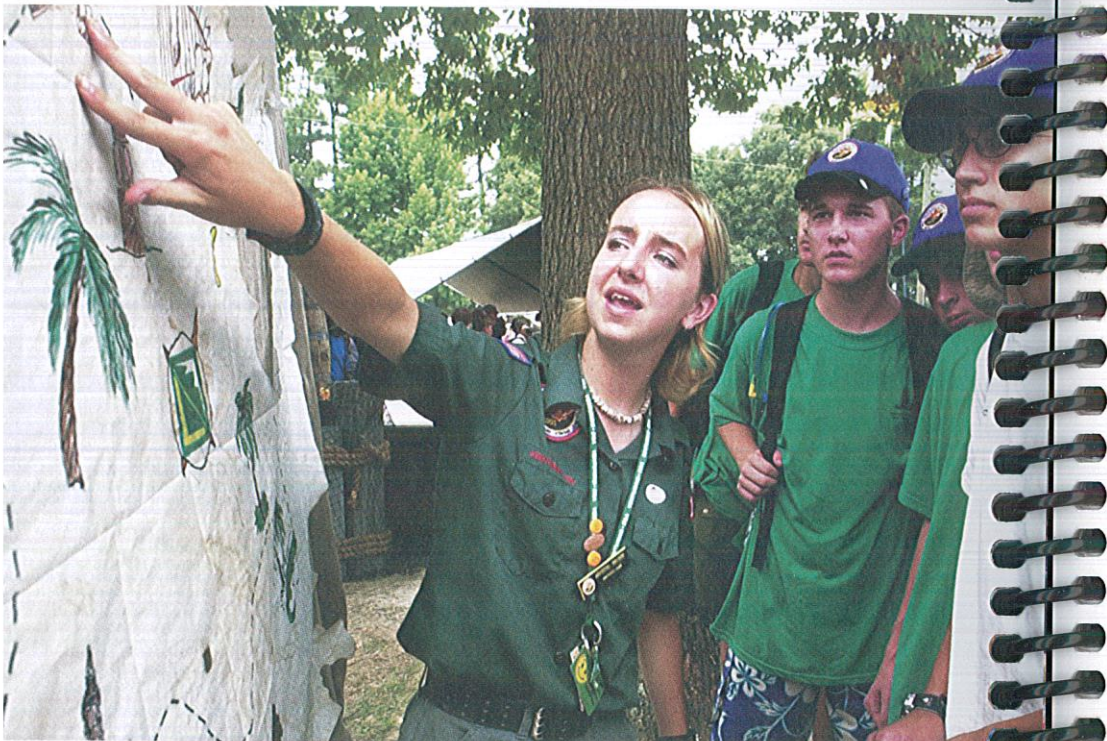


Chapter 3: Leading and Planning in Venturing





VENTURING · BSA®



Leading the Crew

When you become a Venturing officer, you will be encouraged to take responsibility for many facets of the crew's planning and operations. Some areas of responsibility will be harder for you to master than other areas. But learning to take responsibility for others is part of the process of growing into a leader.



Recognition Note

Serving as a crew officer is one of the leadership requirements for the Pathfinder and Summit awards.

The role of a Venturing officer is to foster and develop an environment within the Venturing crew that has a true sense of community and encourages growth and responsibility to one another in the following ways.

1. Set an appropriate personal example of living the Scout Oath and Scout Law as you lead.
2. Help set and achieve the vision, objectives, and goals of the crew.
3. Help each member of the crew be fully engaged in crew activities and in personal growth through Venturing.
4. Help your leadership team set priorities and focus on key tasks to fulfill and meet your objectives.
5. Solve problems and make decisions.
6. Through your example and selfless service, persuade, motivate, and inspire others to follow.
7. Ensure, in conjunction with your Advisor, that the activities and goals of your crew uphold the mission, standards, and policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America and are conducted within BSA safety guidelines.
8. Ensure that the crew is stronger at the end of your leadership term than it was when you began.
9. Have fun as you lead and ensure that the other crew members are enjoying their crew experience as well.

Use these responsibilities to evaluate how you are doing throughout the year, but not as a judgment of your performance. Over time and with experience, you will find that you have changed—that your ability to lead has improved.

Not only do leaders serve the groups to which they belong, but they also share leadership responsibilities with others. No single person can do everything on his or her own. The best leaders recognize that they have to work with others. One of their goals is to get others to work together. By working together, members of a group can accomplish much more than any one person can alone.



Recognition Note

Completing Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews and Crew Officers Orientation is required for the Discovery Award. Completing ILSC entitles you to wear the “Trained” emblem on your green Venturing uniform shirt.

Positions Within the Crew

The many formal leadership roles—known as crew officers—available in Venturing can vary from crew to crew. They can even change over time in the same crew, depending on the crew’s size and needs. Most critical to the success of a crew are the roles of president, administrative vice president, program vice president, communications vice president or secretary, and treasurer. The president and vice presidents of a crew are usually elected by the entire crew. In many crews, the other officers are appointed by the president in consultation with other officers. The responsibilities of crew officers are listed below. As an officer, you should become familiar with the position description for your office and study the descriptions of the other officers so that you work effectively as a team.

The Venturing website offers the Crew Officers Orientation. Visit www.scouting.org/venturing.

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 was 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.

Advisor and Associate Advisors

The Advisor is responsible for supporting and 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 provide additional guidance and assistance to the members of the crew. The Advisor and the associate Advisor serve as coaches and mentors for the youth officers; the youth lead the crew in consultation with the Advisor and associate Advisor. Advisors are appointed by the head of the chartered organization. They can be male or female, but must be at least 21 years of age. The principal responsibilities and characteristics of the Advisors include:

- Foster a true sense of community within the Venturing crew, and encourage everyone’s growth and responsibility to one another.
- Develop crew officers to lead—to plan, make decisions, and carry out a program of activities over an extended period.
- Encourage participation and support for the Venturing crew from the chartered organization, associate crew Advisors, crew committee, parents, and other adults in the community.
- Uphold the standards and policies of the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America.
- Provide a framework for protecting the members of a crew from abuse.
- Ensure that activities are conducted within BSA safety guidelines and requirements. Advisors must be trained by the BSA.
- Seek to cultivate within the members of a crew a capacity to enjoy life—to have fun through the Venturing experience.

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 forms, 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 was 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.

Sharing your responsibility with others is a part of Venturing. It's a quality of good leadership.

Vice President of Communications or Secretary

Effective communication is a key ingredient in any organization. The vice president of communications 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 the vice president of communications or secretary, and other crew members can be enlisted to help as well.

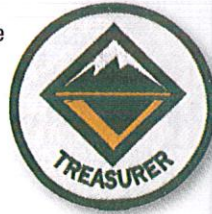


The principal responsibilities of the position include:

- 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




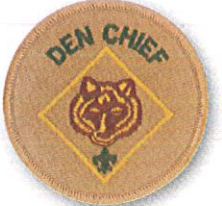
The crew treasurer is responsible for keeping accurate records of the income and expenditures of the crew's funds. The crew expects an exact accounting of all the money taken in or paid out. The treasurer ensures that all expenditures are approved by crew officers and the Advisor before writing any checks. 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.

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

Additional Office	Description of Responsibilities
 <p>Quartermaster</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>Crew Guide</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>Historian</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>Den Chief</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>

Crews may also create additional leadership roles, such as a webmaster, librarian, religious awards coordinator, or risk management coordinator, based on the size, needs, and interests of the crew.

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

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 that whether your crew is small or large, the crew committee is organized to assist you in fulfilling your crew vision and mission. When planning your program, always ask, "How can our crew committee assist us in our efforts to make this plan successful?"

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. Never before has the modern adage “If you build it, they will come” had greater application than in a small Venturing crew. If you have a great program and are actively involved in inviting your friends from school, neighbors, members of your religious congregation, and others to join the crew, you will be surprised how quickly you can grow from a small to a medium and then to a large crew. Remember, as new members join, get them involved immediately in program planning and carrying out your crew program and other crew assignments. The more new members are involved as more than just crew participants, the greater likelihood that they will stay and work to build and strengthen the crew.



Recognition Note

Helping your crew grow and nurture new members is the focus of the crew sustainability service project required for the Pathfinder Award. Work with other members of your crew to help your crew grow and thrive.

Beginning a New Crew Program Year

As you begin your tenure as a crew officer, you are starting a new crew program year. Like a trip in which the way you begin affects how well the trip goes, your first three months as a crew officer can affect how well the crew operates and how much you enjoy serving as an officer.

While every crew is unique, most effective crews follow a similar crew program year. Typically, the year begins with elections and then continues with the crew officers planning the year's activities before it moves on to the detailed planning for each adventure and its execution.

Depending on the crew, some of the steps may be reordered to suit their needs. In the case of some crews with established membership, wide interests, and varied capabilities, some steps may even be skipped.

Election of Officers

Elections for a one-year term should be held as soon as possible after the start-up of a crew or beginning of the crew year 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. Some crews find it helpful to elect officers for six-month terms. The approach your crew uses should reflect what makes sense for your crew.



Recognition Note

Serving as a crew officer is one of the leadership requirements for the Pathfinder and Summit awards.

Two types of elections may take place in a crew:

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

Whether elections are for temporary or permanent officers, the following procedures must be followed when the crew holds its regular election.

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. (All nominating committee members as well as nominees for crew officers must be registered Venturers.)

Those nominated should understand and commit to the responsibilities and the time involved. The role of the nominating committee is to interview prospective crew officers and prepare a slate of nominees. Nominating committee members should ensure that nominees are able and willing to serve. An associate Advisor should be involved with the nominating committee to lend support and advice.

3. 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.

The model described here reflects the practice of many crews: annual elections. However, each crew is different and therefore they may consider elections every 6 months, if it best meets their program needs. Such practice gives more Venturers the opportunity to serve in a crew leadership role, which is important, particularly in a large crew, as members work toward the Summit Award.

Crew Officers Briefing

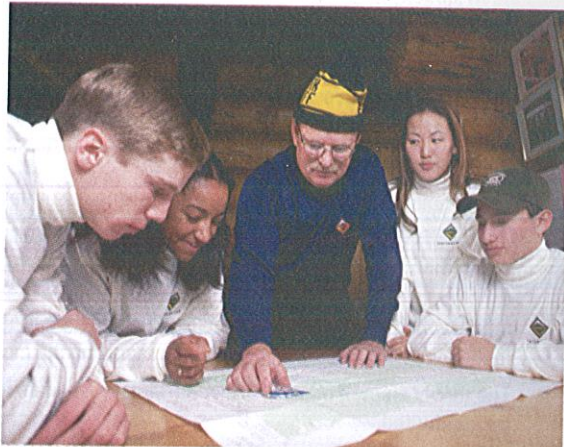
Right after the election, the Advisor and the new youth officers should schedule a crew officers briefing. This two-hour meeting can take place after school, on an evening, on a Saturday morning, or whenever convenient for the group. Choose a location where the briefing can be held without interruption.

The new youth president chairs the crew officers briefing with guidance and assistance from the Advisor. Before the meeting, the new youth president should carefully review the following areas with the Advisor so that he or she is fully prepared to chair this meeting effectively.

1. The president and Advisor should review the history of the crew and its program.
2. The Advisor and the president should review the purpose and agenda of the upcoming crew officers seminar and outline the tasks that need to be completed prior to the seminar (including the Program Capability Inventory and Venturing Activity Interest Survey forms).
3. If this is an existing crew, the president should be ready to discuss the crew's code of conduct and operating procedure.

If this is an established crew, the records from the previous officers should be given to the new officers.

This meeting should be fast-paced—it's your kickoff meeting! Its purpose is to prepare the new crew officers for the upcoming crew officers seminar, which is probably the most important event in the first three months of an officer's term. The Advisor should distribute a Venturing Planning Calendar, No. 331-012, to each officer in preparation for the crew officers seminar. Following the crew officers briefing, schedule the crew officers seminar.



Crew Officers Briefing Suggested Agenda

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Advisor

- Invite each officer to comment on how he or she feels the crew is doing and to suggest future activities.
- Ask each officer to read aloud his or her position description and to ask any questions regarding these responsibilities.

Opening Remarks by Youth President

President

- Establish motivational tone for the youth leadership team.
- Briefly discuss the crew's code and bylaws and the officers' responsibility to uphold them. The Advisor may comment on what he or she expects in the way of health, safety, or behavior standards.

Program Activity Update

President or Program Vice President

- Inform the officers of the next three or four crew meetings and activities.
- Clarify the date, time, and place of monthly officer meetings.

Explanation of PCI and Venturing Activity Interest Survey

Advisor

- Explain the PCI and how the responses to this crew's PCI will help shape the program of activities for the crew.
- Clarify the opportunity for the youth leadership to offer suggestions for this initial program. This is a good time to introduce and explain the Venturing Activity Interest Survey.
- Clarify the officers' responsibility to design the long-term program for the crew.

Preview of the Upcoming Crew Officers Seminar

President

- Clarify the purpose of the seminar.
- Inform officers of the date, time, place, and travel arrangements, if needed.

Conclusion

Advisor

- Close with a few individual remarks about what you hope the crew will accomplish.
- Share with the officers your faith in their ability to lead their own crew and your intent to provide as much guidance and support as needed.
- Advisor's Minute or Officer's Minute to close.

Crew Code of Conduct and Operating Procedures

If the crew does not have a crew code of conduct and standard operating procedures, the crew president should appoint a committee, chaired by the administrative vice president, to draft them. Once the officers review and approve the draft, it should be approved by the crew members. Subsequent additions and revisions can be made at a regular officers' meeting and presented for approval at the next crew business meeting.

The Scout Oath and Scout Law should be the preamble to the crew code of conduct and operating procedures.

The elected crew officers are expected to live by and enforce the crew code of conduct and operating procedures. New members should be given a copy and asked to sign or otherwise indicate that they understand and agree to the crew code of conduct and operating procedures.

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 your Advisor, associate Advisors, and crew president. This important session provides in-depth training for officers and the development of the year's program of activities.

The objectives of the crew officers seminar are

- To have you, the youth officers, learn your position responsibilities
- To build a working leadership team
- To acquaint the officers with Venturing leadership skills and the contents of the *Handbook for Venturers* and *Venturing Awards and Requirements*
- To plan the crew's program of activities for the coming year

This important seminar is an experience that, in one day, parallels the kind of leadership that will be needed throughout the coming year. It is probably the most important step you make as an officer. What you do here affects the whole crew.

This is the first time that the officers will actually undertake their leadership responsibilities.

At this hands-on seminar, officers will plan the crew's program and clarify the crew's expectations and goals. Then the group will consider how to share the program and get the entire crew committed to it.

Consider holding the crew officers seminar in a retreat setting such as a weekend campout or going to a motel. Have some fun while working and don't rush the task.

See *Planning the Crew's Activities* later in this chapter for more guidance in planning your crew's program. You will find it helpful for preparing for all of the experiences you create in Venturing.

Crew Officers Seminar Agenda

Led by a council or district facilitator, if available.

Explain the purpose and objective of the seminar.

- I. Duties.** Review and discuss officer and Advisor roles and responsibilities: why they joined and what they expect to get from their participation.
- II. Activities.** Discuss program planning process. Select one activity and practice steps in the planning process using the Activity Planner.

Plan this activity using the following steps:

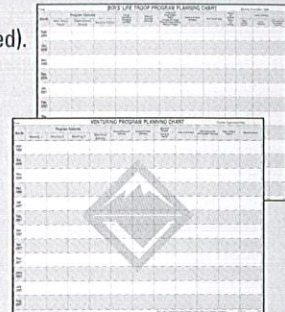
1. Determine the activity (what is to be accomplished).
2. Identify resources (equipment, costs, people).
3. Consider alternatives (brainstorm how to accomplish).
4. Reach a decision (what, when, where; make assignments).
5. Promote the activity (communication plan, commitments, follow-up).
6. Conduct the activity (share plan, follow up).
7. Evaluate the activity (determine if members liked it).

- III. Scheduling.** Plan and schedule a year's program. Review Program Capability Inventory and Venturing Activity Interest Survey for capabilities and interests. Use the brainstorming method to list definite activities for the year. Put the 12 monthly calendars on the wall and write in dates of crew meetings, topics of selected activities or special events, and the names of activity chairs. Avoid conflicts with school, vacations, etc. Before selecting activities, discuss their advantages and disadvantages and be sure activities are based on crew goals. Decide which fund-raising activities are necessary.

- IV. Meetings.** Discuss format for crew meetings (see Sample Regular Crew Meeting Agenda later in this chapter). Explain role of each officer, activity chair, and crew member. Develop sample agendas for meetings.

- V. Standard Operating Procedures.** Appoint a youth committee and chairperson with adult consultant to establish crew standard operating procedures and code of conduct. Establish rules of conduct, attendance expectations, qualifications for participating in crew superactivities/Tier III adventures, dues, and allocation of funds from approved money-earning projects, etc.

- VI. Closing.** Congratulate officers. Reflect on and evaluate day's activities. Reinforce need to carry out each assignment and that their newly planned calendar of activities should be printed and distributed to all crew members, crew committee members, consultants, and parents. Offer an Advisor's Minute or a youth-led Officer's Minute to conclude the seminar.



Suggested Crew Code and Operating Procedures

I. Preamble—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.

II. Crew Vision and Mission Statement

III. Crew Operating Procedures (Each crew can revise to suit its needs.)

A. Objectives

The objectives of Crew No. _____ are

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Membership

Membership shall be open to all young adults of high school age who live in the surrounding area and have completed the eighth grade and are at least 13 years of age, or who are 14 to 20 years of age. No prospective member shall be disqualified because of race, color, creed, or sex. All members must be registered as Venturers and agree to the crew code and bylaws.

C. Officers

1. The elected officers shall be president, two vice presidents, secretary, and treasurer. The president, with the approval of the Advisor, shall appoint activity chairs and make other assignments as needed. The duties of the officers shall be as prescribed in the *Venturing Advisor Guidebook* and the *Handbook for Venturers*.
2. The normal term of office shall be for one year starting on May 1. Elections shall be held between March 15 and April 30.
3. No member shall serve more than two successive terms in the same office.
4. The president shall appoint a nominating committee, which shall consist of three members. The committee shall interview and present a complete slate of candidates who have agreed, if elected, to serve to the best of their abilities.
5. On the night of the election, nominations may be presented from the floor by any member. If the nomination is seconded and the candidate agrees to serve, he or she must be included on the ballot.
6. All contested ballots shall be secret.

D. Crew Business

Crew business will be conducted under the principles outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*. Voting on all issues will be by simple majority, with the exception of changes or amendments to the standard operating procedures, which will require a two-thirds vote of the total membership. A quorum shall consist of one more than the majority of members for votes on routine business.

E. General Meetings

General meetings will be held during the first and third weeks of each month. The day will be decided by the membership at the beginning of each school year.

F. Officers' Meetings

Officers' meetings will be held at least once a month, prior to and at a time and place different from the first crew meeting of that month.

G. Newsletter

The crew will publish a newsletter every other month, which shall include all meeting dates and other information of interest to the membership. The newsletter will serve as the historical record of the crew.

H. Dues

Dues will be \$_____ per month, payable quarterly or at any time within the quarter. Members delinquent in dues payments for six months or more will be dropped from the crew roster.

I. Money-Earning Projects

All money-earning projects must be approved by a majority vote of crew members. Members who do not participate in a project are not entitled to any benefits of the funds earned. All money-earning projects must be approved by the Advisor and meet Boy Scouts of America requirements.

J. (Additional standard operating procedures may be added by the crew.)

This sample document is available online at www.scouting.org/venturing.

Crew Sustainability

Recruitment is not a once-a-year experience that happens only with an annual open house. Your crew may have multiple open houses throughout the program year. Crew sustainability and recruitment are ongoing concerns for your crew.

Peer-to-Peer Recruiting

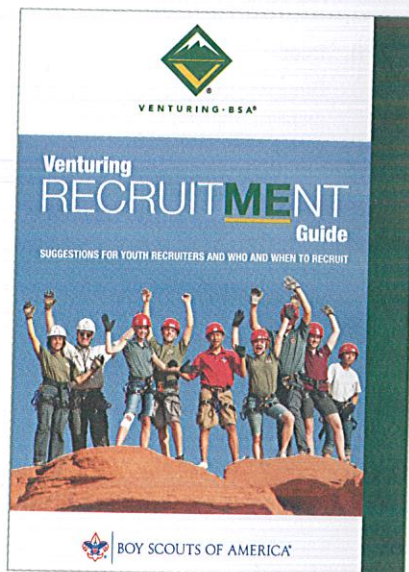
At the heart of peer-to-peer recruiting is asking your friends to try out Venturing with you. The Venturing Peer-to-Peer Packet is a set of tools designed to aid Venturers in recruiting their friends. These resources allow Venturers to have a better way to grow the program. They are intended for an individual crew member to hand flyers or brochures to potential members. Councils and crews may use these materials to promote recruitment.



Recognition Note

Responsibility for planning and implementing a successful crew open house may be used for completion of the Pathfinder Award crew sustainability requirement.

You can order individual pieces or entire packets. The materials are free for your use. You may either order them as hard copies or download electronic copies for your use. Visit scouting.org/venturing to see the entire set of materials and suggestions for making them count.



Remember: Paper informs, but people inspire. Use these tools to help inspire the next generation of Venturers to join your crew.

Open House Events

The Venturing crew open house is a crew event where potential members (and possibly their parents) are invited to a crew activity, given an opportunity to find out about your crew and its program, and invited to join. The open house may be a prelude to inviting prospective members to a crew outing organized as a Tier I adventure.

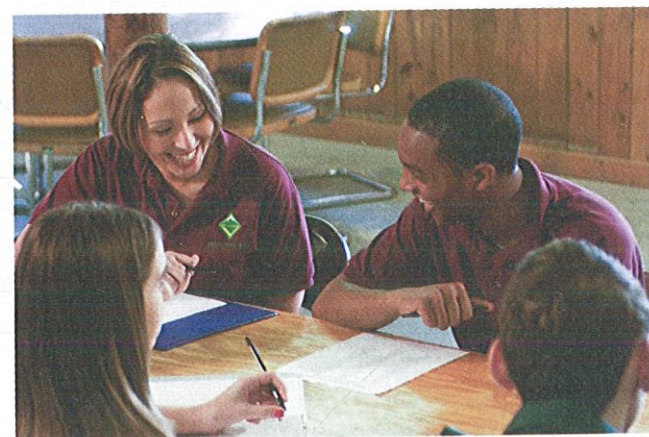
The meeting has two purposes. The primary purpose is to introduce potential new members to your crew. First impressions are key, so plan an open house with that in mind. You might get only one opportunity to show off what you do and to invite someone to join. The second purpose of an open house is to make the crew feel good about what the crew is accomplishing and how it brings its vision to life.

When planning an open house, be bold and creative! The open house could be a very simple meeting where the potential members learn about the crew's past and future programs, or it can be BOLD. A high-adventure-oriented crew, for example, could meet potential new members outside the meeting place, where they will climb and then rappel off the side of the building.

A sports-oriented crew could offer a sports maze where guests do several sports, such as shooting basketballs, throwing a football at a target, hitting a hockey puck into a net, and identifying famous athletes.

Crew officers have the primary responsibility for planning and conducting the open house. Usually the administrative vice president is the chair for planning the open house, or the crew president can assign another crew member to be the chair. The open house chair then recruits a committee to plan and conduct an open house. The crew committee also assigns an adult Advisor to help plan and run the open house.

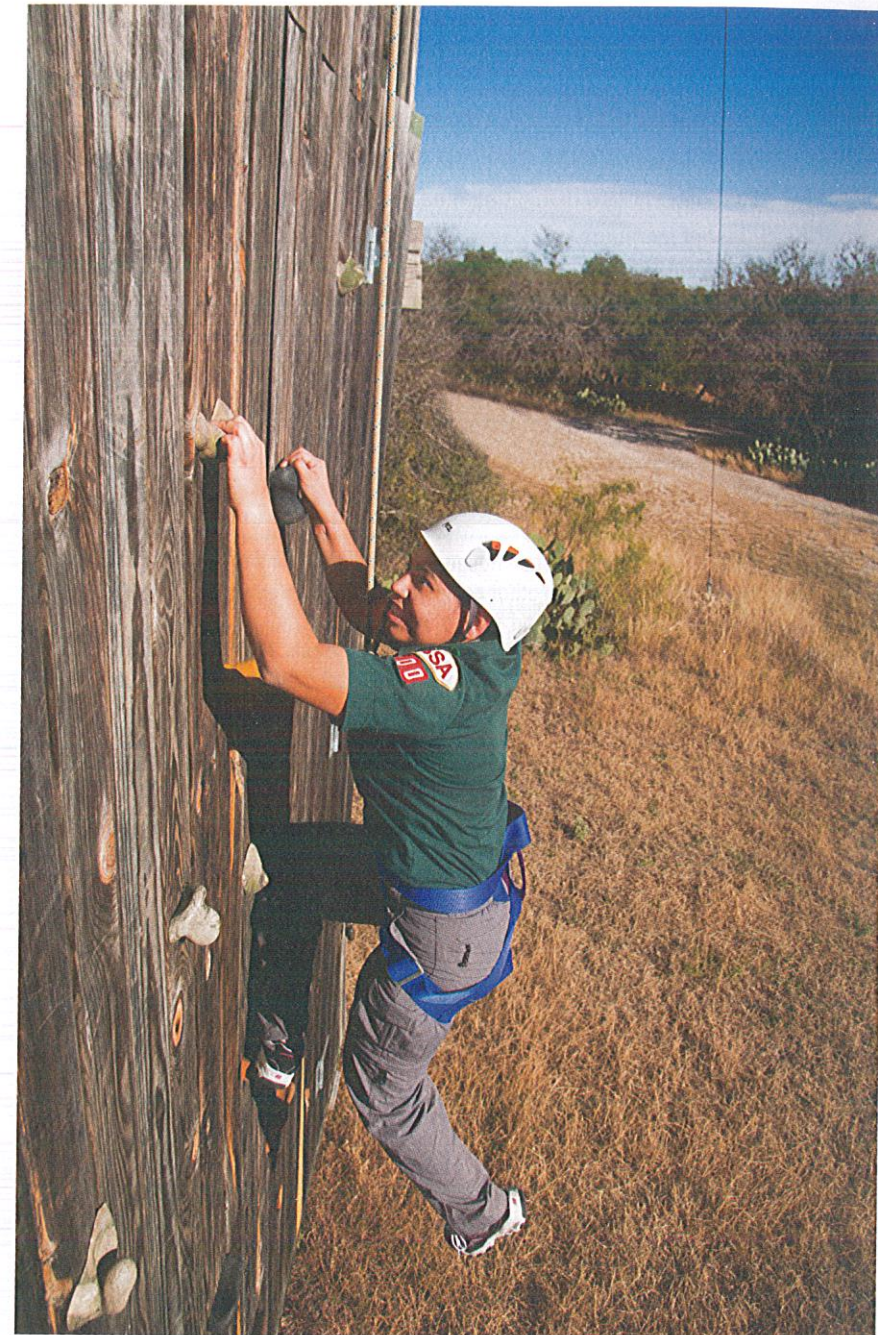
Planning the event will take one or two meetings and should start at least four to six weeks before an open house. The first planning meeting will be to explain why you are doing the open house, plan what you will do, and make assignments. The next meeting, which occurs one or two weeks before the open house, is a follow-up, is-everything-done-type meeting. Open houses and their planning meetings should be Venturer-run, not adult-run.



Sample Open House Agenda

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Before the Meeting
The open house committee arrives at least one hour before the open house. All other crew members arrive at least half an hour before the open house. All hands-on activities are set up at least half an hour before the open house. All equipment such as computer and video project, welcome kit, name badges, sign-in roster, registration table, etc., are set up at least half an hour before the open house. | Greeters |
| 2. Greeting
Have signs in the parking lot directing guests to the entrance. Have greeters outside the entrance and just inside the entrance. Have greeters at all turns and at the door to where your open house is held. Once guests are inside, all crew members are greeters. | Hands-On Committee,
Open House Chair, or
Crew President |
| 3. Hands-On Activity/Icebreaker
Ask everyone to take a seat. | Crew President |
| 4. Welcome
The crew president welcomes everyone and introduces crew officers and Advisors. | Crew Officer |
| 5. What Is Venturing and the Purpose of a Crew?
Consider creative ways to have your crew officers and/or members explain what Venturing is and what a crew does. Tell about program planning, officers, leadership opportunities, the Venturer/Advisor relationship, etc. | Crew Officer |
| 6. About Our Crew
Also in a creative way, share what you think your crew is and some of the activities your crew has done. This could be slides or a video of what you have done. Share your future plans for trips, activities and adventures, service and leadership opportunities, and your superactivity. | Crew President |
| 7. Questions and Answers
Give potential members and their parents an opportunity to ask questions. | Crew Advisor |
| 8. Advisor's Comments (Short)
The crew Advisor wraps up any area not adequately addressed earlier and talks about adult supervision and adults' role in the crew. He or she invites parents to talk further during the registration process. | Crew President |
| 9. Invitation to Join
Describe the joining process: participation in an event outside of a crew meeting, an interview with the Advisor and president, Personal Safety Awareness training, and a joining/investiture ceremony. | Crew Members,
Crew Secretary |
| 10. Hands-On Activities Again and Registration Process
This is another opportunity for potential members to experience a little of what you do. At the same time, they can register at the registration table. | All |
| 11. Refreshments
Refreshments are optional, but are popular. They could be pizza, ice cream, cookies, soft drinks, etc. Have them at the same time as the hands-on activities or whenever else you want. | Cleanup Committee |
| 12. Cleanup | Cleanup Committee |

This document is available online at www.scouting.org/venturing.



Open House Countdown

- 84 days Open house chairman appointed.
- 70 days Open house chairman and adult Advisor are trained by your district.
- 60 days Open house committee members appointed.
- 45 days First open house committee meeting.
 - Brief members.
 - Plan open house.
 - Make assignments.
- 15 days Call to remind open house committee members.
- 14 days Final open house committee meeting.
- 12 days Send special invitation letter (see sample letter).
- 5 days Call prospective members.
- 1 day Call prospective members.

All crew members should be at the open house and consider themselves part of the open house event. Members who have no other assignment will serve as greeters. All members should make the potential members and the family and friends that attend with them feel welcome from the time they get out of their cars until they leave. You should have an exciting, hands-on program for them to enjoy and answer all their questions. If guests get to experience some of what you do and see a well-run, Venturer-led program, they will be more likely to join and come to crew meetings. When planning the open house, think about what you would like to do or see if you were the potential member.



Crew Open House Sample Invitation Letter

Venturing Crew
425



September 10, 2011

Jeremy Price
7503 Windsor Place
Take-any City, TX 75000

Dear Jeremy:

Can you picture you and your friends scuba diving on a ship wreck in the clear, warm waters of the Caribbean during spring break next year? That would just be a sample of the kind of exciting activities we do in Venturing Crew 425.

You and your friends are invited to a brief meeting to hear more about how you can be doing these challenging high adventure activities. The meeting will be next Tuesday evening, September 15th from 7:00 pm till 8:00 pm at the First Church (see detailed map enclose).

Venturing is the teenage, coed program of the Boy Scouts of America. We teenagers choose, plan, and run all of our activities. I have enclosed a brochure that explains more about the program. You can also check out our cool crew website at www.crew425adventures@trig.org. Please bring \$10.00 which will cover your registration and insurance for all the cool things we do. If you need more information or directions, please call me at 555-2020 or Lois Wilkerson at 555-2222.

Feel free to bring your friends! If your parents want to come too, they're welcome.

Sincerely,

Travis Michaels
Crew President

Key Points in Writing the Letter

1. Personalized.
2. Comes from youth.
3. First paragraph paints the picture of what the potential member can do.
4. Emphasizes one-hour meeting, time, place, bring friends and family, bring registration money, what money is for.
5. Briefly explains who we are—Venturing. Youth-planned and run.
6. Invite them to visit the crew website.
7. Enclose a detailed map and Venturing brochure.
8. Give a source to get more information.
9. Emphasize friends some more.
10. Send with a stamp, never bulk.



VENTURING · BSA®



Leading Others

As your Venturing crew plans and runs its program, you may at times feel like everyone in the crew is heading in a different direction. Other members of the crew might not always share your ideas about the crew's visions, goals, and plans. They might not even share the same ideas with each other. You might at times feel somewhat frustrated.

This may be because every group of people or team progresses through a series of predictable stages. A Venturing crew is a team, and it will go through these stages, too. Understanding which stage your crew is at will help you keep things in perspective and serve as a better leader and follower.

Stages of Team Development

The four stages of team development are *forming*, *storming*, *norming*, and *performing*. Each team will move through these stages at different speeds, possibly even shifting back and forth between stages, especially when encountering new challenges or gaining new members.

- 1. Forming.** When teams first come together, they usually exhibit great enthusiasm but much disorganization. Think of a high school band that meets for the first time at the start of the school year. Band members are excited and look forward to playing, but they are not ready to give a concert. It will take time, and lots of practice, before they come together to play well.
- 2. Storming.** In this stage, the initial excitement has worn off. Things remain disorganized, and team members can have different visions of how much they have left to do. Arguments or grumbling may arise, especially as individual team members pull in opposite directions. Storming is a phase nearly every new team goes through, and even existing teams may revert to storming when confronted with change.
- 3. Norming.** After storming comes norming, when the team is working together better. Enthusiasm returns, and the team's skills grow. The norming stage can be fragile, with team members seesawing between storming and norming.
- 4. Performing.** At this point, the team has solidified. The first flush of enthusiasm has returned, and now the team members have the skills and organization to work together well and accomplish their goals. The team is performing *as a team*.

Remember that each of these stages is part of the process of any team growing and getting stronger. Even if most of the members of the crew have been together for years and normally work well together, the crew could still move between these stages when facing new challenges. As a leader, you will want to learn the stages of team development so you can know how to help move your team forward.

The Methods of Leadership

Though no two leaders approach leadership in exactly the same way, any leader can use the four basic methods denoted by the acronym EDGE—Explain, Demonstrate, Guide, and Enable—to match their leadership approach to the situation their team is in.

Explain. The leader gives clear and careful instructions about what is expected of the team and how team members should go about their tasks.

This method is appropriate when teams are forming and need instruction about what they are supposed to be doing.

Demonstrate. Showing can be more powerful than telling. When a team enters the storming stage, it becomes vital for the leader to demonstrate appropriate behavior that will help the team move forward, conveying expectations by example and avoiding any temptation to join in grumbling or arguing.

Guide. When guiding a group, a leader steps back and does less instructing. Although guiding is less hands-on, the leader remains actively involved, offering encouragement and stepping in to provide coaching as needed. When a team enters the norming stage, its leader can act more as a guide.

Enable. The leader of a team that is performing can step back still further and let the team run on its own. The team knows what it is doing and works well together. A leader enables by giving the team full ownership of its actions, offering encouragement, providing needed resources, and helping the team evaluate its own performance.

Exactly how a leader uses these methods will depend on what the group is doing and where it wants to go. Each leader might use these methods differently, according to individual personality and style. Some leaders may enjoy being at the center of attention, while others may have a quieter manner. Not every leader needs to be highly extroverted; many highly effective leaders have a more reserved personality.

No matter where your team is developmentally or what method you are using, be positive and supportive of your team. Show them you care and view your leadership role as one that puts others first. Also, be sure to celebrate success. Successes breed more successes. When your team members rise to a challenge or do something right, let them know you recognize how well they did.



Matching Leadership to Team Development

Deciding which EDGE method to use will depend largely on the team's stage of development. With a team at the earlier stages, a leader needs to be hands-on. But as the team gains experience and enthusiasm, the leader may turn more to guiding and enabling.

Consider a typical Venturing crew that goes on a weeklong canoe trip.

Crew Situation	Team Stage	Leader Response
Arriving at the starting point on the river, everyone is excited. All crew members know how to swim well and they have practiced canoeing skills, but they don't know exactly what they should be doing to get started.	Forming	Before anyone gets into a canoe, the crew president gathers the crew together and reviews the safety rules. The president also explains the plans for the day, making sure everyone knows the route the crew will take and how to secure their camping gear in the canoes.
After unloading their camping gear, crew members set up tents. Progress on dinner, though, is slow because the Venturers who are responsible for cooking are unable to light the camp stove. Several other crew members start grumbling about dinner taking too long. Everyone is tired, and some crew members are thinking about going to sleep without dinner or dipping into some of tomorrow's lunch that doesn't require cooking.	Storming	The crew president, having had experience as a camp cook, sees an opportunity to help the crew find success by asking everyone to watch as she demonstrates the safe technique for lighting the camp stove. By getting the stove lit and displaying a positive attitude, the president eases the tension and refocuses the crew productively toward plans for dinner, which the cooks proceed to prepare and everyone enjoys eating.
When dinnertime comes the next day, the cooks proceed to prepare the evening meal but seem to be having trouble with their organization. They are cooperating but don't seem to have things quite on track.	Norming	The crew president monitors how the cooks are doing and guides them with suggestions as needed on how to organize their work, timing of tasks, etc, so that the cooks can achieve a great meal, on time.
After another day or two on their trip, all the crew members—including those who struggled and grumbled on the first day—are working together without the president needing to offer much of anything but praise each night about how delicious dinner tastes.	Performing	The crew president continues to monitor the team and makes sure that they have the necessary resources for them to accomplish their goals, enabling them to achieve success.

Of course, not every crew's experience will be the same. Some crews will go through the stages of team development more quickly than others—and some more slowly. Some crews might revert to an earlier stage when confronted with another challenge. For example, the crew on the canoe trip might move past its challenges over dinner on the first night, only to find itself back in the storming stage when it rains all day.



Recognition Note

Matching team phases with leadership methods is a key component of a number of BSA leadership trainings, including NYLT, Wood Badge, and NAYLE. These trainings may be used to satisfy leadership requirements for the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards.

The key is for a leader to be aware of how the team is working together and to try to adapt the method of leadership to try to meet the team's needs. Leadership, after all, is about serving others, and groups going through different stages of development will have different needs to be served.

Communicating With Others

Leaders need strong communication skills. To succeed, they must share ideas and information with others. They need to explain and demonstrate, as well as guide and enable. They also need to listen, to learn what the members of their team think, need, and want. Successful leaders rely on good communication skills to help resolve any conflicts that arise. Leaders also draw on their communication skills to mentor future leaders. In Venturing, you have the opportunity to practice and improve your communication skills in all these ways.



Recognition Note

Communicating effectively will serve you well in meeting the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit award requirements.

Communicating Effectively

Communication is the process of transmitting or sharing a message between a sender and one or more receivers. Effective communication depends on both the sender and the receivers—and on messages flowing back and forth between them. Communication is a two-way street. It breaks down when information is not shared at all or when it fails to convey what the sender wanted the receivers to know.

To communicate well, any leader should consider three elements of effecting communications:

1. Knowing what message he or she wants to send.
2. Relaying that message so that the receivers receive and understand it.
3. Making sure the receivers received the correct message.

The first step—figuring out what message to send—will depend on the situation and on the leader's vision and goals.

When it comes to the next step—relaying the message—the leader must be clear. The message will more likely be understood if it is relayed in a way that is simple, uncluttered, and focused on the essential idea or information that needs to be received.

In deciding how to relay a message, the leader needs to think about the receivers. Only by stepping into the receivers' shoes can the leader figure out the best way to relay his or her message.

The final step, after relaying the message, is for the leader to find out what the receivers have received. It's important for a leader to solicit questions—and to ask questions, too. The leader must listen well to make sure the receivers heard what the leader intended.

Communicating With Youth and Adults

Venturers communicate with two sets of receivers: youth and adults. Effective communication is much the same for both groups. Both want to be treated with respect. Common courtesies such as "please" and "thank you" go a long way when communicating with others. In addition, youth and adults all benefit from you speaking clearly and simply.

Your crew may also need to refine how it shares meeting reminders, announcements about upcoming adventures, and other information about crew activities. Be sure to include everyone when communicating about the crew's plans:

- Venturers
- Crew Advisors
- Venturers' parents
- Crew committee members
- Consultants
- Hosts of locations where your crew meets
- Managers of destination locations
- Individuals supporting crew activities

Good communication is vital when your crew leaves on an adventure. Leaders need to communicate plans and expectations with crew members before and during a trip.

Effective Conversations

How to have a conversation:

- Maintain eye contact.
- Pay attention to the person you're talking to. Don't do something else (like check text messages on your phone or play with a pen or pencil).
- Find a time or place to talk free of distractions.
- Take turns talking and listening. Listen attentively. Avoid thinking about what you're going to say next when the other person is talking.
- Repeat what you heard to make sure you have it right.
- Be courteous. Do not interrupt the other person.

Getting Feedback

Feedback is important so leaders can keep the crew doing what works well as well as try to make things work better. When a leader strives to put others first, feedback is like a gift. It gives the leader a basis for better serving his or her team.

Venturers should be asked to give feedback during and after every adventure. There should also be periodic opportunities to give feedback about crew meetings and the overall crew program.

Feedback should not dwell only on complaints. It also needs to highlight what is going well. Sometimes this balance is achieved by following the sandwich principle: Start by saying something positive, then offer constructive criticism, and finally return to something positive.

Gathering feedback, of course, is only a first step. A successful leader reflects on what he or she has learned from feedback. Should he or she do something different as a leader? Does the team need to modify its goals or plans? The gift of feedback gives the leader more information about how to effectively serve his or her team.

Resolving Conflict

Even when conflicts don't rise to a serious level, small slights or frustrations involving crew members can fester if the individuals keep their concerns to themselves. Good communication can sometimes prevent conflicts from arising. Effective leaders actively seek feedback from their team members, both to gauge how the group is doing and to try to head off conflicts.

Even in crews with good communication and effective leaders, conflicts can develop. When this happens, a crew officer needs to step in to help guide resolution—it's your duty as a leader. Resolving conflicts will not always be easy. Follow these five basic steps to help ease the difficulty.

1. **Be mindful of yourself.** If your emotions have heated up because of the conflict, you might ask everyone to take time to cool down. Your role is to help others resolve their conflict, not to enter the conflict yourself. You need to serve as a neutral sounding board, so make sure you are calm enough to play that role.
2. **Be mindful of others.** Think about factors that might affect the individuals involved in the conflict. Has it been hot outside? Are people hungry? Have they had trouble at work or school? Relatively minor things can make people irritable. Maybe everyone should get something to eat before discussing the conflict. If the conflict involves only part of the crew, find a place that's out of the hearing of others.
3. **Listen.** Listening is the most important thing you can do. Listen to any judgment about who is at fault so you can get everyone's perspective on what happened or what's the matter. Affirm that you have heard what people are telling you; say, "I got it" or "I hear you." Summarize things in your own words to make sure you have heard what the others mean, saying something like, "This is what I hear you saying ..."
4. **Encourage others to talk.** Ask questions that will help the individuals find a solution to the conflict. What does each person want? How have they been trying to get what they want? Why is that approach working or not working? What other ways might solve the problem? Keep everyone talking, focusing on anything positive in how they are handling the situation. Help them find a solution that seems fair to all.
5. **Bring in backup.** When a conflict seems too big or lasts too long, talk with other crew members and Advisors to get their suggestions and help. Some conflicts can be resolved only by involving Advisors. Be sure to tell your Advisors right way about any serious situations like those involving drugs, alcohol, bullying, hazing, harassment, or self-harm.

Coaching and Mentoring New Leaders

Leadership is shared when responsibilities are distributed among different leaders, and it is also shared when an experienced leader helps a new leader learn leadership skills.



Recognition Note

Mentoring training will help you to serve as a successful mentor in leadership and personal settings. Mentoring training is a requirement for the Summit Award.

Experienced leaders can help new leaders in two main ways: coaching and mentoring. Coaching is a learning activity directed by a coach, or teacher, not by the learner. It involves explaining and demonstrating by the coach, and it can be very useful in helping the learner gain concrete skills or learn how to perform specific tasks. When Venturers serve on the staff of BSA leadership training course, such as the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews course, they act as coaches.



Recognition Note

Serving as a mentor will help you achieve Summit Award Leadership requirement 3—mentoring another member of your crew as he or she leads an adventure.

Mentoring might include some coaching, but it is really different. Mentoring involves learning that is motivated by the learner, not the mentor. The focus with mentoring is also less on concrete skills than on longer-term personal growth. A mentor guides and enables, listening actively and helping the learner to assess his or her own strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Mentoring does not come naturally to many of us. We are more inclined to step in to solve other people's problems, offering them our advice about what to do. But when we analyze and solve other people's problems for them, we deprive them of an opportunity to think and grow for themselves.

Mentoring takes place through conversation, not instruction. The learner seeks out the mentor as a resource or sounding board. The mentor, in turn, asks questions that help the learner formulate goals, analyze problems, and generate a plan of action. The mentor supports the learner by both encouraging and challenging. The mentor should never put down a learner's ideas or make judgments.

Valuing Others

The Scout Law says that a Venturer is a friend to all. A Venturer offers friendship to people of all races, religions, nations, and backgrounds, respecting them even if their beliefs, perspectives, and customs are different.

Every individual is unique, so within any group you will find both similarities and differences among the group's members. Successful leaders not only accept these differences, they embrace them.

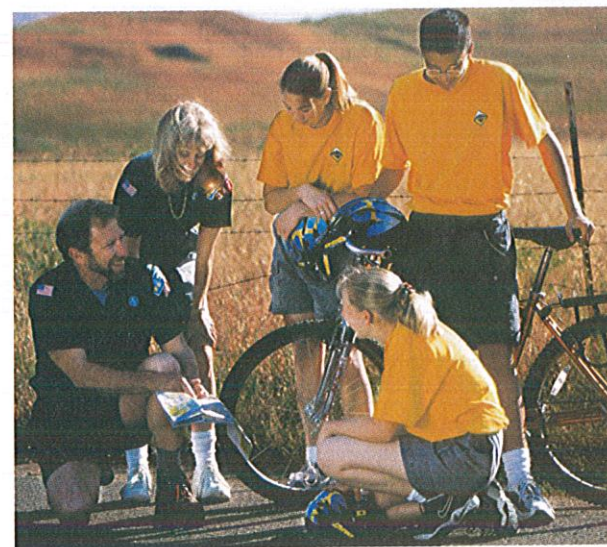
They know that each person brings different knowledge and experiences that make their teams stronger.

By valuing the differences we see in people, we value those people themselves—as individuals. This is just what the Scout Law directs. Only by seeing and seeking the best in others—and in ourselves—can we experience the strength and diversity that is needed to make the world a better place.



Recognition Note

The Venturing TRUST Award has an extensive focus on valuing others and the importance of developing and acting on that disposition.

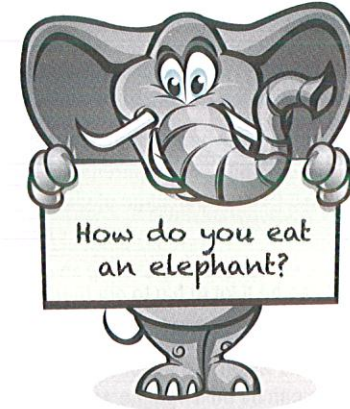




VENTURING · BSA®



Planning the Crew's Activities



The answer: one bite at a time.

The truth is that whenever you want to accomplish something, it helps to break it down into smaller tasks. You need a plan. Just as goals are steps toward a vision, a plan is a means of reaching those goals. Planning is not only an essential skill for organizing adventures as a Venturer; it is also a critical life skill.

The Importance of Effective Program Planning

Whether you are planning a crew meeting, an open house, or a Tier I or Tier II adventure, a clear plan will go a long way to ensure the success of your project. Effective planning assists your crew as they:

- Make effective use of resources.
- Establish and act on clear goals.
- Communicate success.
- Build a stronger crew.
- Build stronger individuals.
- Prepare to have fun.

The guidelines that follow are used by crews as they plan, conduct, and celebrate their Venturing crew's program.

Developing Your Crew's Annual Program

In addition to planning individual events, the crew officers also plan an annual program.

Each year, your crew should agree on a calendar of its activities for months to come.



Recognition Note

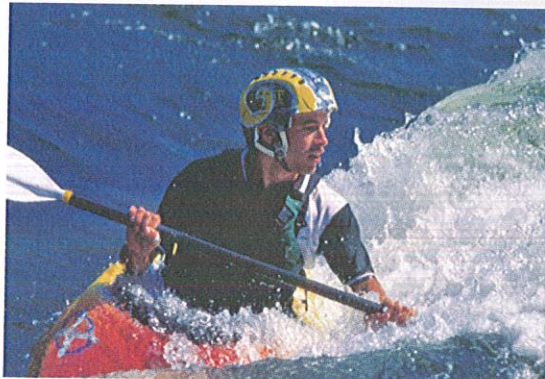
The BSA's Project Management and Time Management training courses are recognition requirements and will provide tools needed to meet the challenge of planning the annual program.

Having a yearly plan is vital and 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 to achieve its vision. If a major adventure is what the crew wants, training and preparation goals can be built into the annual plan.
- It enables the crew to build a balanced activity plan of adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service into its annual program using the ALPS model.
- An annual plan allows Venturers and Advisors (as well as parents) to mark their individual calendars. Participation in crew activities increases when people know what to expect.
- An annual plan enables the crew president to start appointing activity chairs to be responsible for planning and leading each activity the crew plans to take during the year.
- The plan ultimately determines what the crew will be doing throughout the year. It's the crew's ticket to adventure and fun!

Annual program planning also helps map out weekly and monthly programs. If the crew is planning a cross-country bicycle ride, plan meetings around fitness, bike repairs, first aid, and transporting and acquiring gear, and build a series of endurance rides into your monthly and weekly program. Venturing is what you make it. It doesn't just happen by chance; it takes planning and preparation.

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 look ahead for the year and develop a plan.



The first step in building your crew's annual program is to begin the process by "preparing to plan." Start by identifying the individuals who will help inform the plan, gathering resources, considering alternatives, and laying the groundwork for the detailed program planning to follow. Carrying out the organizing steps will allow the crew to apply the planning model with ease and efficiency.

When it comes to developing an annual program plan, the initial preparation process involves three basic 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 explains the process, goals, and what each officer needs to do to prepare for the next step.

Step 2

Gather the following key information.

- Key school dates, like holidays and exams
- Community event dates, like proms, homecoming, 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 (PCI) sheets from parents and others who might offer resources
- Data from Venturing Activity Interest Surveys from each member
- Last year's crew annual plan, if you have it
- Crew priorities and goals
- Venturers' recognition records and Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit award requirements

Step 3

After collecting each member's Venturing Activity Interest Survey, hold the annual crew officers seminar, where officers plan the coming year's program.

- Align the program plan with the Venturing areas of program emphasis: adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service.
- 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; do it right!

Preparation for the Annual Crew Activity Planning Process

Preparation for planning is as important as the planning itself. The process described here encourages your crew leadership to do quite a bit in advance of creating the actual plan your crew will follow during its program year. Gathering information from a variety of sources—crew members' interests, the results of the crew's annual planning meeting, the resources available among the members' of your crew's committee, and an assessment of what your crew can reasonably deliver—will help your crew members form a plan that is likely to be successful. This process makes use of the resources gathered in the three steps described on the previous page.

Once the plan is developed, the crew president assigns a member of the crew as the activity chair for a particular activity. The chair convenes a team to put the plan into action, guided by one of the crew's Advisors. One of the key tasks of the activity chair is to publish a timeline/calendar that will communicate to the members of the crew (and often to their families) not only what is taking place, but when.

Planning Helps: The Program Capability Inventory

The Program Capability Inventory (PCI) is a process of surveying the adults associated with the crew to understand how they might support potential crew needs. Each Venturing crew's program is unique because it is based on the interests of the young adults who join the crew and what the adults associated with the crew can provide. The PCI process reveals the expertise of adults associated with a crew. PCIs become one of the most important tools that shape a program of activities for a Venturing crew.

While the crew committee traditionally collects PCIs, ideally, this is a task managed by a Venturer. The first step is to send the Program Capability Inventory form to adults. The second step involves converting their responses into a follow-up form called the Program Planning Form.

Step 1: Distributing the PCI Form

Completing the PCI form begins the process of matching adults and young people with similar interests. (This form can be accessed online at www.scouting.org/venturing.)

The PCI form is given to all the adults in the crew organization (Advisors, crew committee members, potential consultants, etc.) and to any other adults who might have an interest and ability to assist your crew at the beginning of a crew organizational process and then ongoing throughout the year. The crew president or his or her appointee has the primary responsibility of distributing the PCI form and converting the responses into a program planning form. The officers' responsibility is to use the Program Planning Form to plan the crew's initial program of activities (during the crew officers seminar) and to fine-tune this program throughout the year.

A crew should continually expand its list of possible adult resources that can help the crew in specific ways.



PROGRAM CAPABILITY INVENTORY

Venturing Crew No. _____ Organization _____

Instructions

Each year our Venturers need adult volunteers to serve as Advisors, program consultants, and helpers with transportation, chaperoning, counseling, and planning.

We would like to know in which areas of interest, hobbies, or contacts you would be willing to help our Venturers.

If they decide to call on you for help, an appointment will be made with you well in advance.

Thank you for your willingness to assist our Venturers and please return this PCI form to: _____

(Please complete.)

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (home) _____ (business) _____

Occupation _____ Position _____

Yes! I would be willing to help in the areas designated below:

Hobbies and Skills

Backpacking ___	Caving ___	Creating ___	Mountaineering ___	Promoting ___	Softball ___
Basketball ___	Climbing/rappelling ___	Equestrian ___	Organizing ___	Public speaking ___	Swimming ___
Bicycling ___	Coaching ___	First Aid ___	Orienteering ___	Sailing ___	Training ___
Bowling ___	Computers ___	Fishing ___	Outdoor living ___	Scuba diving ___	Water sports ___
Camping ___	Cooking ___	Geocaching ___	history ___	Shooting ___	Other ___
Canoeing ___	Counseling ___	Marksmanship ___	Photography ___	Snow sports ___	

Memberships

Please list your clubs, associations, fraternal groups, etc.:

Contacts

Please list people you would be willing to ask to share their careers, hobbies, or skills:

Special Program Assistance

___ I have an SUV ___ van ___ or truck ___.

___ I have a workshop.

___ I have family camping gear ___ RV ___ or pop-up camper ___.

___ I can make contacts for special trips and activities.

___ I have access to a cabin ___ or camping property ___.

___ I have access to a boat ___ or airplane ___.

___ I can help with leadership skills.

___ I can help with _____.
(Career Information)

___ I can help with _____.
(Vocational Information)

___ I can help with community service projects.

___ I can help with fundraising projects.

All adults who are given the PCI form are asked to:

1. List their career, hobbies, skills, and any contacts they might have that could be of benefit to the crew.
2. Indicate their willingness to share their expertise with the crew at least once during the year.

Step 2: Completing the Program Planning Form

After a crew receives the completed PCI forms, the responses must be converted to a Program Planning Form to help the officers plan a program of activities for the year.

This step involves organizing the responses in a useful, meaningful way by sorting them into such areas as:

- Name of each responding adult
- Each adult's career
- Each adult's hobbies, interests, and skills
- Their ideas for service projects
- Their ideas for program activities
- Equipment and facilities any of these adults can provide



PCI forms will help crews decide their next adventure, which might be small-boat sailing or another watercraft activity.



PROGRAM PLANNING FORM

To be used for Program Capability Inventory recap.

Name	Phone	Career	Hobby	Contact

CREW COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

CHARTERED ORGANIZATION SUGGESTIONS

CONSULTANTS

Planning Helps: Venturing Activity Interest Survey

The PCI process provides the crew with information about the expertise and availability of the adults associated with your crew. The Venturing Activity Interest Survey matches that expertise to the interests of the crew.

The Venturing Activity Interest Survey should be conducted before developing the year's program of activities at the crew officers seminar. It's important to know the interests of the crew members in order to make this program meaningful. Continue conducting Venturing Activity Interest Surveys throughout the year to fine-tune the program as the year progresses. A recommended approach is to complete the survey when a new Venturer meets with the crew president and Advisor during his or her interview.

Crew officers can design unique methods of gathering information about the interests of their crew members. Whatever method is used, it is important that:

- All members are surveyed for their interests.
- Every member feels that his or her interests are important to the crew and he or she is free to express interests and ideas for activities.
- The results of the surveys are put into writing and filed for easy access.

The program vice president should ensure that Venturing Activity Interest Surveys are conducted regularly, at least annually, and the vice president of communications or secretary should ensure that the results are in writing and filed with the PCIs and Program Planning Form.

Crew Vision and Mission Statement

Your crew's vision and mission statements help guide your crew as you plan your crew's program. Developed and revisited annually by your crew, these statements communicate clearly and concisely convey the crew's purpose and direction. By crafting a clear mission statement and vision statement, you can communicate your intentions to crew members and prospective members and use them to help your crew take action as you develop your annual program plan. The vision and mission statements should inspire you and should provide a direction for your annual program planning.

A mission statement defines the crew purpose and primary objectives. It meets the needs of the members of the crew. It communicates to crew members what the crew likes to do.

Vision statements also define the crew's purpose, but rather through the crew's values. The Scout Oath and Scout Law are part of your crew's value system, but your crew may have additional values that they wish to communicate to others: dispositions about providing serving, helping the members of the crew grow as servant leaders or seekers of adventure. Those values should be imbedded into your crew code of conduct and operating procedures statement.



VENTURING ACTIVITY INTEREST SURVEY

Complete the following. Your responses will be used to help develop the program of activities throughout the year, so it is very important that you provide complete responses.

Name _____

Date _____

1. What specific interests do you have that you would like our crew to pursue this year?

2. Do you have any ideas or suggestions for activities that would address those interests?

3. Consider for a moment the six experience areas (citizenship, service, leadership, social, outdoor, fitness). How would your interests fit into any of these areas?

VENTURING ACTIVITY INTEREST SURVEY—ALPHA LIST

Please check those activities, tours, projects, and seminars that you would like the crew to plan as part of its program for the year.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airport tour | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Project COPE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Geocaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Automobile plant/dealership | <input type="checkbox"/> Gourmet cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition dinner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking | <input type="checkbox"/> Government official | <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barbecue party | <input type="checkbox"/> Halloween party | <input type="checkbox"/> River rafting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach party | <input type="checkbox"/> Ham radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Road rally |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bike hike | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking trail cleanup | <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Block party | <input type="checkbox"/> History, study the town's | <input type="checkbox"/> Saving money |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling | <input type="checkbox"/> History, trace family | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buy a car, how to | <input type="checkbox"/> Hobby smorgasbord | <input type="checkbox"/> Scuba diving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping trip | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday party | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior citizens, assistance to |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Shooting sports meet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car wash | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunter education | <input type="checkbox"/> Skating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice-skating party | <input type="checkbox"/> Slide show, plan a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cave exploring | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry, local | <input type="checkbox"/> Snow sports weekend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child care | <input type="checkbox"/> Intercrew activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Spaghetti dinner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civil defense | <input type="checkbox"/> Job interviewing skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports medicine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing/rapPELLING | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College or university visit | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifesaving, swimming | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports tournament |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College panel discussion | <input type="checkbox"/> Military base trip | <input type="checkbox"/> State capitol, visit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Morality, ethics | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer jobs clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community cleanup activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Mountaineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Swim meet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation project | <input type="checkbox"/> Movies | <input type="checkbox"/> Swim party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> Music listening | <input type="checkbox"/> Television station |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Court session | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis clinic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cruise, sailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation flight | <input type="checkbox"/> Train trip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling/mountainbiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Orienteering | <input type="checkbox"/> United Way, support the |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor living history | <input type="checkbox"/> Watercraft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diet and nutrition | <input type="checkbox"/> Pancake breakfast/supper | <input type="checkbox"/> Water sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disabled citizens, assistance to | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents' night | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather bureau |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug abuse/alcoholism | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time jobs clinic | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilderness survival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Egg hunt for children | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter camping trip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical fitness | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family picnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Planetarium | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family sports day | <input type="checkbox"/> Plants and wildlife | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fashion show | <input type="checkbox"/> Play, produce a | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Power station | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-aid training | <input type="checkbox"/> Progressive dinner | _____ |

The Annual Crew Officers Seminar: Developing the Annual Activity Plan

Now that you are well prepared for the planning process and have gathered the information you need to plan your annual activity plan, you are ready to develop your crew's annual activity plan as part of your annual crew officers seminar. Start with these ground rules for the planning process.

- It is important to respect the each other's views. Listen carefully and avoid interrupting the speaker.
- Keep focused on the task, which is to plan the crew's annual program. Try not to get sidetracked.
- Use the planning model to keep everyone on track and to be sure that all questions are addressed. This will help deal with unintended consequences.
- Write out ideas so everyone can see them.
- Be in agreement.

With these five guidelines in mind, the planning progress may be broken up into six steps:

Step 1. The crew president and/or Advisor leads a discussion on the crew's goals for the coming year. Write the goals on a flip chart or eraser 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 the ideas on a flip chart. Remember—don't critique the ideas while brainstorming.

Step 3. Evaluate the ideas that have been developed to see if they match the Program Capability Inventory. Do you have the resources needed for each idea? If those resources are not identified on the Program Capability Inventory forms you have collected, discuss other resources that may be available to you in your community. Vote 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 to provide opportunity for members of your crew to accomplish requirements of the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards. Take a look at your annual program "from 35,000 feet" to ensure a balanced program, using the ALPS model (adventure, leadership, personal growth, and service).

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 consultants, and organize teams/committees to lead out the work.

Step 6. Distribute the annual plan and calendar to the Venturers, their families, and the chartered organization representative. Once the annual activity plan is finalized, the activity chairs for the various events can begin working on their activities. It is up to them to keep the process moving forward and to report progress at the regular officers' meetings and crew meetings.

Communication is also vital. Even a good plan won't help much if it is not shared with others. After all, everyone needs to know the crew plan so they can make their own individual plans.

Areas of Program Emphasis— Building a Balanced Activity Program

The Venturing areas of program emphasis should be used to suggest things in which crews might wish to take part: adventures and fun activities, leadership-building exercises, setting goals to achieve personal growth, and performing service in your community. It should serve as a tool for year-round program planning for the members of your crew. Once you have completed your annual program plan, review it to ensure that you have a fun, balanced program plan that helps crew members become involved in each of the areas of emphasis.

Using the requirements for each award level helps the crew leadership set some program goals for each year. Acting on the responsibility to lead the meetings and the Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III adventures will help prepare the crew for the program as well as helping individual crew members to grow as leaders.

The Venturing awards recognition system can provide 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 Venturing awards. These requirements should also be the basis of annual planning.

Tips for Using the ALPS Model in Annual Program Planning

As you conduct your crew officers seminar and develop your crew's annual plan, the ALPS model and the requirements for the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards can be used as guides to constructing a robust crew plan that will facilitate your crew members achieving Venturing awards. Tips by area of program emphasis include:

Adventure

Participation in adventures is at the heart of the Venturing experience. As your crew plans its annual program, pay attention to what your crew's interests are. Use these interests to set program goals for adventures that line up with the requirements of the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards. These must be Tier II or III adventures. As you consider adventures for your crew, be creative and take into consideration the needs of your crew members, as identified on the Venturing Activity Interest Survey, and the resources available to your crew, as identified on the Program Capability Inventory.

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

Leadership

Leadership in Venturing takes place in a variety of settings. Some crew members have been selected as leaders. Some will be appointed to serve as leaders for various adventures. There are also training courses available to help you learn the skills in a structured setting. Planning dates for the following required trainings should be a priority for the crew. And giving crew members and crew leaders the opportunity to take part in BSA and other adventure-based leadership training should also find its way to your annual crew program.

- **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 be offered at least annually by the crew or through local council resources.
- **Project Management training** should be offered at least annually by the crew or within the local council to assist crew members in organizing crew activities.
- **Mentoring training** should be made available as a crew-level course or through the local district or council.
- **First-aid training** (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) is one of the essential adventure skills. Building this training into the crew's annual program is important to provide new crew members with needed skills.

Giving crew members and crew leaders the opportunity to take part in BSA and other adventure-based leadership training should also find its way to your annual crew program to support those Venturers who have completed the required trainings above.

Personal Growth

Your goals in personal growth will help impact both the crew's annual program—and what you gain from serving as a member of the crew in pursuit of adventures. Look at the opportunities present during the crew's annual program planning meeting to help plant some seeds for the ways in which you will reflect on your skills, abilities, and interests and take charge of your own destiny as you set personal challenges to meet and learn from.

Take into consideration the following personal growth opportunities when planning the annual program. Ethical controversy activities can be done as crew activities as well as providing opportunities for Venturers to lead these sessions.

Some program resources such as the TRUST, Ranger, and Quest awards are useful for building skills in pursuit of adventures. The Ranger Award, in particular, is well-suited to help crew members prepare for outdoor adventures by setting program goals that will help them gain a comprehensive set of outdoor skills. See *Venturing Awards and Requirements* for additional information about these and many other recognition opportunities for Venturers, individually and as a crew.

Additional program ideas and approaches to deliver skills are available in *Program Features for Troops, Teams, and Crews*.

Service

Service is a commitment to others and so forms an important part of your time as a Venturer.

As your crew plans its annual program, be aware of opportunities to deliver service to others. Service provides additional opportunities to build your own skills as a leader, especially as you take on the challenge of leading service projects as a Venturer. But remember that service is much more than just an occasional project. It's a way of life. As you are involved in other crew activities, always be on the lookout for opportunities to serve, to improve your community, and to help other people along the way. It is not uncommon for a crew to stop along the way to an activity to assist someone in need, only to realize later that the unplanned, spontaneous service rendered became the most memorable part of the activity.



Service is one of Venturing's areas of program emphasis, so a strong program of service is essential. Consider the following as part of your annual programming needs:

- **Service hours**—24 hours of service are required to complete the Discovery Award; an additional 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.

Choosing Program Chairs for Each Crew Activity

The activity chair for an activity is selected by either the vice president for program or the crew president (depending on your crew's practices and size) 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. 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. It is the responsibility of the chair to be sure that the activity planner is filled out and filed with the crew records.

Choosing a Consultant

Consultants can be a great asset to an activity but might not know much about Venturing or the Boy Scouts of America. The youth leader for the activity should help orient the consultant by carefully explaining the proposed activity and finding out how the consultant's expertise can be helpful.

In addition, the youth activity chair should review with the consultant what is expected of him or her and what equipment or supplies are needed, if any. The more structure and guidance provided to consultants, the better, so they understand exactly what the crew needs.

After the initial discussion, the activity chair should follow up with a letter or email to the consultant, summarizing their discussion so that there is no misunderstanding. Be clear as to the crew's expectations for the consultant, and make sure there is an understanding of the relationship between a crew's youth and adult members and the consultant. Remember that the consultant is there to help, not to run the activity. When the activity is over, be sure to thank the consultant for his or her time and resources.

Take good notes throughout the planning process. After each activity, do a critique/debriefing on what went well, what didn't go well, and what you can do differently next time.

After each step, put the notes in your crew history file. These updates will help during your next planning cycle.

Your plan will be a living, breathing document. For it to have real value, you must follow it, share it with everyone, and review it regularly to see if modifications have to be made. Good luck on another great year and don't forget: Share your plan and calendar with every Venturing family!

Planning Crew Meetings

A lot of planning takes place at crew meetings, but making crew meetings productive themselves also takes planning. This is the purpose of the crew officers meeting. If you are the crew officer responsible for a meeting, think through the 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 your crew meets, each meeting's purpose will depend on the 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. The key is to develop and use a meeting plan or agenda that helps the crew make meetings both productive and fun. Try to focus 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 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 in the crew.
- When planning the meeting, think of it as five to seven short activities instead of one long meeting.
- Be sure that meetings further the crew's annual program goals.
- Use crew meetings to prepare for significant adventures.
- Keep the business parts of the meeting brief.
- Keep track of recognition requirements along the way.
- Be sensitive to time constraints from school, jobs, and extracurricular activities that young adults experience.
- 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.
- Crew leadership, supported by Advisors, should work together to ensure that every meeting is well-planned and ready to go.

Sample Regular Crew Meeting Agenda

3 min.	1. Call to Order and Order of Business	_____ Crew president
10 min.	2. Unfinished Business	_____ Crew president
	A. Secretary reads minutes of previous meeting	_____ Secretary
	B. Treasurer reports	_____ Treasurer
	C. Crew officers' report	_____ Appropriate officer
10 min.	3. New Business	_____ Crew president
	A. Discussion by crew members on matters that need a decision	_____ Administrative vice president
	B. Registration of new members	_____ Program vice president
	C. Promotion of upcoming events	_____ Administrative vice president
	D. Recognition of individuals for advancement progress, and promotion of advancement opportunities	_____ Crew Advisor
	E. Crew Advisor comments	_____ Youth activity chair
45 min.	4. Crew Activity* Program	_____ Youth activity chair
	A. Remind Venturers about materials needed, requirements, or what to bring and wear, etc.	
	B. Introduction of presenters	
	C. Carry out plan or conduct the activity	
2 min.	5. Announce Date, Place, and Time of Next Meeting	_____ Crew president
5 min.	6. Closing	_____ Assigned member
	Advisor's/Officer's Minute	_____ Advisor or appointed officer
	7. Refreshments and Fellowship by Crew Members	

After the meeting: Advisor and crew president confirm plans for the next officers' meeting. Crew president follows up with next meeting; youth activity chair to double-check all arrangements.

***Note:** Conduct activity planned by committee and consultants using the activity planner.

Frequently Asked Questions About Crew Meetings

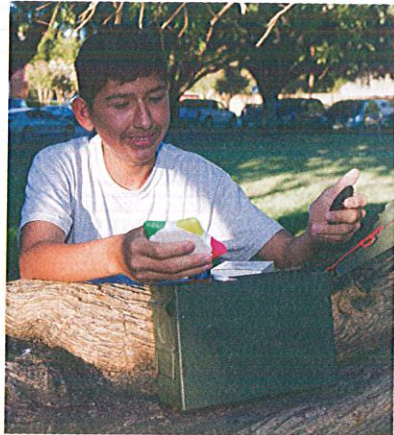
How often should a crew meet? When and how long to meet are up to each crew. Separate from other activities and adventures, some crews meet every week, while others meet every other week, and a few even meet just once a month. Meeting weekly can help keep the crew together, building the team and creating a routine for Venturing. But it also means the crew officers need to do more planning to make sure all the meetings are productive and worthwhile to attend.

How long should crew meetings last? How long meetings last will depend on what the crew needs to do to achieve its vision and goals, as well as how often the crew meets. A crew that meets every week may be able to keep its meetings shorter than a crew that meets only every other week. Whatever you decide, try to keep to the same meeting times on a regular basis. Making a habit of starting and ending on time will make it easier on everyone to plan their individual schedules to include Venturing.

Where should crew meetings be held? Hold your meetings at a safe place that is convenient for crew members: usually at the place of worship, school, or community group that sponsors the crew. It helps to have a regular location for each meeting, but for some activities, the crew might choose a different location.

What do Venturers do at crew meetings? As with everything in Venturing, the crew can choose. As long as it's safe, in line with the Scout Oath and Scout Law, and in support of one or more of the Venturing areas of emphasis, you can do just about anything you'd like to plan during a crew meeting. For example:

- Prepare for your next adventure.
- Play Frisbee.
- Learn camping skills.
- Make a dessert.
- Take Hazardous Weather training.
- Hold a crew birthday party.
- Practice lighting camp stoves.
- Plan a yearly crew calendar of events.
- Set up and run a geocaching challenge.
- Take part in an ethical controversy discussion.
- Complete Project Management training.
- Get together with another crew for a game night.





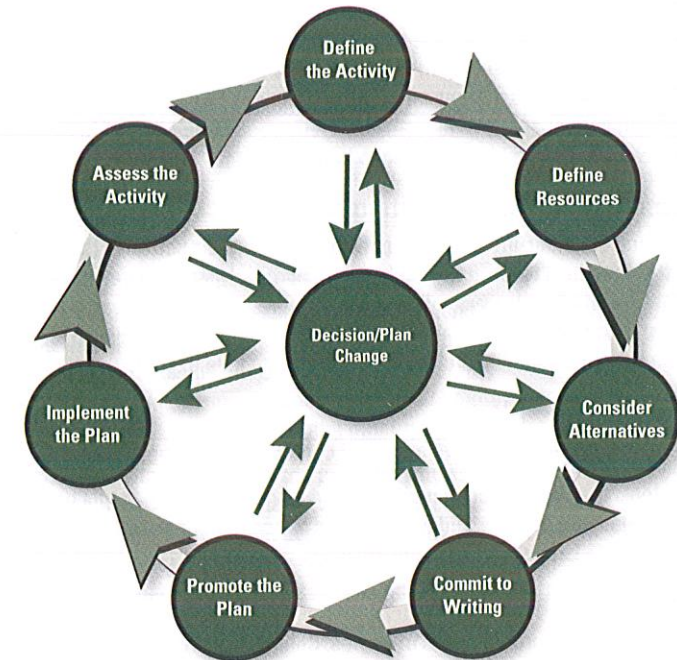
Leading and Planning Your Adventures

This section is designed as a reference to help you and your crew plan and lead crew adventures. It is a brief but helpful introduction to skills you may develop more fully through National Youth Leadership Training, the National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, and the Kodiak Challenge. It should not be considered in any way a substitute for those courses, but rather a primer to help you get started as an effective leader.

Planning Crew Adventures: Detailed Planning Helps

Planning every adventure means that you have to be concerned with the high-level details—what the seven-step model provides—and the details that you work out to implement each step in the process.

The annual activity plan helps your crew identify what the members wish to do for each program year. The seven-step planning model presented here will be useful as you plan crew adventures and service projects. (This same model will also be useful in life when you face project planning and project management tasks.)



This activity planning model is used in the pages that follow. Its purpose is to help you make good decisions along the way as you develop, implement, and assess your plan for a particular activity. Use the points on the cycle to help you evaluate your plans as you go along, as well as the Venturing Activity Planning Worksheet.

Step 1: Define the Specifics of the Activity

What would the crew members like to do? Consider what the crew has done before as well as new activities that relate to the crew members' interests. Narrow down the ideas to create a final list. If your annual crew plan has scheduled a canoe trip and assigned you as the activity chair for that particular activity, work with your Advisor, crew officers, and your consultant to develop and plan for that activity that will be fun, meet the needs of crew members (as identified in the Venturing Activity Interest Surveys), conform to the safety requirements of the Boy Scouts of America and the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, and possibly, help some crew members meet requirements they are working on for the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards.

Step 2: Define Resources

Determine the time available for the activity, what skills will be needed in the crew and from consultants, whether the needed tools and gear are on hand, what the event will cost and how it will be paid for, and other relevant issues such as the availability of sufficient adult leadership.

Step 3: Consider Alternatives

Evaluate the ideas you have developed to see whether they match your Program Capability Inventory. Do you have the resources needed for each idea? Are there alternatives that would work as well—or better? What if an emergency occurs leading up to the event—or during the event? How are you prepared to handle changes in circumstances?

Step 4: Commit the Plan to Writing

Draft the plan and calendar, including the activity itself, support activities (such as, prior to your canoe trip, meetings to learn to paddle canoes properly, water safety seminars, etc.), and key dates. Review the plan with others to make sure all dates are feasible. Follow up with key dates and times to ensure adequate guidance and accountability to implement the adventure. Be sure to schedule periodic status checks to help execute the plan properly.

Step 5: Promote the Plan

Promote the plan and the event. Have a point of contact for questions to be answered.

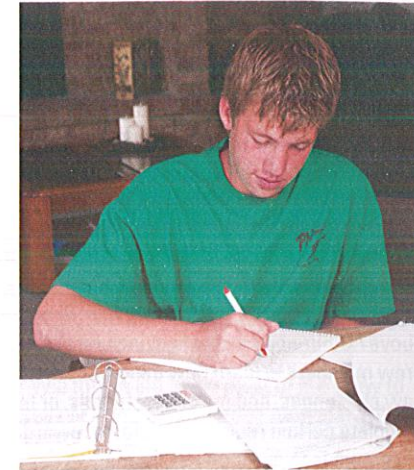
Consider the tools to use when communicating the adventure: social media or paper handouts? Keep in mind how the audience prefers to communicate. Follow up with multiple messages to keep the excitement building.

Step 6: Implement the Plan

Have fun. Take lots of pictures. Tell lots of stories. Celebrate success.

Step 7: Assess the Activity

Regular assessment checkpoints along the way ensure you are making progress. Then at the end, debrief the entire experience with the members of the crew. What went well? What should be changed? What has been learned? What you can do differently next time? Take good notes and put them in the crew history file to help during the next planning cycle. A reflection after the adventure will allow crew members to learn from the experience. The next crew adventure should run more smoothly as you apply what you learned when planning and implementing this activity.



Additional Considerations for Planning Crew Activities

Proper planning for an outing or service project might seem like a lot to do, but having clear answers to all questions in advance and knowing who is responsible for implementing the interlocking parts of your adventure will go a long way to ensure that the adventure is successful, safe, and fun. The seven-step planning process will help you develop an effective plan.

Adventure is one of the key components of the Venturing program. As you move from a participant to a leader to an adventure mentor, your skills will be growing. Your progress through the Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards will help you track your growth as an adventurer—and as a leader.

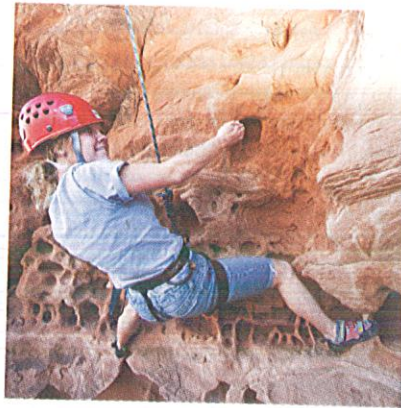
Applying the Seven-Step Process

The planning process is built around asking questions along the way as you plan your adventure. You will not necessarily be able to answer every question in the order it appears here. Your answers to some questions will generate other questions. You may think of your plan as a puzzle and try answering the questions that are more obvious. These initial answers may help you fill in the blanks for the other questions.

While it is important to have a detailed trip plan, don't be so inflexible that some plans can't be changed during the crew's adventure. Write it down. Review it. Share it. Publish the plan and the timeline and make certain that everyone is ready to go. 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.

Define the Activity

An adventure requires a goal, and having a goal makes it easier to plan the adventure. The first step in planning any Venturing adventure should be to consider the purpose of the activity and the goals of the crew. The objectives of the adventure will serve as a foundation for the planning. Is the purpose of the upcoming event to learn a skill, improve self-confidence, experience a specific activity, go to a certain place, just have fun, or all of the above? Other objectives might include getting crew members to learn new things, accept new challenges, and make new friends, or to complete certain requirements for an award. The only nonnegotiable objective of any adventure is to minimize risk. Managing risk is required.



Once you have your vision in place, follow up with questions—and thoughtful answers—that will help deliver that adventure.

- **What has to be done?** What will it take to make the event happen? What resources need to be acquired to move the project into action?
- **When is it to be done?** Establish a timeline. Backdating tasks to complete in leading up to an event is especially critical for Tier II- and Tier III-level adventures.
- **Who does it?** This is vital in establishing accountability. Do the persons responsible for implementing their part of the adventure have the needed skills? If not, how do we help them acquire those skills? What other support do they need?
- **Where, when, and how?** Answering these questions will establish locations and timeline and will settle issues regarding implementation of the adventure.
- **Is everything clear?** Preparing an initial written draft of the adventure—including the vision for success and implementation details—will start the process of defining the adventure in detail. Ask the adventure mentor to review the plan for completeness and accuracy.

While most of the planning tips in this chapter can be used for any tier of adventure, the lower tiers require less significant effort (and experience). Therefore, if you are new to adventure planning, a good place to start is planning a Tier I adventure. As you develop your planning skills, then you will be ready to push yourself out of your comfort zone to plan a Tier II or III adventure.

Define the Responsibilities

When planning and implementing an adventure, clearly identify the responsibilities of the activity chair, officers, and Advisors.

For relatively simple activities, the activity chair may be able to carry out the planning, promotion, and staging responsibilities alone. However, for more complicated crew adventures, the activity chair recruits a committee and, depending on the activity, receives

additional help from the Advisors, the crew committee, and consultants. For example, if the activity is a bowling night, the activity chair probably can organize, promote, and run it alone. But for a waterskiing party, the activity chair might need other Venturers and adults to help with things such as equipment, food, and transportation.

The Advisor is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of the crew members. The Advisors and crew officers, as a team, need to make sure the activity chair has the necessary training and support to carry out the role.

Define Resources

An adventure can stall when crew members realize they don't have the resources for it or they have not identified resources far enough in advance to gather them. When defining resources, address the important issues in detail.

- Is there enough time to prepare for the event? Will the timing allow most of the crew to participate in preparation and in the activity itself? Making a backdating calendar will help identify critical implementation points.
- What skills do crew members and consultants have? Are there prospects for additional or new consultants to help the crew attain the needed skill level?
- Do you have the necessary tools and gear? If you are going canoeing, for example, can an outfitter support your needs, or do you need to raise money to purchase your gear? For a service project, can you borrow tools from friends and family, or will the agency you are serving provide you with what you need?
- How much will this adventure cost? Is it realistic to pay for it yourself, or should your crew hold fundraising events? Will the fundraiser bring in enough to implement the activity you are planning?
- Have you considered school calendars and summer jobs? Do you have sufficient adult leadership in place? What other issues do you need to consider? 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.



Recognition Note

Serving as a crew officer is one of the leadership requirements for the Pathfinder and Summit awards. Your ability to lead a discussion while serving in those offices will help lead the crew to a respectful consideration of adventure options.

Consider Alternatives

Considering the alternatives is always an important step in the planning process. In general, the trip to the location where the adventure takes place is a means to an end. Once the adventure is defined, sometimes it is easier—and more economical—to carry it out closer to home.

Here are some questions to consider when testing your adventure against alternatives.

- What resource issues suggest that an alternative plan is needed?
- What if an emergency takes place leading up to the event—or during the event? How is the crew prepared to handle changes in circumstances? Be methodical when looking at the plan and the alternatives that may be necessary.
- Does the alternative make more sense, based on resources? Can the same goals be met on an adventure close to home rather than traveling? Are there service opportunities in the local 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 crew members, Advisors, and parents or guardians, and commit to making the adventure take place. How you address the concerns that follow may suggest a more cost-effective or achievable adventure for your crew.

Decide Where to Go

Knowing what the crew wants to do helps you decide where to go for the adventure. A good method for determining places within the crew's range is to mark your location on a map with a dot. Then make three circles:



- A circle with a radius of 120 miles—Any place within this circle is about a two-hour drive or less from your location and appropriate for a weekend activity.
- A circle with a radius of 600 miles—This is how far you could safely drive in one day following BSA guidelines (a maximum of 10 hours of driving per day, under 600 per day on interstate highways). Every place inside the circle is a one-day-to-get-there trip.
- A circle with a radius of 1,200 miles—This is how far you could get in two days. All of a sudden, faraway places seem a little closer.

If you can afford to travel by train, bus, or plane, your circle of possibilities can grow dramatically. Then see if you can find the resources to get there.

At this stage the outfitter, property owner, or land-managing agency should be consulted well in advance to inquire about costs, reservations, group size limits, and permit requirements.

To help ensure a safe adventure, ask these questions when selecting a location:

- Are youth officers and/or adult Advisors familiar with the location?
- Have program locations been selected based on the needs and abilities of all crew members, not the needs and abilities of the leaders and/or more experienced crew members?
- Are the locations appropriate for the philosophy, mission statement, and objectives of the crew?
- What are the program location's hazards?
- What emergency resources are available in the area?

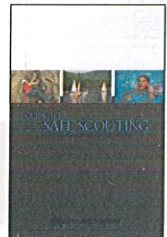
How Will We Get There?

1. Determine How to Travel. Because transportation is frequently the greatest expense of an adventure, be sure to carefully consider alternatives: air, train, commercial bus, chartered bus, or private vehicles including cars, vans, buses, and recreational vehicles.

Before choosing a mode of travel, explore the alternatives and their costs. Also consider the cost of meals, lodging, and additional vehicle insurance.

- 2. Select the Route.** Determine the route to take. Will it be the scenic route or the fastest way? Both have their advantages and disadvantages. Be sure to determine stops for food and rest.
- 3. Plan Group Travel.** Chartered buses are often the most economical transportation for groups of 20 or more. While small groups may find it cheaper to travel in private vehicles. Established rail, bus, and airline companies are strongly recommended, especially for longer adventures. For long trips, booking a flight may be the most reasonable alternative. Flying usually eliminates the need for overnight stops and meals. Choose the best transportation method based on your destination, itinerary, numbers, and budget. If you plan to use a commercial carrier during spring break or over a holiday, you must make reservations well in advance to ensure space for your crew.
- 4. Automobiles/Vans.** If traveling by private vehicle, you must arrange for enough drivers to allow plenty of relief. Parents are great resources for vehicles and drivers. Determine who will drive, and plan for delays such as mechanical problems or flat tires.

Refer to the *Guide to Safe Scouting* for BSA driving requirements for both adults and Venturers as well as guidelines for safe driving. See <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsources/HealthandSafety/GSS.aspx>.



Group Identity. Whether it's the official Venturing field uniform or a crew T-shirt, a common attire lends credibility, helps crew members know they are part of a team, makes it easier to keep track of the group, is required at some places to take advantage of offers available only to organized groups, and is your passport to shared Scouting goodwill.

Decide When to Go

Choose the time of year that best suits the crew—summer vacation, spring break, winter holidays, etc.—and select events suited to the season or time. Or choose where you want to go or what you want to do, and then pick the best time for it. Some trips are possible only for one season or for only a short time during a particular season. Crew member/Advisor availability can affect your timing, as well.

The timing of your adventure can play a significant role in the risks you must plan for (especially for adventures that will take place in the outdoors): The crew should be prepared for the season and conditions it is operating in.

Other resources that could help you make some of these important decisions include travel guides and guidebooks, online sources, people who know the area, and managers of adventure locations.

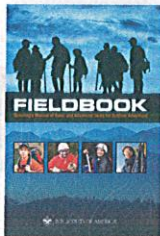
Decide What to Do There

Many Venturing crews have a theme (backpacking, service, STEM, culinary arts, historical re-enacting, etc.). Activities during your adventure might be focused on this theme. But don't be limited to activities based on your crew theme. Part of a good adventure is trying and learning new things.

Determine the Equipment and Supplies Needed

No matter what kind of crew adventure you have planned, whether it's a whitewater rafting trip or a STEM summer camp, three types of equipment must be considered: personal gear, group gear, and supplies. Personal gear includes such things as a crew member's sleeping bag, clothes, toothbrush, and water bottle. Group gear includes items that are used by the entire group, such as maps, stoves, and tents. Supplies are consumable items, such as food.

BSA's *Fieldbook* can be an invaluable guide to gear and skills in the outdoors and other adventure situations. You can get a copy at your local council service center or online at www.scoutstuff.org.



Personal Gear

Give crew members a detailed list of personal gear, and ensure they bring the appropriate items. Be specific and clear about why they need to bring certain item and what the performance characteristics should be. For example, if the personal gear list includes "rain gear" and a disposable plastic poncho is not acceptable, your gear list is not clear and could lead to cold, wet crewmates.

Depending on the scope of the adventure, conducting a gear shakedown could ensure the crew's safety, comfort, and well-being. Conduct the shakedown well before the adventure to ensure all crew members are prepared, and have extra gear available for loan.

Group Gear

Many established Venturing crews have acquired a supply of group gear, but depending on the activity or the crew's development, some Venturers, Advisors, and parents might be asked to bring items to share. Just as with personal gear, provide a detailed list of the group gear needed for the adventure. Be sure to check all group gear to ensure everything is working properly before departure.

Supplies

Supplies include food, stove fuel, dish soap, first-aid supplies, and any other consumable items. Even if you are not going camping, at least one properly stocked first-aid kit is a must. Food is typically one of the largest expenses of any adventure. Keep these tips in mind when planning what the crew will eat:

- While it might be easier to eat out, it is usually cheaper to cook your own food.
- Cooking your own food provides an opportunity for crew members to come together as a team and learn new skills.
- If the crew is sponsored by a school or place of worship, check to see if you can take advantage of any arrangements they have with food service vendors.
- Check with the chartered organization and/or local council to see if the crew is exempt from paying sales tax in your state.
- If you take your own food, be careful to prevent spoilage. Even a slight case of food poisoning could ruin your trip.
- Don't forget the condiments and cooking utensils. Determine the type of cooking needed. Consider testing the meals before the adventure to ensure you are prepared with all of the appropriate supplies.
- In some cases (such as a day trip), it might be best for each crew member to bring his or her own food so the crew can avoid cooking.



What Is Included in a Budget?

A budget for a crew adventure is more than just a list of prices for food and program fees. It should include everything that the crew will be spending money on once away from home.

Common budget items include:

- **Transportation.** This may include airline, bus, or train tickets, rental vehicles, gas, and/or parking fees.
- **Lodging.** Includes the cost of overnight stops to and from the adventure, as well as fees for campground, cabin, hotel, or hostel.
- **Food.** Includes meals en route and during the adventure. Some crews have each crew member pay for his or her own meals en route. If so, it is helpful to provide a recommended dollar amount crew members should bring. Also, it's a good idea to tell crew members how many meals they will be responsible for while on the road (as well as the kind of restaurants the crew plans to visit).
- **Training.** Determine the cost of meals and other expenses for any weekend training needed for the adventure. These training costs can either be incorporated into the overall adventure budget or listed as separate expenses.
- **Use or Participation Fees.** Whether the crew is going to a museum, using a whitewater rafting outfitter, or attending a Scout camp, make sure to account for any fees for participation.
- **Equipment Purchase or Rental.** Include the purchase or rental of crew equipment such as maps, propane fuel, etc., that will be used during the adventure.
- **Side Trips and Tours.** Include costs of any side trips or special activities that are planned.
- **Promotion.** Include the cost of mailings, postage, trip T-shirts, hats, etc.
- **Contingency.** Allow for unexpected costs, such as a delay en route or replacement of damaged equipment. Refund this fee at the end of the trip if not used. A typical contingency fee is 5 to 15 percent of the total trip cost.

When creating a budget for the adventure, work closely with the crew treasurer to make sure you are following all operating procedures established for the crew's finances.



Determine the Cost

Whether the crew is going to New York to catch a Broadway show, participating in a weeklong Habitat for Humanity build, or heading into the backcountry for a backpacking trek, an important step in planning is to develop a budget. A budget helps ensure the crew will be organized. By carefully estimating all the expenses of the adventure, you can prevent unforeseen problems.

Budgeting well in advance of the event is just as important for a simple Tier I adventure as for a complex Tier III adventure. The crew will undoubtedly have members with a diversity of financial resources. It is important for the entire crew to be involved in the budgeting process so the final participation fee can be supported by as many crew members as reasonably possible.

Money Earning

Once you have determined all expenses, the group can decide how to pay for them. To determine each person's share, add up the costs and divide the total by the number of participants. Can each crew member afford a full share?

- Many crews conduct fundraisers to reduce the costs of their adventures.
- Some crews offset the cost of activities through large annual fundraisers that require participation from all crew member families.
- Other crews provide opportunities for crew members to sell popcorn, candy, or other items.

Funds for all anticipated expenses must be on hand before the trip begins and must be earned by means in accordance with the policies of the Boy Scouts of America. For council approval of your crew fundraiser, complete a Unit Money-Earning Application, No. 34427. This application should be submitted to the local council at least two weeks before the fundraiser.

The Venturing Activity Planning Worksheets in this chapter are useful tools for capturing your planning process and the decisions as you make them and is then the basis for promoting and executing your adventure.

Payment Details

Once a budget (and a per-person outing fee) has been established, it's time to begin promoting the adventure and collecting money for it. Many crews have found the following tips helpful.

- Secure a commitment from each crew member with a deposit. The deposit may be refundable or not. Some crews allow all payments to be refundable except for travel fees (e.g., nonrefundable airline tickets). Others will allow a refund until a certain amount of days before the adventure. Whatever the crew decides, establish a policy and communicate it up front to all crew members and parents.
- Once a reservation is made, fees are typically the responsibility of the crew member (whether or not they attend), unless a replacement participant can be found. A payment schedule, established during the initial promotion of the adventure, can be helpful way to split up costs for participants and to help the crew leadership identify crew members who cannot follow through on their plans to attend.

- Final payment for crew adventures is typically 30 to 60 days from beginning of the outing. Shorter (3 days or fewer) adventures may have a shorter final payment deadline.
- Determine in advance whether money left over at the end of the trip will be refunded or applied toward the next trip. This should be determined before fees are paid for the current adventure so that participants, parents, and leaders know the plan in advance.

Handling Money While on the Adventure

Prior to the adventure, the crew treasurer and Advisors should ensure a process for the payment and tracking of expenses. Some of the questions you should ask include:

- What expenses can be paid prior to or upon return from the adventure?
- When a payment with a credit/debit card is needed, whose card will be used? In many crews, the Advisor will pay for certain expenses with a credit/debit card and then submit a request for reimbursement. Do not assume that is the case for every crew.
- How much cash will the crew need during its adventure? Are ATMs available during the adventure so you can avoid taking large amounts of cash? If ATMs are used, be prepared to be charged bank service fees for each withdrawal.
- Who is responsible for tracking expenses? A crew officer (typically the treasurer, with the support of a designated Advisor) should be assigned to record all expenses.
- How will expenses be tracked? Before departure, the crew treasurer should total the amount collected and subtract expenses that have already occurred (transportation, program fees, etc.). The treasurer or their designee should maintain a running balance of expenses during the adventure so that you know how much money is available to spend.

Commit the Plan to Writing

Steps outlined below show the level of detail that is helpful in planning an adventure. The information offers a detailed set of considerations. Every adventure might not require every point, but if the proposed adventure will have significant travel, the points below will offer insights and suggestions to include in the written plan.

Adhere to all BSA regulations. File a tour and activity plan with your local council office. Check with your local council for its requirements for filing a local tour permit. For details, read the Tour and Activity Plan FAQs here: <http://www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/HealthandSafety/TourPlanFAQ.aspx>.

Allow plenty of time for processing. Don't wait until the last minute.

How Can We Manage Risk?

Risk management is a matter of foresight and good judgment. When you've planned your adventure well and left a trip plan with someone, you can depart from home confident that the crew is prepared to handle any situation. As long as you keep your wits about you and carefully consider the consequences of your actions, you'll be able to enjoy even the most adventurous activity safely.

Thorough planning means much more than the crew having all the clothing, equipment, and provisions needed for the adventure. It includes thinking through the intended route, checking weather forecasts, practicing any special skills the adventure will demand, and leaving a complete trip plan with responsible people who will search for you if you are overdue in returning home.

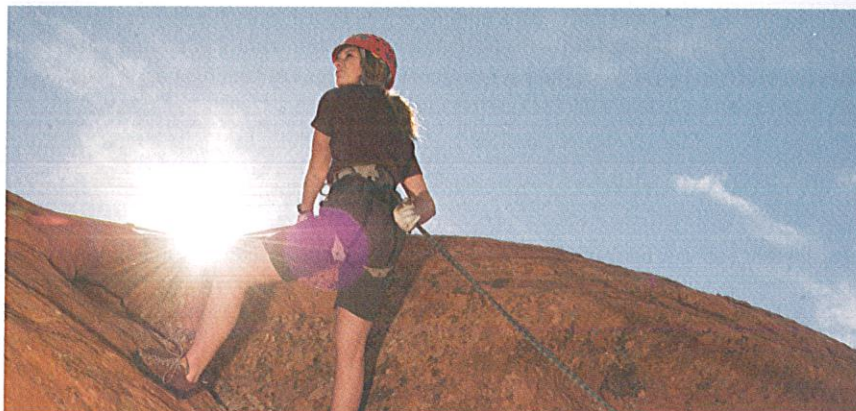


Recognition Note

Completing first-aid training is a practical step in service to others and risk management preparation. First-aid training is part of being prepared in any situation and in any setting and is a requirement for the Discovery Award.

Paperwork. Preparing the crew to manage risk during an adventure involves a certain amount of pre-trip paperwork and development of a risk management plan. At a minimum, before the adventure begins, the crew must have the following BSA forms on file:

- **Tour and Activity Plan**—<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/TourPlanFAQ.aspx>
- **Annual Health and Medical Record Form** for each crew member—<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/ahmr.aspx>. Adult Advisors should review each crew member's medical record form to be aware of any potential risks associated with their participation in the adventure.



Be sure to check with the land manager, tour operator, or guide service you plan to use during your adventure to see if they require any forms to be completed by crew members, including contracts, backcountry permits, liability waivers, and talent release forms.

Always prepare a written itinerary of where you plan to be on each day and night of the adventure. Also include driving directions to each location, cell numbers for each crew member, and emergency contact numbers for family members. Leave copies with several responsible people who will take appropriate action if you haven't returned according to schedule.

Promote the Plan

For an adventure to be successful, crew members must go! For people to go, they must know about it so that they can plan. Keep the Venturers and their parents informed about what will happen, dates, costs, and what they will need to do to prepare for the adventure. Get them excited! You are competing with many other activities, so sell yours well. A crew Facebook page or newsletter are good ways to sell and advertise upcoming events. Maintain photo albums, slide shows, videos, etc., of past trips. At meetings, have Venturers recap past events, highlight future trips, and emphasize how much fun you anticipate having. Keeping parents informed is another key to good activity participation. Have an annual information night to discuss what the crew will do in its regular activities and for its adventures for the coming year.

Assess the Activity

After the activity, determine whether the crew members liked the event. Were the desired outcomes achieved? What would you do differently the next time?

A good adventure is like a good book; it should have a good buildup (planning process), a climax (the adventure itself), and a closing. In this case, the closing would be recognizing everyone who helped put on the adventure with thank-you cards or other appropriate means.

You might have a get-together such as a cookout or potluck dinner for the crew members, Advisors, parents, and others who helped you. Show slides, hand out awards, and reminisce about the trip. You will have fun, and the parents will be able to see what you are about. It is important to critique the trip plan and adventure and file this for future reference. Learn from what went well and what didn't. Your successors will appreciate the critiques. Who knows, they may want to repeat a really successful adventure.

Additional Notes on Planning Service

For a major service project that involves gathering significant resources and managing a large group of participants, detailed planning is essential, just like it is for every major adventure.

The same planning skills used to plan a major service project can also be used to plan a crew sustainability project.

Contact someone who represents this group or place and tell the person that you want to perform a service there. He or she might have specific opportunities ready to go, waiting for someone like you to volunteer, or the person might want to hear what you want to do. Remain open to deviation from the crew's initial vision. The service project might end up involving different activities than expected. Sometimes the client's needs won't align with the crew's vision. Maybe the client already has a vision. It will be up to the crew to decide whether to adopt that vision for the service project.

Determine Where to Serve

You'll find no shortage of organizations that are seeking assistance, but your selection of a place to serve is an important one. First, you should consult with your crew to determine their passions. Maybe the crew shares a common interest in helping out others in a particular way or meaningful location or historic site. If you need more ideas, reach out to:

- Fellow Venturers and Scouts who have already completed service projects
- Your place of worship
- Your school
- The crew's chartered organization
- The local Scouting district or council
- Your local government or parks and recreation department



Recognition Note

Project Management training is a helpful tool for helping you plan and organize activities, whether they are service projects or adventures. It is a requirement for the Pathfinder Award (requirement 2).

Knowing Your Limitations

Clients or client organizations will sometimes ask for services beyond your capability to provide. In this case, consult your crew Advisor. The Advisor can help you reflect on individual/crew capabilities and engage in open, direct communication with the client about the limits of the crew's capabilities. It's far better to decline or modify a request of service than to commit to a task that the crew is unable to fully perform.

Messengers of Peace

To see how Scouts around the world are making a difference where they live, view some of the project summaries at the Messengers of Peace website. Visit www.scouting.org/messengersofpeace and <http://www.scout.org/node/76>.



Messengers of Peace

When Service Adventures Go Off Plan

No one starts out to fail in any adventure. But things happen—weather, equipment failure, illness, etc. These can interfere with the planned adventure, but a Venturer will still learn from the experience.

When a service project does not go off as planned, more than the crew is impacted. The client or client organization can be negatively affected. Does that mean you should not do service projects? No! But it does mean that service projects need the most careful, attentive planning possible and a recognition that it is about the client, not the crew.

Serve on!

The Venturing Activity Planning Worksheet

The Venturing Activity Planning Worksheets capture much of the information described in detail above, describing how to use the seven-step planning process to organize your crew adventures and service projects. The planning sheets are a useful tool to summarize your plans in a systematic and clear manner. Make use of these planning tools as you organize your crew adventures.



Venturing Activity Planning Worksheet

Position	Name	Phone No.	Email
Activity Chair			
VP of Program			
Associate Advisor of Program			
Consultant			

What is our goal?

Where will we go?

When will we go?

Departure/Arrival	Day	Date	Time
Departure			
Arrival			
Departure			
Arrival			

What will we do when we get there?

Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	

What equipment, supplies, and reservations will we need?

Personal Gear		
Item	Quantity	Comments

Crew Gear		
Item	Quantity	Comments

Permits and Reservations		
Item	Quantity	Comments

Lodging		

Other		

How will we get there?

Please attach maps/driving directions for each stop of the trip.

How can we manage risk?

Analysis and Management of Risk (What-If Plan)

Hazard	Severity	Frequency	Assessment	Corrective Action(s)

Emergency Communications

Position	Name	Phone No.	Email
Chief Emergency Contact (Home)			
Nearest EMS			
Council Scout Executive			

Nearest Medical Facility to Adventure Location (including address and contact information)

First-Aid Certified Members Attending the Adventure

Position	Name	Phone No.	Email
First-Aid Certified Members			
CPR-Certified Members			
Certified Lifeguards (if needed)			

Other Required Training (may be event-specific)

Position	Name	Phone No.	Email
Hazardous Weather			
Climb On Safely			
Safe Swim Defense			
Safety Afloat			
Other			

Emergency Response Plan

Weather Forecast (as of _____)

Forecast	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
High				
Low				
Chance of Precipitation				

Allergies and Medical Concerns

Venturer/Advisor	Allergy/Medical Concern	Prevention/Treatment

How much will it cost?

Budget Item	Total Cost	Per-Person Cost
Transportation		
Lodging		
Food		
Training		
Use or Participation Fees		
Insurance		

Equipment Purchase or Rental		
Side Trips and Tours		
Promotion		
Contingency		
Total		

Contact Lists

Venturers Participating in the Adventure

Name	Cell Phone No.	Email

Advisors Participating in the Adventure

Name	Current YPT?	Cell Phone No.	Email

Parent/Guardian Emergency Contact Information

Venturer Name	Parent/Guardian Name	Parent/Guardian Cell Phone No.	Parent/Guardian Email

Activity Chair Backdater

This backdater should be used as a guide. It can be modified to meet the needs of your crew and its adventures. For example, a Tier III adventure will most likely take at least three months, and perhaps as long as a year, to plan and prepare for.

Upon Assignment

- Pick up program material from vice president for program and associate Advisor for program.
- Develop and review schedule of crew meetings preparing for the event.

Two to Three Months Before Activity Date

- Make initial contact with event site to determine requirements for:
 - Overnight lodging (if used)
 - Special permits required
 - Fees
 - Water
 - Restrooms
 - Site map
 - Worship services
 - Transportation requirements
 - Emergency phone number
- Discuss event and crew meeting plans with vice president for program and associate Advisor for program.
- Determine requirements for any additional training.
 - Swimming event—Safe Swim Defense
 - Canoeing, rafting, kayaking, or sailing event—Safety Afloat
 - Climbing event—Climb On Safely
- Prepare initial event budget to include cost of site, food, and transportation.
 - Brief initial event details at crew meeting.
 - Provide information for crew's website, Facebook page, and/or newsletter.

One Month Out

- Meet with crew president, vice president for program, and associate Advisor for program to finalize details including:
 - Departure and return time
 - Number of meals
 - Emergency phone numbers
 - Drivers
 - Special equipment required
- Hand out event flyer at crew meeting containing all details, including dates, cost, and any required permission forms.

Three Weeks Out

- Begin collecting required fees; keep records of all monies collected and spent; turn money in to crew treasurer.

Two Weeks Out

- Activity chair briefs crew president, vice president for program, and associate Advisor for program on status of the activity.
- Send or fax Tour and Activity Plan (with driver list attached) to council office.
- Continue collecting required fees and permission slips.

One Week Out

- Activity chair briefs crew president, vice president for program, and associate Advisor for program on status of the activity.
 - Prepare roster of all Venturers and adults going on the trip.
 - Collect final fees.
 - Prepare final transportation plan; drivers' maps and instructions (one for each vehicle); sufficient transportation for crew equipment.
 - Obtain blank check from crew treasurer to cover any unpaid or adjusted fees.
 - Obtain book containing annual permission forms and medical forms.

Departure Day

- Activity chair briefs crew president, vice president for program, and associate Advisor for program on any last-minute changes in the activity plan.
- Maintain a roster of all Venturers and adults going on the trip (give copy to all adults and crew president).
- Carry all required permits (including Tour and Activity Plan).
- Carry the book containing annual permission forms and medical forms.

After Event

- Ensure all expenses for trip are paid.
- Give vice president for program an activity file with all handouts and information collected.
- Conduct an evaluation of the trip.

Leading Others

Leadership is one of the areas of program emphasis in Venturing. You bring this skill to life as you complete training, as you serve your crew as an officer, and as you lead your crew on adventures and serve as a mentor to others.

The youth leadership training continuum is used to describe the set of courses you take to prepare you as a leader. Effective leaders are made, not born, and there is great value in completing those training courses.

“ I attended the national Junior Leader Training program in Philmont when I was a teenager—a program that taught me how to deal with people, how to set goals, and then how to go about achieving them. I actually never saw the need for another management course. All would have been wordier, more expensive versions of what I learned at age 15 at JLT at Philmont. ”

—Dr. Robert Gates,
Secretary of Defense (retired)

Hopefully you will, as Dr. Gates did, have an opportunity to take part in the BSA's leadership development courses to help you develop as a leader now and in the future. What follows is more information to help you use the planning model to organize activities and adventures for your crew. The more you are prepared for your adventure through careful planning, the greater your opportunity for success.

