Roundtable Scouts BSA Breakout

Troop Leadership Lanes
Driving a Successful Troop

Well functioning Scout troops are like multi-lane highways. If everyone stays in their lane on the highway and everyone is moving in the same direction we reach our destination - a meaningful Scouting program.
In Scouting, like on the road, we have rules and guidelines that help us function. Each lane on our Scouting highway is wide, allowing flexibility and innovation. As long as everyone is on the same road and going in the same direction a successful troop can be achieved in many ways.

1. Are we all on the same road?
2. Am I staying in my own lane?
3. Am I keeping my eyes on the goal?

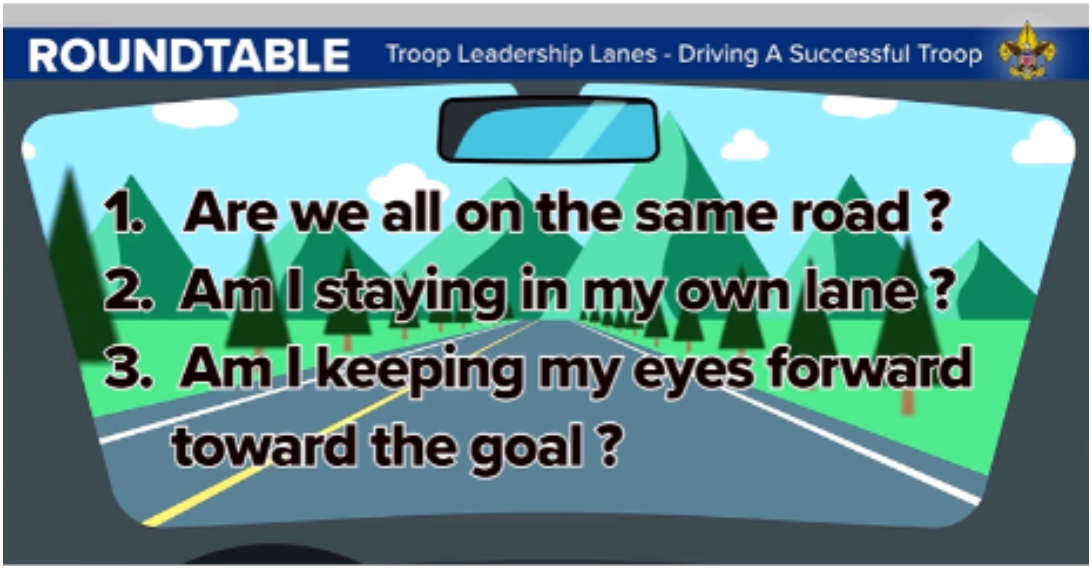
The following roles are responsible for the proper functioning of a troop. When each group stays in its lane, and each group is going in the same direction we achieve a meaningful Scouting program.

1. Chartered Organization
    a. The troop belongs to the chartering organization, and the COR represents the needs and interest of the organization. The COR needs to be engaged and aware of the vision of Scouting. Are their eyes on the road?
2. Scoutmaster
    a. The Scoutmaster mentors Scouts, manages and trains assistant Scoutmasters and delivers program to youth. Scoutmasters work to drive forward a dynamic troop program.
3. Committee
    a. No unit functions well without a committee (large or small) driving the behind the scenes work. They manage tasks and responsibilities so that the Scoutmaster can navigate the road to a robust Scouting program.

b. The committee chair is responsible for motivating, coordinating, recruiting, communicating with and leading the committee. The goal is that no one person has to do too much.

4. Scouts
    a. In Scouts BSA, in the patrol method, older Scouts sit up front learning how to drive and stay on the road. Scouts should put thought into how they want to drive down the road, they are not just passengers. When Scouts take appropriate leadership roles the entire unit benefits. Scouts learn by trying and sometimes failing and trying again until they get it right. Adult leaders focus on mentoring Scouts rather than micromanaging to help them succeed.

Each of these groups can help or hinder the driving for a successful Scouting program. Ask yourselves these questions:



When unit leaders are out of their lane or are driving too many vehicles by themselves, troops can fall apart. Are your unit leaders properly distributed on the unit leader highway? Committees are needed to fulfill the basic roles that need to be done. The Scoutmaster can not drive multiple cars down the road by themselves.

Scouting isn't one size fits all. Your troops' journey might look different from others. When everyone in a Scout troop stays in their lane and moves forward together, we create an environment where youth can thrive and the aim of Scouting can be achieved.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which of the four groups (Charter Org, Committee, Scoutmasters, Scouts) in your troop are fully engaged versus “parked” or drifting? What’s one action to get stalled groups back on track.
2. Share a time you stepped into someone else’s role (Scoutmaster doing committee work, committee micromanaging Scouts, etc.). What caused this and how can you prevent it?
3. What does “Meaningful Scouting Program” look like for your troop? Are all your leaders and Scouts heading toward the same goal, or are some going in different directions?