

Board of Review and Scoutmaster Conference

Learning Objectives

- Understand the purpose of each conference
- Understand how to conduct each of these conferences
- Better understand what are the Do's and Don'ts of each conference

Scoutmaster Conference

Purpose

- Scoutmaster to review Scout's growth in his understanding of Scouting's ideals.
- For the Scoutmaster to learn how the scout applies Scouting's ideals in his daily life and in the troop.
- Review the Scout's next rank's requirements and encourage him to complete the next rank.
- Get to know the Scout, both as a Scout and as a person.
- Help the Scout grow up.
- Guide and counsel the scout so that the troop can function properly and for the scout to serve the purpose of scouting.

Conducting a Conference

Who	The Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster can delegate the responsibility to an experienced Assistant Scoutmaster; however this delegation should only be for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class rank. The Scoutmaster should hold the conference for all Star, Life, and Eagle candidate.
Where	At a place and time mutually agreed upon by both the Scoutmaster and Scout. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct the conference in a quiet place. • Remember to follow BSA Youth Protection Policy requirement, one on one between Scout and Scouter. Be in a place visible and accessible by other people.
When	At the conclusion of rank. A conference can also be held when the Scoutmaster senses a Scout needs a conference (i.e. if the Scoutmaster notices that the Scout is not advancing) or the Scout asks for a conference.
How Long	There is no specific time length for the conference, a good rule of thumb is 20 minutes or long enough to learn three to four things about the Scout that you did not know before. You should not rush the conference; your objective is to get to know the Scout.

How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions on how he is doing, feels about the troop, and his role in it. • Find out all of the Scout's goals, both in scouting and outside of scouting. • Listen carefully to what the Scout is saying and listen to what he is not saying. • Review the scout's achievement and discuss with the Scout their achievement with out retesting. Check the advancement record for appropriate signatures. • Some Scoutmasters check and sign off on the Scout spirit requirement. • End the conference with praise for the positive aspects of the Scout's character, his skill level, and/or his accomplishments.
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Do's

- Have fun – intention of the conference is to learn more about the Scout than last time.
- Point the Scout toward the next step in Scouting.
- Have the conversation go beyond Scouting.
- Have a conversation that will allow a direct give and take between the Scout and the Scoutmaster for both the Scout's good and the good of the troop.
- Have an informal conversation that leads towards a certain goal or as a requirement for advancement.
- Assess the Scout's readiness for his Board of Review and progress since the last Scoutmaster Conference.
- Review Scout's achievement and discuss them.
- Ask Scout how he felt about certain accomplishments.
- Ask Scout how he handle himself on service projects.
- Ask Scout about his leadership position and whether he believes he was successful.
- Discuss any problem with eyes towards solving them.
- Create Advancement goals that will allow him to succeed.
- Impart some of your personal character to the Scout.
- Talk about inequities, and how he as a Scout can make those uneven things even as he grows up.

Don'ts

- Assert your authority.
- DO NOT Interrogate the Scout nor retesting of a scout competence.
- Shut the door on advancement.
- Have a Question and Answer session. Come ready to talk with Scout.
- Avoid talking about fellow Scouters; if this happens redirect the conversation.
- Avoid talking about the following topics:
 - Politics
 - Political figures
 - Sexual activities
 - Sexual enjoyment
 - Family issues

Sample Questions

The Joining or Scout Scoutmaster Conference

- What did you like about Cub Scouting?
- What do you think you will like about Boy Scouting?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- What are your interests outside of Scouting?
- Why did you join our troop?
- Do you have any questions about Boy Scouting or the troop?
- What does the Scout Oath mean to you? The Scout Law?

You should explain:

- The advancement process, including who will be approving and recording his progress
- The purpose and timing of Scoutmaster Conferences.
- How the boy-led troop works and his advancing role in it
- The patrol method and the new-Scout patrol

The Tenderfoot through First Class Scoutmaster Conferences

- Who is your patrol leader, and what do you think of him?
- What do you think of the problems you are facing?
- How have you progressed on first aid?
- What are your goals for the next few months, and how do those goals meet advancement requirements?
- What do you think would make the troop better?

You can review what a Scout should have learned in his signed off achievements and see how he has absorbed the skills. Ask a Second Class candidate about his service project—how he felt about it, how he felt he had done, did he believe he was successful, and how he measured that success.

You should explain:

- That a Scout does not always keep a skill by simply doing it for advancement; that he must repeat it, and in some cases, teach it, to really have the skill
- The value of planning to achieve his goals
- How setting advancement goals involves looking ahead to see what must be accomplished and in what order
- How the Scout can use the merit badge program to explore interests and accomplish Advancement

The Star and Life Scoutmaster Conferences

- What merit badges did you enjoy, and why?
- What merit badges did you get the most out of, and why?
- How did you feel about your leadership position?
- How did you feel about how you exercised that position?
- Did you feel you accomplished anything in that position?
- What were your frustrations?
- Who do you think is doing a good job in the troop?

- Have you decided what merit badges you will be earning next?
- Have you thought about achieving Eagle?
- Have you thought about a service project for Eagle?

You should explain:

- The progressive nature of service projects from Star to Eagle
- The nature of required and unrequired merit badges

The Eagle Scoutmaster Conference

- How did you feel your Eagle project went?
- Did you run into any rough spots?
- Did you plan enough to get you over the rough spots?
- How did you work with the agency for which you did the project?
- Was that agency clear in its goals for you?
- Would you do the project differently now?
- How do you think the troop is doing?
- How do you intend to help the troop after you become an Eagle Scout?
- Do you have any goals for the troop?
- What are your goals for yourself?
- Do you feel you are an Eagle Scout?
- Do you believe you have accomplished all you need to in order to become an Eagle Scout?

You should explain:

- That his Scouting career is not over; that Eagle Palms, leadership, and adult leadership await him
- That other opportunities exist in the Order of the Arrow, Venturing, and Sea Scouting

The Eagle Palm Scoutmaster Conference

- How do you plan on contributing to the troop now?
- What are your goals for the troop?
- What are your personal goals?
- How will your Scouting experience help you?

You might explain:

- Scouting opportunities for older boys
- National Youth Leadership Training
- Leadership in the Order of the Arrow
- Camp staff opportunities
- The Hornaday Awards
- Venturing
- What happens when a boy leader turns 18
- Potential service as an assistant Scoutmaster
- Remaining active in Scouting in college or when one moves

Board of Review

Purpose

"The board should attempt to determine the Scout's ideals and goals. The board should make sure that a good standard of performance has been met. A discussion of the Scout Oath and Scout Law is in keeping with the purpose of the review, to make sure the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school, and community. The board of review members should feel free to refer to the Boy Scout Handbook, Scoutmaster Handbook, or any other references during the review..."

1998 National BSA Advancement Policies and Procedures

- To make sure the Scout has completed the requirement for rank.
- To see how good of experience the Scout is having in the unit.
- To encourage the Scout to progress further for future rank
- Determine that the Scout's understands the ideals of Scouting and how he applies them in his daily life in the troop.

Conducting Board of Review	
Who	Board consists of three to six members of the Troop Committee. One of those members will be the board's chairman. The chairman is usually the Troop's advancement chairman. Unit leaders, Scoutmaster's and Assistant Scoutmaster may not participate on the board.
Where	Both the board members and the Scout are in a quiet place. Where there is no possibility for embarrassing the Scout in front of others and where the Scout is comfortable to speaking his mind.
When	At the conclusion of every rank. A board may also be held when they notice the Scout's lack of advancement, the Scout perceived trouble in the troop, or certain event at the last campout or troop meeting. Ideally, a Scout should sit for a Board of Review every six month, advancement or not.
How Long	The length of the review should last 15-30 minutes. For scout's going for the higher ranks (Star, Life, Eagle), the board should be closer to the 30 minute length.

<p>How</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoutmaster can introduce the Scout to the board member and hear the board's decision. The Scoutmaster can not sit with the scout while the board is in progress. • Chairman will ask the Scout to come to attention and recite one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scout Law ○ Scout Oath ○ Scout Motto ○ Scout Slogan ○ Outdoor Code • Ask open ended questions about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rank requirements, what they learned in the rank. ○ What they accomplished in the rank. ○ Scout's other activities, their home, school, church, and work to get to know the scout better. • End the board by praising the Scout for positive aspects of his character, his skill level, and/or accomplishments. • Have the Scout leave the room then the board can discuss and make a decision, which should be unanimous • Invited the Scout back in, if the Scoutmaster is present he can come in as well, and tell him of the decision in a friendly and supportive manner • If the Scout failed the board, he must be specifically told what he must do to succeed at the next Board of Review. Then a written follow up, by the chair must be give to both the Scout and Scoutmaster of the decision and action(s).
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Do's

- Opportunity to determine Scout's attitude and acceptance of Scouting's ideals, both in the troop and outside of it.
- Review accomplishments and lack of accomplishments.
- Find out how Scout is doing, how he feels about the Troop, and his role in the Troop.
- Hold an examination that went into getting the Scout signed off was up to standard.
- Checkup to see that what should have been done actually was done.
- Ask Question like "Where", "When", and "How"
- Have an informal conversation between the Scout and the board members. This is a time where it should be a give and take between the two parties.
- Ask Open-ended question to prompt comments by the Scout.
- Listen carefully to what the Scout is saying and not saying.

- Ask Scout about leadership opportunities outside of Scouts. It is important to see how the Scouting affects his daily life.
- Get to know the Scout, especially during the Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class Board of Reviews.
- Ask questions about advancing to the next rank.
- Chairman to ensure all requirements are signed off.

Don'ts

- DO NOT retest the Scout on competence.
- Board of Review IS NOT a retesting of requirements. Rather you can ask question that begin with "Where", "When", and "How" on the rank requirements.
- Board of Review IS NOT an examination.
- DO NOT have the scout actually do the skills (i.e. tie a knot for you, using a compass, etc.)
- Ask question which only results in a one to two word answer. If this does happen, ask follow up questions like "Why" or "How can that be done".
- Ask questions about family issues.
- Make a review an interrogation session.
- Ask trick questions.

Sample Questions

Sample Tenderfoot Questions:

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 15-20 minutes.

1. When did you join our Troop?
2. How many Troop meetings have you attended in the last two months?
3. What did you do at your last patrol meeting?
4. Tell us about your last Troop campout.
5. How would the first aid skills you must know for Tenderfoot help on a campout?
6. Where did you learn how to fold the American flag? Tell us about your first experience with this skill.
7. How would you avoid poison oak (poison ivy, sumac)?
8. Where did you go on your hike? How did you choose the location?
9. If you were on a hike and got lost, what would you do?
10. Why do we whip or fuse the ends of a rope?
11. What is the "Buddy System" that we use in Scouting? When do we use it?
12. Why do you think there are physical fitness requirements (push-ups, pull-ups, etc.), and a retest after 30 days, for the Tenderfoot rank?
13. What does it mean to a Tenderfoot Scout to "Be Prepared"?
14. Do you feel that you have done your best to complete the requirements for Tenderfoot? Why?
15. What "good turn" have you done today?
16. Please give us an example of how you obey the Scout Law at home (school, church)?
17. What do you like best about our Troop?

18. What does it mean for a Scout to be "Kind"?
19. Do you have any special plans for this summer? The Holidays?
20. When do you plan to have the requirements completed for 2nd Class?

Sample 2nd Class Questions:

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 15-20 minutes.

1. How many patrol meetings have you attended in the last 3 months?
2. What did your patrol do at its last meeting?
3. Tell us about a service project in which you participated.
4. Where did you go on your last Troop campout? Did you have a good time? Why?
5. Why is it important to be able to identify animals found in your community?
6. Tell us about the flag ceremony in which you participated.
7. What is in your personal first aid kit?
8. What have you learned about handling woods tools (axes, saws, etc.)?
9. How are a map of the area and a compass useful on a campout?
10. Have you ever done more than one "good turn" in a day? Ask for details.
11. Have you earned any merit badges?
If "Yes": Which ones? Why did you choose them? Who was your counselor?
If "No": Encourage getting started, and suggest one or two of the easier ones.
12. Did you attend summer camp with our Troop last summer?
If "Yes": What was your best (worst) experience at summer camp?
If "No": Why not?
13. Do you plan to attend summer camp with our Troop next summer?
If "Yes": What are you looking forward to doing at summer camp?
If "No": Why not?
14. What suggestions do you have for improving our Troop?
15. How do you help out at home, church, school?
16. What class in school is most challenging for you? Why?
17. One of the requirements for Second Class is to participate in a program regarding drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse. Tell us about the program in which you participated.
18. How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
19. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Trustworthy"?
20. When do you expect to complete the requirements for 1st Class?

Sample 1st Class Questions:

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 20 minutes.

1. On average, how many Troop meetings do you attend each month?
2. What part of Troop meetings are most rewarding to you?
3. What is the Scout Slogan? What does it mean for a 1st Class Scout?
4. Tell us about your last campout with the Troop. Where did you go? How did you help with meal preparation? Did you have a good time? (If "No", why not?)
5. If you were in charge of planning and preparing a dinner for your next campout, what would you select?
6. As a 1st Class Scout, what do you think the Star, Life, and Eagle Scouts will expect from you on an outing?
7. Does your family do any camping? What have you learned in Scouts, that you have been able to share with your family to improve their camping experiences?
8. Why do you think that swimming is emphasized in Scouting?
9. Why is it important for you to know how to transport a person who has a broken leg?

10. Why is it important for you to be able to recognize local plant life?
11. What did you learn about using a compass while completing the orienteering requirement?
12. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Courteous"?
13. Why are merit badges a part of Scouting?
14. How frequently do you attend religious services? Does your whole family attend?
15. What is your most favorite part of Scouting? Least favorite?
16. How does a Scout fulfill his "Duty to Country"?
17. How do you define "Scout Spirit"?
18. What is the Order of the Arrow? What is the primary function of OA?
19. Who was Lord Baden-Powell?
20. When do you think you might be ready for Star Scout?

Sample Star Questions:

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 20 minutes.

1. How many Troop outings have you attended in the last three months?
2. Tell us about the last service project in which you participated.
3. What does it mean for a Star Scout to "Be Prepared" on a daily basis?
4. How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
5. How many merit badges have you earned? What was the most difficult (fun, challenging, expensive, etc.)?
6. Which is more important: Becoming a Star Scout, or learning the skills prescribed for a Star Scout?
7. Why do you think a Scoutmaster's Conference is required for advancement in rank?
8. What is the most important part of a Troop Court of Honor? Why?
9. What leadership positions have you held outside of your patrol? What challenges did they present? What are your personal leadership goals and objectives?
10. How would you get a Scout to do an unpleasant task?
11. What extracurricular activities do you participate in at school?
12. What responsibilities do you have at home?
13. What is our "Duty to God"?
14. What does it mean to say "A Scout is Loyal"?
15. How are the Scout Oath and Law part of your daily life?
16. What is the Outdoor Code? Why is it important?
17. If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow:
When did you complete your "Ordeal", "Brotherhood"?
What does membership in the OA signify?
18. Have you received any special awards or accomplishments in school, athletics, or church?
19. Baden-Powell's first Scout outing was located on an island off the coast of Great Britain; what was the name of that island? [Answer: Brownsea Island]
20. When do you plan on achieving the Life rank?

Sample Life Questions:

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 20 - 30 minutes.

1. What is the most ambitious pioneering project with which you have assisted? Where?
2. What has been your worst camping experience in Scouting?

3. How many patrol meetings has your patrol held in the last three months? How many of them have you attended?
4. Have any of the merit badges you have earned lead to hobbies or possible careers?
5. What are your hobbies?
6. Of the merit badges you have earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult? Why?
7. Why do you think that the three "Citizenship" merit badges are required for the Eagle Rank?
8. What is your current (most recent) leadership position within the Troop? How long have you held that position? What particular challenges does it present? What is Leadership?
9. Do you have any brothers or sisters who are in Scouts (any level)? What can you do to encourage them to continue with Scouts, and to move forward along the Scouting Trail?
10. How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
11. Why do you think that Star and Life Scouts are required to contribute so much time to service projects?
What service projects are most rewarding to you? Why?
12. Why do you think that a Board of Review is required for rank advancement?
13. How has Scouting prepared you for the future?
14. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Reverent"?
15. What does "Scout Spirit" mean to a Life Scout?
16. Why do you think that Scouting for Food is referred to as a "National Good Turn".
17. The Scout Oath refers to "Duty to Self"; what duty do we have to ourselves?
18. If the Scout is a member of OA:
What role does OA play in Scouting?
What honor do you hold in OA?
What is the difference between Scout "ranks" and OA "honors"?
19. In what year was Boy Scouts of America founded? [Answer: February 8, 1910 - BSA Birthday]
20. Have you begun to think about an Eagle Service Project? What are you thinking about doing? When?