

Venturing Recruitment Plan

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Venturing Recruiting in Schools

Some councils and districts have an opportunity to market and recruit in high schools, private high schools, community colleges, universities, and other schools. Here are some helpful hints for school-based recruiting:

- Make sure the school leadership (principal, district superintendent, president, etc.) understand what Venturing is and what it offers their teens and young adults.
- Build a relationship with that leadership. Let them know about the successes of existing crews—such as a teen earning the Silver Award, doing a valuable service project in the community, mentoring a boys and girls club, teaching, receiving a scholarship, and learning a new skill (such as becoming a trainer for the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency to educate others about drug-free sports as part of the Quest Award or going on a challenging trip). School leaders like to hear successes related to their students. Draw a connection between that success and Venturing. Do this regularly and consistently. It works. Pictures work well, too.
- Demonstrate Venturing's value and opportunities by having crews do demonstrations or projects for schools. For example, a crew could teach several American Red Cross courses at a school or demonstrate a unique sport they learned in Quest, such as fencing.
- Invite school leaders to Venturing activities so they can see their students in action.
- Have Venturers present testimonials you can share with school leaders.

Once you have approached a school and prepared the way, you can ask for the following:

- Print a flier with information that students can pick up at the office, library, cafeteria, or other location.
- Have Venturers set up a recruiting table in the cafeteria or other location or on club days.
- Have a crew do the flag ceremony at a school sporting event.
- Start a crew as a school club.
- Start a crew in junior ROTC classes, sports trainers group, etc.
- Put up Venturing posters announcing crew open houses.
- Present noteworthy Venturing advancement, such as the Venturing Silver and the Ranger, TRUST, and Quest awards at student assemblies.
- Invite school leadership to take part in council- or district- level boards of review for students who have earned the Eagle Scout Award.
- Invoice youth in the relationship building by having the members of a Venture crew carry out a service project for a local school.

Other Recruiting Approaches

Recruiting starts from a simple place: Recruit teens wherever they gather. Look at church youth groups or Sunday school classes, sports teams, clubs, shopping malls, a student union, soccer fields, movie theaters. Current Venturers could set up a table at any of these locations to tell their story.

Your approach will vary depending on the opportunity and location. For instance, at a mall or movie theater, you might have only a few minutes to talk to interested teens, whereas at a youth group, you will have a captive audience with more time. Your location will define whether you have to find a way to attract

young adults, to interest them in coming to talk to you. Remember that teens are visual and hands-on, so consider presenting colorful images of Venturers doing challenging and interesting things and hands-on activities where youth can try a new skill.

As you learn more about Venturing, you can get more creative with your sales and marketing approaches. Just remember: The bottom line is that the main reason teens don't join Venturing is because no one asked them to!

Working with Crew Vice Presidents of Administration

One of the best ways to get young adults involved in Venturing is by having their Venturer friends invite them. In Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing, we like to see our units involved in regular, monthly recruiting. In Venturing, we even have a youth position with this as a priority: the crew vice president of administration. This is a key youth position, and your council or district can work directly with this youth on recruiting.

Crew Vice President of Administration Position Description

- Serves as administrative officer of the crew.
- Assumes the responsibilities of the crew president in his or her absence.
- Leads the recruiting and admission of new members during the year.
- Organizes and recognizes the achievements of crew members.
- Maintains crew advancement chart and reviews individual progress at each meeting.
- Conducts opening and closing ceremonies for special occasions as scheduled.
- Attends all crew activities.
- Participates in the council VOA program planning conference.
- Approaches Venturing in a spirit of fun, and seeks to reflect this spirit in the recruiting of new members and through recognizing the achievements of crew members.

Two key responsibilities characterize your position: (1) leading the recruiting efforts for new crew members, and (2) managing the recognition of members.

First, you provide leadership for the recruiting of new members into your crew by ensuring that prospective members are made aware of your crew and are invited to your crew's open house, and by encouraging members to bring

friends to crew meetings. You follow up with any members who seem to be losing interest. Find out why, so that their needs can be addressed in officers' meetings and in the planning of program activities.

Second, you are responsible for recognizing members and making them feel a part of your crew. When prospective members come to your crew's open house or to meetings, it is your responsibility to welcome each one. It is also your job to stage the installation ceremony admitting new members if such a ceremony is a tradition of your crew.

It is your responsibility to recognize the achievements of individual crew members, honoring members who win scholarships, win awards, or gain other achievements in or out of Venturing. You may also conduct opening and closing ceremonies to add color and meaning to crew meetings.

Like every officer, you are responsible for maintaining the crew's code and bylaws.

Points for Successful Work

To work successfully with this youth officer, it's important that you pay attention to the following points:

- Make sure crew officers and Advisors know how important this position is so that at each election, capable and motivated youth run for the office.
- Make sure crew presidents and Advisors understand the recruiting responsibility of this position. Regular monthly recruiting brings new life to the crew.
- Make sure all of your crew vice presidents of administration are trained. Even though this is primarily the responsibility of the Advisor, the council or district could offer supplemental training related to this function. Once a year, invite crew vice presidents of administration to a special training session at your district or council Teen Leaders' Council or Venturing monthly program forum.
- Consider recruiting a sharp young person who was successful in this role to serve on your committee responsible for calling each vice president each month to offer assistance and to check progress.
- Post a chart on your Web site or publish it in your newsletter showing monthly recruiting progress.
- Every month, recognize crews and vice presidents of administration who do well in their recruiting efforts.
- Establish a recruiting benchmark, such as asking each crew to recruit at least one (or two, or three) new members each month.
- Help crews in their recruiting efforts by providing good district and/or council marketing to youth.
- Regularly teach these vice presidents new approaches to recruiting.
- Establish a crew recruiting award for your district or council.
- Send letters to successful vice presidents of administrations' principals or college deans, telling them what a good job their students are doing as leaders.
- Publish recruiting success stories in your newsletter and post them on your Web site. Even send them to the BSA national office to be recognized on the national website.

Successful Crew Open Houses

The primary way we do recruiting in Venturing is through crew open houses, so training and motivating crew leadership to plan and run quality open houses could be one of the most important things your committee does. Here is a list of things you need to know and do before you can prepare your crews:

- Know why we do open houses.
- Know what a great open house looks like.
- Be motivated and enthusiastic about open houses yourself.
- Believe that teens can successfully run great open houses.
- Start planning early.
- Have all the necessary support materials.
- Be able to convey to the crews' leadership what an open house is and how to do one.
- Be able to motivate your crews' leadership to attend your open house training so you only have to do it once and you can take advantage of synergy.
- Be able to train and motivate everyone to achieve success.
- Support your crews when they do their open houses.
- Follow through.
- Recognize your crews for their successes.
- Help them build on one year's experience to improve for the next year.

Why Hold a Crew Open House?

- It is how a crew recruits.
- It can be the annual crew program kickoff for a new year, rejuvenating existing members and therefore keeping them involved for another year.
- It provides an opportunity for leadership within a crew if youth run the event.
- It provides a review of the crew's past program and hints of future programs so crew members feel good about themselves and their crew. It can give Venturers a new perspective on their involvement in Venturing.
- Youth recruiting other youth is the best kind of recruiting.
- Crews take ownership of their recruiting; friends recruit friends.

What Is the District's Role in an Open House?

Training and motivation. Since the open house is the primary method of recruiting in Venturing, it is extremely important that the council or district be involved. The district should train and motivate every crew to run the best open house possible. Take this role seriously; don't leave your fate in someone else's hands. If you are serious and committed, your fall Venturing recruiting will be a success and you will have healthy and happy crews.

You should provide an exciting, can't-afford-to-miss-it training session/open house kickoff, or whatever you want to call your training and motivation session, in June or July (since crews should plan and prepare for the open house in August). Send a reminder to crews in May or June to appoint an open house youth chair and adult staff adviser. Invite to your training session the youth open house chair, adult staff adviser, and anybody else from the crew who wants to help with the open house.

Direct the training session toward youth; it should be fun and motivational. Involve youth who have previously run successful open houses. Challenge these crew open house leaders to be successful. Set high standards for them. Training can be done by the district executive, a volunteer, or even Venturers. Here are some points to cover during your training session/open house kickoff:

- Explain why we do open houses, giving real and good reasons and emphasizing the importance of a quality job and success.
- Explain each person's role in achieving that success (provide job descriptions).
- Explain how to plan and backdate (provide calendars).
- Get the phone numbers and e-mail addresses of youth so you can get regular updates on the planning progress (don't be afraid to give them check points).
- Get them pumped up and motivated to do a great job.

Keys to a Successful Crew Open House

- Plan early (you start in April or May; youth start in June or July) and make your planning high quality.
- Have trained and motivated council/district trainers.
- Have trained and motivated crew open house chairs and Advisors.
- The open house should be led and run by youth (emphasize their responsibility for success).
- Involve adults who want to help youth be successful rather than run it themselves.
- Write a good invitation-to-join letter from the crew.
- Provide good, detailed directions to the open house so attendees won't get lost or discouraged from attending.
- Have friendly and welcoming faces at every turn. Eliminate the fear factor. Place plenty of welcoming and directional signs.
- Make potential members believe they made the right decision to attend the meeting.
- Provide hands-on activities instead of just a lot of talking (for example: 30 minutes of activity and fellowship, 20 minutes of talking, and 10 minutes to register). The Advisor should limit his/her talking, as well.
- Plan a getting-oriented-to-our-crew weekend or activity right away.
- Make parents, families, and friends feel welcome.
- Send reminders to crew members to ask their friends to attend (this is where most new members should come from).
- Get everyone in the crew involved in the open house.
- Keep it short: no more than one hour.
- Show pictures and videos of crew activities.
- Give a folder to new members that includes a crew calendar, application, pen, and anything else of interest. Make it easy for them to join.
- Have someone from the district visit as an observer.
- Recognize open house chairs for their successes by giving them movie tickets, gift certificates, products, etc. Send thank-you letters. Invite all crew open house chairs to a district committee meeting or council board meeting to recognize them publicly.
- Create an atmosphere in which crews and youth can't wait to do the next open house.
- Include all open house dates in your council newsletter or on your website.
- Work to use social media such as Facebook and You Tube as part of the communication promotion process.

Keys to an Awesome Open House from a District Executive's Point of View

- Make sure that your district committee is committed, and be thoroughly committed yourself.
- Persuade your crew leadership that they will have a great time following your plan and they will be successful.
- Work carefully with the youth. If trained, motivated, and given the correct support, they can be very successful.
- Start early, in April.
- Work hard to get all crew open house chairs and their Advisors to your district open house training meeting. Make it an event they can't afford to miss.
- Check on their progress regularly.
- Make sure chairs energize the entire crew.
- Help the crews prepare a good invitation-to-join letter.
- Encourage crew members to invite their friends.
- Make all information readily available.
- Train crews to be welcoming and friendly in their open house approach.
- Encourage crews to plan and offer open houses that are short and sweet.
- Follow up; get new members involved right away.
- Recognize successes.
- Learn from your mistakes and improve each year.

Sample District Venturing Activity/Fall Recruitment Calendar

January

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Venturing officers' association
- Specialized training

February

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Basic training

March

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Council activity—Venturing age specific

April

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Venturing officers' association
- Specialized training
- Remind crews you need the name and contact information for their open house chairman and Advisor.

May

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- District activity—Venturing age specific
- Invite the open house chairman and Advisor to a “how to plan an awesome open house” meeting to be held in June.

June

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Semiannual crew health review
- Basic training for Advisors
- Host a “how to plan an awesome open house” meeting.

July

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Kodiak course
- District trip
- Venturing officers' association

- Newly trained and motivated open house chairman recruits and trains (and motivates) the crew open house committee and sets the date for the first crew open house planning meeting.

August

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Council activity—Venturing age specific
- Specialized training for Advisors
- Crew plans an open house that will excite potential members

September

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Crew plans an open house that will excite potential members.
- Open house chair holds any needed committee meetings and prepares the crew for open house.

October

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- District activity specific for Venturers
- Venturing officers' association
- Basic training for Advisors
- Open house chair holds any needed committee meetings and prepares the crew for open house.
- The open house committee and crew officers conduct debrief sessions on open house. They also have a plan to ensure new members get involved.

November

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Council activity specific for Venturers

December

- District Venturing monthly program forum
- Semiannual crew health review

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 a DVD player/TV, welcome kit, name badges, sign-in roster, registration table, etc., are set up at least half an hour before the open house.

2. Greeting

Greeters

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.

3. Hands-On Activity/Icebreaker

Hands-On Committee

Ask everyone to take a seat.

**Open House Chair or
Crew President**

Crew President

4. Welcome

The crew president welcomes everyone and introduces crew officers and Advisors.

5. What Is Venturing and the Purpose of a Crew?

Crew Officer

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.

6. About Our Crew

Crew Officer

Share, in a creative way, what you think your crew is and some of the activities your crew has done. This could be accomplished with slides or a video. Share your future plans for trips, activities, and your superactivity.

7. Questions and Answers

Crew President

Give potential members and their parents an opportunity to ask questions.

8. Advisor's Comments (Short)

Crew Advisor

The crew Advisor wraps up any area not properly addressed earlier and talks about adult supervision and adults' roles in the crew. He or she invites parents to talk further during the registration process.

9. Invitation to Join

Crew President

Invite visitors to join. Explain registration costs, insurance, the code of conduct, crew policies and bylaws, and other pertinent crew information. Explain line by line how to complete the registration form. Tell new members to turn in registration forms and fees to the crew secretary at the registration table during the hands-on activities.

10. Hands-On Activities Again and Registration Process

**Crew Members,
Crew Secretary**

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.

11. Refreshments

All

Refreshments are optional, but often 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.

12. Cleanup

Cleanup Committee

Sample Open House Countdown

Days	Task
-84	Open house chair appointed
-70	Open house chair and adult Advisor are trained by your district
-60	Open house committee members appointed
-45	First open house committee meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief members• Plan open house• Make assignments• Begin promotion through web, including social networking websites
-15	Call to remind open house committee members
-14	Final open house committee meeting
-12	Send special invitation letter (see sample letter)
-5	Call prospective members
-1	Call prospective members Final check of meeting details

Q. What is the purpose of an open house?

- A.**
1. To invite new members to join
 2. To help your existing members feel good about your crew

Q. Who is responsible?

A. Crew officers

Q. When should you start planning?

A. The first planning meeting should be four to six weeks before your open house.
Appoint your committee eight weeks before the open house.
The open house chair should be trained 10 weeks prior to the open house.
The chair should be assigned 12 weeks before the open house.

Sample Invitation-to-Join Letter

Venturing Crew 425

(Crew Open House-Sample Invitation Letter)

September

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

Dear Jeremy:

Can you picture you and your friends scuba diving on a shipwreck 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, September 15, from 7 to 8 p.m. at the First Church (see detailed map enclosed).

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 crew's Facebook page. Please bring \$15, which will cover your registration and insurance for all the things we do. If you need more information or directions, please call me at 555-2020 or Lois Wilkerson at 555-2222, or e-mail me at _____.

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 the one-hour meeting, time, place, bringing friends and family, bringing registration money, and for what the money is used.
5. Briefly explains who we are: Venturing is youth-planned and run.
6. Invite them to visit the crew Web site.
7. Enclose a detailed map and Venturing brochure.
8. Give a source to get more information.
9. Emphasize friends more.
10. Send with a stamp, never bulk.

Open House Planning Meeting Agenda

Purpose of an open house

Chair

Ask the question: “Why should we do an open house?”

Answer: To recruit new members and to make our existing crew members feel good about what we do as we start our new program year.

What are the key parts of the open house?

Chair

Answer: Greeting, activity/icebreaker, what Venturing is, about our crew, past programs, upcoming programs, questions and answers, Advisor’s comments, invitation to join, registration, refreshments (optional), more hands-on activities (optional), closing comments, cleanup.

Planning the agenda

Chair

Making assignments

Chair

Next meeting

Chair

Closing comments

**Crew president,
administrative vice
president, and/or open
house adult Advisor**

Note: The above agenda is just a suggested guideline. How you plan your open house could be affected by your crew’s program emphasis, where and when you meet, or other factors. The key is to plan an exciting, effective program and to make the necessary assignments to make it happen. The chair must be prepared to effectively run this meeting, work with the committee, and follow up to ensure that the open house is done well. Also, feel free to change the name of this event. Call it whatever you like.

Starting New Crews

Venturing offers huge opportunities for youth to grow while providing an additional way to accomplish the mission of the Boy Scouts of America. Some would even argue that by having a teen Scouting program built on values and ethics, we are providing a lifeline to an age group that can be at great risk—more so than the other age groups we serve.

These young people experience tremendous pressures, and Venturing can help them through these tough times. We can help them learn and grow—and have a safe place to do it. We can give them an opportunity to interact and work with and learn from quality, knowledgeable adults who care about them. We can make a difference, so let's start organizing crews!

First, let's talk about some of the ways crews are different from Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops. Generally, when we organize packs and troops, we do basically the same things each time; that is, the program we establish in one chartered organization is pretty much the same as that in another. There can be some differences: One religious organization might include different religious emphases in its program than another; one troop might emphasize advancement or camping more than another. In Venturing, this opportunity for different programs is even greater.

At the same time, you need to remember that Venturing is still Venturing no matter what the crew emphasizes or builds their program around. They all have the Venturing Oath, the Venturing handshake, the Venturing salute, the advancement program, adult and youth

training programs, shared council and district activities, and award programs. They all use the same Venturing methods and share the resources you provide.

As organizers—or a kind of salesperson—we obviously need to know our “product,” but we need to sell that product from the buyer's point of view. We have to ask the question: “What do they want?” or “What can Venturing provide them?” Venturing was designed to be flexible to meet the needs of every potential chartered organization; there is no standardized program or box that every chartered organization needs to fit into. Any chartered organization has the potential to offer any kind of program. For instance, a religious organization could have a crew that primarily does scuba diving, or a bike shop could have a crew that mostly does mentoring. Don't prejudge or automatically put chartered organizations into a box; ask them what is important to them.

As an organizer, you have to be ready to answer the question most potential chartered organizations will ask: “What will we do?” You have to find out what is important to that organization. You have to be prepared with your answer and be confident that the district or council can help the chartered organization do what it wants. Selling Venturing and organizing crews can be one of the most fun and rewarding experiences you can have. You just need to be prepared, know what you are selling, be able to find out what potential chartered organizations need and want, and then paint them a picture of what their crew might look like.

Sea Scouts

Sea Scouts is a specialized segment of Venturing organized to address members' boating skills and to promote knowledge of our maritime heritage. Its purpose is to provide a maritime character-building, citizenship-training, and fitness program to the youth of America.

Sea Scout ships are organized by churches, civic clubs, schools, maritime organizations, businesses, unions, and other community organizations, which provide adult volunteer leaders, program resources, and meeting facilities. These ships plan programs related to maritime careers, seamanship, and service.

Sea Scouts started in the United States in 1912 and has a long and colorful tradition. Thousands of young men and women have had the opportunity to follow the traditions of the sea while learning what the future holds in a career related to the sea or a lifelong hobby of recreational boating. Many Sea Scout ships maintain sail or power vessels, follow a challenging rank advancement program, and have nautical uniforming, customs, and ceremonies.

The program of a Sea Scout ship is based on matching the interests of its members with the skills, equipment, and resources of the chartered organization. Most ships follow the traditional advancement program found in the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239. The ship's program follows the customs and traditions of the sea and encourages members to earn the ranks of Apprentice, Ordinary, Able, and Quartermaster (equivalent to the BSA Eagle rank).

Sea Scout advancement includes learning about uniforms, safety, customs, swimming, boating, marlinspike seamanship, piloting, signaling, drill, cruising, galley, sailing, boats, tackle, first aid, navigation, boat maintenance, engines, sea history, lifesaving, equipment, weather, radio, customs, and ideals.

Some Sea Scout ships prefer to plan their program around a specialty, such as sailing, scuba diving, or an aquatic sport.

The terminology used in Sea Scouts differs somewhat from that used in the rest of Venturing. The top elected youth leader of a Sea Scout ship is called a boatswain (pronounced BO-sun), which is equivalent to the president of a Venturing crew. Other equivalent terms:

Venturing	Sea Scouts
Venturing	Sea Scouting
Crew	Ship
Advisor	Skipper
Associate Advisor	mate
Secretary	yeoman
Treasurer	purser

Council Sea Scouts Committee and Area/Region Structure

Councils with a number of Sea Scout ships may organize them into a cluster, with a council Sea Scouts committee to provide training, service, and program help to the ships. Its chair, often called the council commodore, is recruited and approved by the Scout executive and council president.

This is a council option; many councils find that adequate support is provided by the district committee. For those councils interested in a council Sea Scouts committee, the following information might be helpful:

Option 1. The council Sea Scouts committee has a support role and assists with the planning of activities, leader meetings, and training as needed. The district provides the organization and service of ships. A council staff member coordinates their efforts.

Option 2. The council Sea Scouts committee is responsible for the organization of new ships, the renewing of charters of existing ships, leader training, activities, and unit service. A council staff member coordinates its efforts and may be accountable for Sea Scout ships and membership.

Councils may add additional subcommittees as needed for a sea base, boats and gear, etc. Councils may use the term *commodore* for chair and *vice commodore* for members of the various subcommittees.

The council Sea Scouts committee might wish to appoint or organize an election for a Sea Scout to serve on the committee.

Each region determines the organization of a volunteer structure for Sea Scouts on an area or regional basis. This group can organize regattas, training courses, activities, or conferences if councils in the area or region desire such events.

National Sea Scouts Committee

The National Sea Scouts Committee is responsible for the literature, training, insignia, advancement, policies, and activities related to Sea Scouts. The chair is appointed by the national vice president, Outdoor Adventures Group. He or she appoints committee members with the approval of the individual's council and region.

Council Support of Sea Scouts

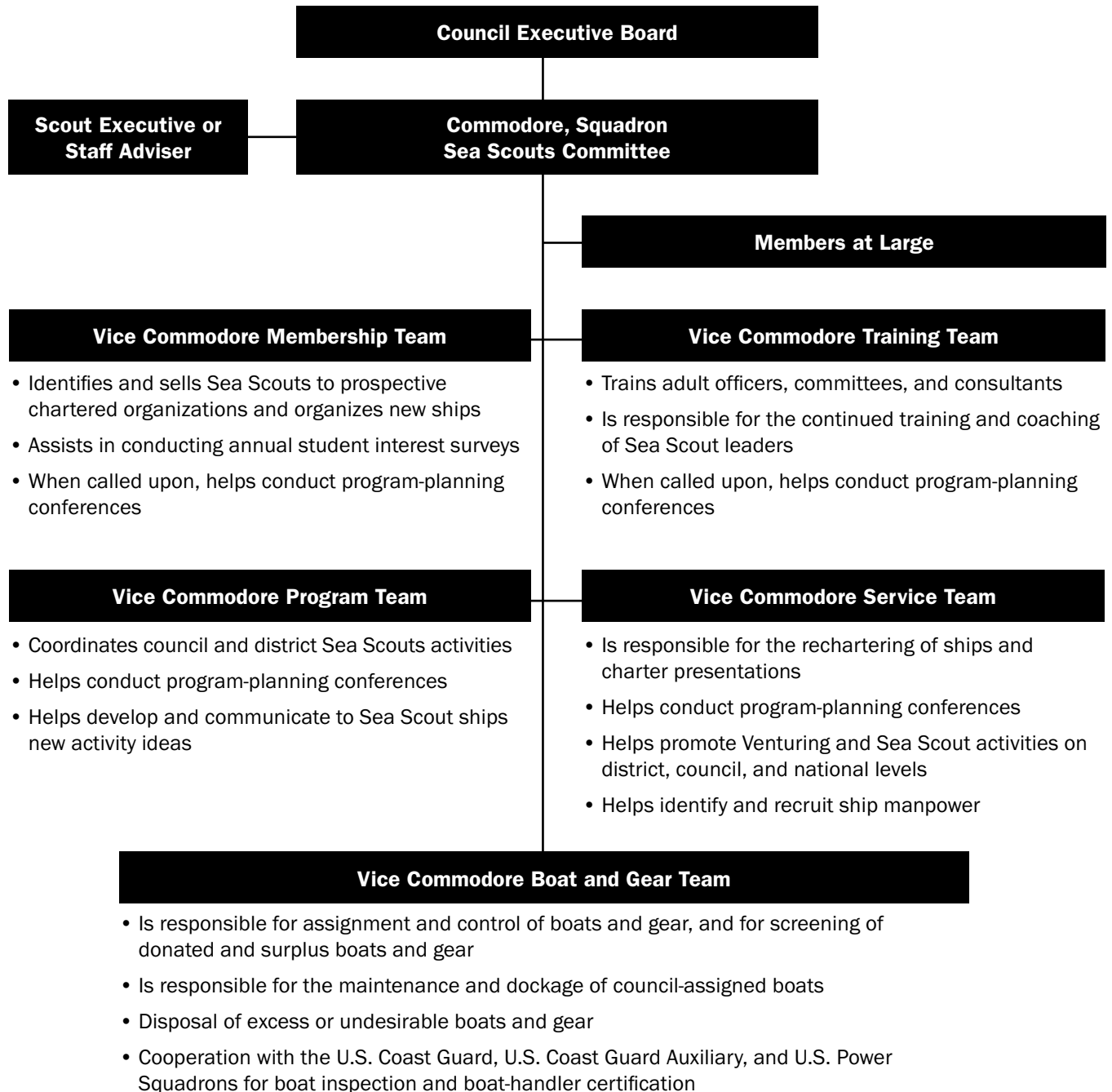
The Skipper, mates, and ship committee members should become familiar with the administrative and program support available to their ship from the council and the district. Ship adult leaders should not wait for service but should request help as they see the need. The organizational structure and services available to Sea Scouts are described on the following pages.

Method A

The commodore (council chair for Sea Scouts) is selected and appointed by the Scout executive and council president. The commodore is charged with producing and supporting a healthy and progressive Sea Scouts program. The commodore, as chair of this committee, sets up the following organization and meets monthly with his or her vice

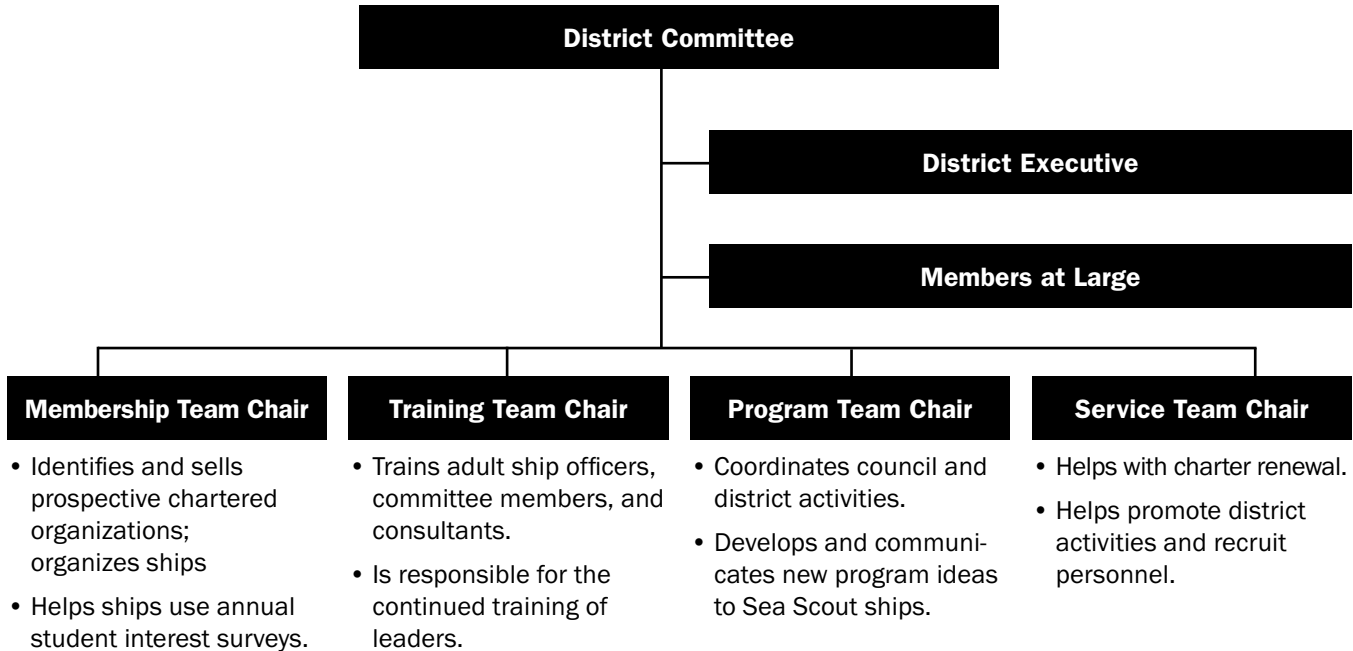
commodores to provide the essential service. It is usual to find the commodore serving as a member of the council executive board. He or she appoints vice commodores to assist in the overall administration of Sea Scouts. The Sea Scouts committee is made up of five teams—membership, training, program, service, and boat and gear—with each team headed by a vice commodore.

Method A—With Sea Scouts Committee



Method B—No Sea Scouts Committee

Where there is no Sea Scouts committee, the administrative and program support of Sea Scout ships is provided through the council and district committees. This method of Sea Scouts program support is automatically in force in all councils that do not have a Sea Scouts committee.



Steps for Organizing a Sea Scout Ship

Step 1

When an appropriate organization is selected to charter a Sea Scout ship, the BSA council assigns an organizer to guide the following steps. The potential chartered organization may be a church, civic club, school, labor union, maritime association or business, or other community group.

Step 2

The organizer and a council staff member visit the top person in the organization (pastor, president, CEO, etc.). They review the purpose and program of Sea Scouts and the responsibilities of the organization in chartering a ship. The top person agrees to

- Commit the organization to support a Sea Scout ship
- Inform the key leaders of the organization about Sea Scouts
- Recruit the adult ship leaders
- Provide program resources and a meeting location

Step 3

The organizer meets with the organization's key leaders (executive committee, church board, department heads, etc.) and reviews the purpose and program of Sea Scouts. The top person asks the key leaders to

- Support their Sea Scout ship
- Help secure program resources and equipment
- Identify prospective adult leaders (men and women older than 21 years of age who are of good character and have the ability to lead a quality Sea Scout program for youth)

Step 4

The top person and the key leaders invite the prospective adult leaders to an organizational meeting. The purpose, program, and leadership of a Sea Scout ship are reviewed using the *Sea Scout Manual*. A leader basic training session is scheduled to cover the material found in the *Sea Scout Adult Leader Basic Training Instructor's Guide*.

After these training sessions are completed, the organizer guides these prospective leaders to select a Skipper, two or more mates, and the ship committee. The organization's top person is involved in this selection. The job descriptions for these positions are found online and in the *Sea Scout Manual*.

Step 5

Complete the Sea Scout ship program capability inventory (PCI). This is a list of adults in the organization who can help with instruction, resources, and equipment for ship meetings, activities, and cruises. The ship committee secures the use of watercraft, as needed, for the ship program, keeping in mind that the cost of operating and maintaining a large vessel may be prohibitive for a new ship.

Step 6

Plan and schedule the first three months of meetings and activities. These would include weekly or bimonthly ship meetings, Saturday or weekend activities or cruises, and monthly ship committee meetings. The program for the first few ship meetings might include the following:

- Introduction to Sea Scouts
- Instruction related to Sea Scout advancement, particularly Apprentice
- Discussion of ship uniforms
- Election of officers
- Boating safety—swim checks
- Basic nautical skill instruction

Step 7

Recruit young adults to join the ship, using names from the council student interest survey or elsewhere. Recruit prospective members through schools, churches, and community organizations. Invite sons and daughters of members of the chartered organization. Develop announcements and publicity.

Carefully plan the first ship meeting (called an open house or “Welcome Aboard” day) to provide an exciting program that attracts prospects to join. Feature hands-on maritime activities. The ship leaders review the schedule of meetings and activities along with the structure, activities, and advancement opportunities in Sea Scouting. Invite leaders and members from nearby ships to help. All new ship members should purchase a *Sea Scout Manual*. Sea Scouts must be 14 years of age, or be 13 years and have completed the eighth grade, and be younger than 21 years of age. The organization determines whether its membership is coed, all female, or all male.

Step 8

The ship is chartered by the BSA council. All members and leaders must be registered. Registration forms and information will be provided by the organizer. The charter and membership cards will be presented to the chartered organization at an appropriate occasion.

Step 9

The new ship members elect youth leaders, called officers, as soon as possible. The Skipper may appoint temporary officers until the ship members know each other well enough to choose.

Step 10

The Skipper trains the new officers using the *Sea Scout Manual* and resource support at www.seascout.org. A year’s schedule of meetings and activities should be developed, avoiding any conflict with school, church, or community events.