

## RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS & NEW LEADERS

We are experiencing some very exciting times in the Boy Scouts of America. *We are welcoming girls into all our programs...from Cub Scouts to Venturing.* We have a lot to do to ensure that this transition goes very well. Timelines are critical to this process and the time to go about planning for welcoming girls into Scouting beyond Cub Scouts in February 2019 is NOW. Girls in the early adopter program will be transitioning to their next level and second-year Webelos will be transitioning into Scout troops. These troops don't exist right now. These girls will be looking forward to meeting troop leadership and hearing about a vision for these new troops that will give them a solid place to 'land' in February 2019. Unfortunately, we lose boys who decide, for a variety of reasons, not to continue Scouting. We need to do a better job to not let this happen...and as importantly...we can't let this happen with girls who are extremely eager to move into Scouting at the troop level.

Recruiting volunteers:

- **Set the expectation** that for these new units to be successful, it takes a lot of volunteer commitment to make that happen, and that we expect everyone to volunteer. Be clear about why we need volunteer help. We are a volunteer organization. *Volunteer-driven, professionally guided.* This is a very important message that cannot be underestimated or understated. New volunteers need to know that we are volunteers too!
- **Just Ask.** People like to volunteer. They like being asked. Today's parents are excited about being able to do one program that serves their entire family. Don't decide for anyone...let them decide...**Just Ask!**
- Liking to volunteer doesn't immediately translate into taking on a big job. *Go small.* For those of you who work in project management, know the process of 'work breakdown structure'. Back to that later...
- So, you ask...and they say "no". *'No' doesn't mean 'never'.* Perhaps they would like to help but have scheduling conflicts and work responsibilities won't allow them to take on anything else...right now. Maintain your contact. You are likely to hear 'yes' at some point.
- And when they say "yes" ...find the *'right fit'* for the job. Just having a seat filled is not always best if it's not the 'right fit'.
- **Onboarding.** If you don't have a solid onboarding plan, now is the time to create one. *Onboarding begins when that volunteer says "yes".* Don't wait to start the process.
  - **Examples of information relevant to 'onboarding':**
    - Welcome to Scouting [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) and [www.scoutingwire.org](http://www.scoutingwire.org)
    - Culture – What is Scouting all about.
      - I'm a new leader. What does this all mean?
      - <https://www.scouting.org/programs/cub-scouts/faqs/>
  - **Youth Protection Training & Leader Specific** training is a part of the onboarding process. Log on to/or create an account on [www.my.Scouting.org](http://www.my.Scouting.org)
- **People connect when they feel welcomed** and are reassured that they will have help every step of the way in learning what they need to know to be a leader.

**Relationships!** Creating relationships with new and older (I stress 'older') will make them want to come back. Managing volunteers is critical to this effort. Manage with respect. Feedback is a gift! Let them know how much their time and dedication, no matter how little or great, is very much appreciated. If they feel empowered to do their jobs...they will have a rewarding experience. *Empowerment comes from great training, coaching and mentoring.* We may do an excellent job recruiting, but if onboarding lacks or doesn't happen, we're going to lose great people who said "yes" ..." what can I do to help?". What about the person who approaches and asks, "what can I do to help" and then there's no follow up? That's not welcoming to anyone.

Back to 'work breakdown structure'. Any job or position has multiple parts to it. Taking a big job and breaking it down into smaller pieces makes the job something that more than one person can do, and do well. Position title requires position description. And it's very important that the job description is not overwhelming. Expectations are very important and that comes hand in hand with commitment. Recruit individuals who want to be a part of the team...and not just a seat!

**Motivation** to volunteer is basically internal. Volunteering meets their needs or the needs of their children. Beyond any self-serving motivation, people volunteer because of friendship. This can be a very powerful motivator. *When a friend extends a personal invitation, it's often hard to say 'no'.* Belief in the cause or the organization produces the strongest level of commitment. When people are motivated to volunteer because of their passion for a cause...the Boy Scouts of America...people will give more of their time, talent and treasure. This is the highest level of motivation.

I am confident that if you are reading this newsletter, you may be a long-time volunteer or perhaps you are a new volunteer to the BSA. Regardless...you are a valued volunteer. Thank you very much for what you do.