

SELECTING CUB SCOUT LEADERSHIP

THE CHARTERED ORGANIZATION'S MOST
IMPORTANT SCOUTING RESPONSIBILITY



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

SELECTING CUB SCOUT LEADERS

The greatest resource in Cub Scouting are the adult volunteers that are committed to providing a safe Scouting program as designed and who go above and beyond to make it special. The chartered organization approves all adult leadership and thus has a vital role to play in the selection process when there is a leadership position in the pack to be filled. This brochure is designed to provide you with a proven method to identify and recruit adult volunteers for your pack. This should be used in collaboration with the chartered organization representative and the pack committee chair.

DEVELOP A FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING CULTURE

Getting more adults involved starts the very moment a family joins your pack. Have your most friendly parent greet everyone, not just the first night they join, but for several meetings afterwards. A warm and welcoming atmosphere is as simple as keeping three points of the Scout Law in mind: Friendly, Courteous, and Kind.

Traditionally, families join Cub Scouting at a formal joining event. Scheduling a parents meeting within 10 days after your formal pack joining event helps to create a culture of being friendly and welcoming. The date, time, and location (including physical address) of the parents meeting should be on a sheet of paper that every new family gets when they join. This first parent's meeting is for all parents and guardians and other caring adults involved in the pack. For returning families, their attendance does more than provide information: it shows that Cub Scouting involves everyone. More adults will volunteer and help if they know that there are others who are doing the same.

The parents meeting is designed to do two things: welcome adults of new families and provide them an opportunity to participate. This is a perfect meeting for the new member coordinator or your most friendly and social parent to plan.

PARENTS WANT TO HELP

Parents often want to help but do not know how. Cub Scouting is such a unique program, unlike sports—where the rules of the game are widely known—that it makes some parents uncomfortable. That is why having a culture of being friendly and welcoming is an important part of getting the best volunteer leadership. Knowing how to ask other adults to volunteer is a skill and, just like any skill, can be learned; the more you do it, the better you become at it.

Keep in mind that not everyone likes a title or official position, but they may be willing and ready to do all the work that is associated with a specific position. The most important part is that the tasks that need to get done, get done—not that someone agrees to hold a title. Just because an adult does not want to wear a uniform and provide direct service to youth does not mean they are not a valuable resource.



STEP ONE—IDENTIFY SKILL SETS

When there is a position to be filled, the first step is for the pack committee chair to contact the chartered organization representative to discuss the position to be filled and confirm how involved in the process they would like to be. The chartered organization representative may entrust the pack committee chair to lead the process. If the position to be filled is the pack committee chair, it is the role of the chartered organization representative to lead the process.

The pack committee chair, chartered organization representative (if they choose to), and two or three other adult leaders in the pack discuss the position and what skill sets are needed for that position. Positions in Scouting require different skill sets. Being a good den leader may not mean you would be a good pack treasurer, so focus on the skill sets for the position first. Focus on skill sets that are specific to the position and not general skill sets for adult leaders. We expect all leaders to live and act in accordance to the Scout Oath and Law. We don't expect everyone to have a knowledge of bookkeeping, an important skill set for a pack treasurer. You may also find that the needed skill sets change over time. A 20-family pack that recently became an 80-family pack and is looking for a new Cubmaster may identify different skills sets than a pack with membership that is already serving a high percentage of the youth in the community.

At this point, avoid naming potential adults, and write down the skill sets needed for the position. Take the list of skill sets and come to an agreement on which one of those is the most important for the position. Use the form on the last page of this brochure to assist you.

STEP TWO—IDENTIFY PROSPECTS

Identify the adults in the pack who have those skill sets that best matches the position. Don't allow anyone to say no for someone else. Many adults will shift their priorities if they feel it is important and meaningful.

STEP THREE—MAKE THE ASK

Now that you have someone in mind, make an appointment to meet with them in person. At this meeting you should have two things with you: another adult volunteer and a written position description. Having a written position description allows you to detail specifically what you are asking them to do. The brochures *Welcome! New Lion or Tiger Den Leader*, *Welcome! New Wolf or Bear Den Leader*, *Welcome! New Webelos Den Leader*, *Welcome! New Cubmaster*, and *Welcome! New Pack Committee Member* are designed to help you with this step.

When you meet, start by letting the prospective adult volunteer know that other adults in the pack have gotten together and identified them as a top prospect to serve in this position. Then review the position description and the appropriate *Welcome!* brochure for the position you are asking them to serve in. Ask them if they will serve in the position. Be flexible and remember what is important: getting the tasks completed, not the title or position.

If the individual wants some time to consider it, that is a good sign. It usually indicates that they are the type of person that when they say they will do something, they are going to do it.

STEP FOUR—FOLLOW UP

When someone agrees to serve in a position, follow up with them immediately to thank them and provide them with the resources they may need. For example, when someone agrees to be a den leader, provide them with a copy of the den leader guide for their den.

At the next pack meeting, make a formal announcement when a new leader is recruited. This allows other parents in the pack to know who is now responsible for that position, which may prompt them to offer their assistance. Creating a special presentation or ceremony for new leaders is one way your pack can make Cub Scouting even more meaningful.

STAY POSITIVE

When someone says “no,” that is a commitment. A “no” is better than someone saying “yes” but then not being able to fulfill that commitment. If they do say “no,” find out why and ask what they would be willing to do. You should also ask if they know of someone else who would do well in that position. Discuss whether or not that person has the skill set you are looking for to ensure that they are a good prospect.

No task or position is too small. Don’t feel like someone has to have years of experience before they can accept a position. When listing skill sets for positions in Scouting, rarely will tenure be seen as a valuable skill set over things such as being a strong communicator, working well with other adults, or being a good role model.

Stay positive! You may not get the person to agree to take on the position you had in mind, but you may be successful in getting them involved in some way. The number one reason why adults do not volunteer: they were never asked.

SELECTING LEADERS

Most leaders are involved in the pack because their child is a Cub Scout. It is almost inevitable that when their child graduates from the pack, they will move on with their child to a troop. This process will leave gaps in the pack leadership, making recruitment often predictable and a normal part of Scouting.

Developing a succession plan in your pack is important for Cub Scouting to be available to the youth in your community for years to come.

The pack committee should constantly be looking ahead one year to identify known vacancies and prepare to transition to new leadership. The most common method is to have an assistant who knows that they are going to be serving as the leader next year.

When looking for people to fill leadership roles, always emphasize selecting more than recruiting. Cub Scouts deserve the best program possible, and they will receive it from qualified and enthusiastic leaders. These leaders should be selected because of their qualifications and not merely recruited because no one else would do the task. This is why asking parents to volunteer in a group setting rarely makes for successful leadership selection in a pack.

When searching for leaders, make sure to look not only among parents in the pack but among other adults as well. Often a former leader, a member of the Scouting Alumni Association, or a member of the chartered organization may be willing to help. Grandparents or other relatives can make good leaders, too. Consider all possibilities!

Within your pack, Lion and Tiger parents are the future of the pack. They are accustomed to being part of meetings and activities, and there is no reason why that should stop when their Cub Scout becomes a Wolf. Knowing each Lion and Tiger parent and identifying their skill sets should be a foundation of your succession plan.

Before actual recruitment, it’s important that the chartered organization approve the candidate. If the potential leader has not already completed an adult leader application and has taken Youth Protection training, have them do so before you make a formal ask. Some packs cover the registration fee for their leaders. The chartered organization must give final approval on the selection of all leaders.

Do not wait until you have a vacancy to evaluate potential leadership. Consider parents who are potential leaders and approach them before you have a vacancy.

Having leadership already in place when you conduct a recruitment event for Cub Scouting makes for a smooth event and higher quality program.

