



Destiny Calling: Scouting and Beyond: Transitions Within Scouting

Session Length: 45 Minutes

Through this session, you will:

Explain that sometimes dedicated volunteers can take on too many responsibilities in Scouting

Demonstrate that many Scouting volunteers take on multiple roles when serving our program, and sometimes this burden can affect the productivity and satisfaction of the volunteer

Guide the learning group in developing a personal Sequence of Service plan that will help them serve over the long term without suffering burnout

Enable the learning group to recognize their current situation and commit to make any necessary adjustments to become a high performing Scouting volunteer for the long-term

Learning Outcomes:

- Recognize that overcommitting as a volunteer can lessen the enjoyment of the Scouter and those who they are serving
- Developing a personal Sequence of Service can enable a Scouter to move from one position to another with pride, continued enthusiasm and a track record of success
- Sometimes burnout or boredom can affect Scouting volunteers but it can be overcome

Theme Connection:

The theme of NOAC 2018 is “Decide Your Destiny,” emphasizing the message that today’s decisions shape tomorrow’s reality. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

- Decide Your Destiny – Through the concept of Sequence of Service, seasoned BSA volunteers can develop a unique Scouting career.

This session will help the ****Lodge/Chapter/Section**** with the Journey to Excellence

Requirement(s): N/A

Required Materials:

- Laptop
- Projector and pointer
- Screen



None

Session Narrative

Too Much of a Good Thing

20 minutes

- Instructor introduces himself to audience
- Show and Review Learning Objective Slide on screen
- · ASK QUESTION – Does Anyone Remember the Neil Young song lyric from Out of the Blue - “It’s better to burn out than fade away?”
- · ASK QUESTION – Do You Think Any Scouters Subscribe to This Mantra?
- ○ After discussion from the learning group, reveal the meaning of the lyric from Mr. Young:
- According to Neil Young, he believed in intensity in whatever he did, and then moved on to the next chapter of his life.
- “The rock'n'roll spirit is not about just survival. Of course the people who play rock'n'roll should survive. But the essence of the rock'n'roll spirit to me, is that it's better to burn out really bright than to sort of decay off into infinity.
- For the record, Neil Young began his rock and roll career in 1960; he just released a soundtrack album for movie in March 2018. He is celebrated for roles with Buffalo Springfield, Crosby Stills and Nash, a legendary solo career which included acoustic phase, several resurgences, and was enough of a mentor to so many influential bands that he is regarded as the Godfather of Grunge. He has never stopped performing, and he constantly is reinventing his art.
- ASK QUESTION - Why Do We Serve Our Fellow Scouts Year in and Year Out?
- Lead discussion, but make sure the audience mentions
 - ○ Feels Good to be Needed
 - ○ Awards and Rewards
 - ○ Recognition for Longevity
 - ○ Pride in Performance
 - ○ No One Can Replace You
- Conclude the discussion by mentioning a The New York Times story about a 95 year old Scoutmaster in Newark NJ who stepped down after almost 75 years of consecutive service to his troop.
- The article was warm and kind, and called attention to his dedication as being admirable and enviable



- Tragically, the troop immediately folded with only 6 Scouts remaining at the end, and 4 were graduating high school
- As most of us probably feel, such an ending is heartbreaking and not the best way to end a Scouting career
- We recognize the power of a legacy – and we want to see the impact of our work continue to thrive after we step back
- **ASK QUESTION – To help us think about our role in Scouting, may I ask who is familiar with the Dr. Seuss classic book, If I Ran The Circus?**
- Central to the story is a character, Sneelock, who never speaks and always stands with his pipe in his mouth and his little round glasses on his nose
- As “The Circus McGurkus” is created around him and becomes more grand, Mr. Sneelock somehow involved in more and more daring feats, such as having an arrow shot at his head, or going through a course of Stickle-Bush Trees on Roller-Skate-Skis!
- As the feats become steadily more dangerous, Sneelock’s costumes become more ridiculous. He goes from his normal pants, long sleeve shirt and vest, to a full marching band outfit, as well as a Colonel’s uniform, a fur Tarzan-like leotard, and eventually shirtless with bright red leggings as he jumps into a fish bowl. He never really volunteers for any of this, he just seems to get roped into these outlandish circumstances and winds up doing all the work
- It doesn’t appear to be very fun to be a Sneelock, but he made the show go on...
- **ASK QUESTION – Do You Sometimes Feel There is a Parallel in Your Scouting Life Right Now?**
- **Ask Audience to Stand and Show Slide with this Question**
- Consider everything you are doing in Scouting today
 - Unit(s)
 - Commissioner Corps
 - District
 - Council
 - Training
 - Wood Badge
 - Area
 - National
 - Lodge
 - Section
 - If over the past year you are only doing a single role across all of these categories, please sit down.
 - 2 roles? SIT
 - 3 roles? SIT
 - 4 roles? SIT
 - 5 roles? SIT



- More than 5 roles? Go stand in the corner, you need the peace and quiet...
- **SHOW photo of world record for wearing most t-shirts (155 at one time)**
- There is no doubt that wearing so many shirts was not comfortable, not sustainable, and probably complicated his ability to answer his mobile phone if the President called to congratulate him
- This man set a record as a stunt, but why do we take on such much additional responsibilities in our Scouting lives?
- “Lifer” definitions – Which Are You Today?
 - a person sentenced to imprisonment for life
 - a person who makes a career of one of the armed forces
 - a person who has made a [lifelong](#) commitment (as to a way of life)

Chart a Volunteer Career

20 minutes

- **ASK QUESTION – By a Show of Hands, Who Manages Their Scouting Career Like They Manage Their Professional Career or Academic Plans?**
- Point out that each of us spends a lot of quality time in Scouting, but also in our work or student lives
- Many of us “invest” our time – we try to get the most return (compensation or academic benefit) for the longest period of time by moving up the ladder at the office taking on greater responsibilities including managing projects and staff, or by taking challenging course and earning good grades and strong extracurricular activities with leadership roles.
- Most of us invest in our profession by learning the ropes, mentoring and leading a team, achieving priorities and hopefully adapting to change, as students, we strive for excellence
- Getting promoted is financially beneficial, and often results in a new position in a new department, or a different location, or sometimes even a different industry, being a strong student gets us into better colleges, better graduate schools and opens door to better careers
- I hope this feels familiar to most of us as dedicated Scouters
- Many of us have been asked in the past, “Why Do We Do What We Do for Scouting?”
- Let’s take a minute to consider answering that question by reframing it as “What is our Destiny?”
- **LEAD DISCUSSION AROUND THESE QUESTIONS:**
 - **What Do You Personally Want Out of the BSA Program?**
 - **What Experiences Do You Want to Earn That You Have Not Had a Chance to Gain?**
 - **Who Can Help You Get There as An Advisor or Mentor or Coach?**
 - **Why Stop Once You Arrive? What Might Be Your Individual Sequence of Service?**
- Did Neil Young get it right? Is it Better to Burnout through an intense level of service with strong enthusiasm in a Scouting position, but then move on to another Role that will challenge you next?
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- When you accept any new Scouting role, Know When to Depart Before You Arrive



- Calculate a Self-Imposed Term Limit for When Think You Should Be Planning to Move On
- Outline a Beginning, Middle and End of Your Tenure for That Position so You Know What You Should Be Focused on As Priorities
- List a Few Milestones and Achievements That You Would Be Proud To Accomplish in this Position so you can measure your success
- Write Out a Roadmap to Success – What Steps Do You Need to Take to Make Things Happen and Be Successful in this Position
- To Realize Your Sequence of Service, You Will Have to Transition to Your Next Role
 - No one gets criticized for moving on to another good opportunity at work or school
 - Stepping into another Role or school is Not Self-Serving but Highly Beneficial
 - BSA Wisdom is Knowledge Gained The Hard Way, Through Experience
 - Many BSA volunteers recognize a Duty of Succession to leave one position in qualified capable hands before they move on to take an open position elsewhere in Scouting
 - The challenge for many of us is to Serve as a Mentor for Short Term, But Move Out of the Way. Cutting ties and letting new leaders do their job their own way without interference can be emotionally challenging for veteran Scouters, but it serves everyone best.
- Sometimes, we all feel burnout even before we achieve our goals.
- **ASK QUESTION – Can Anyone Offer Simple Advice About How to Deal with These Frustrations?**
 - Adults who add drama to the program (unit, district, council, national).
 - People who don't read. They want everything spoon-fed to them.
 - Scouts or parents don't step up to help because they think someone else will do it.
 - Parents or scouts are obviously in the program for the bling and Eagle, nothing else.
 - You try to get through to a kid but the parent undermines all your work.
 - The increased paperwork.
 - The lack of real, substantive training
- Highlight the following advice to help address frustration and boredom
 - Spice it Up — learn new skills, visit new places
 - Explore — gather ideas
 - Climb Mountains — literal or figurative
 - Teach —any training might be energizing
 - Measure your actual progress, reflect on your successes
 - Change assignments as the last resort, Scouting is FUN!

Recap

2 minutes

- Weekly Time Allotment
- Relinquish Multiple Roles (1 Hat at a Time)



- Self-Imposed Term Limit For Each BSA Role, depends on the challenge
- Immediately Begin to Groom a Successor for Each Scouting Role
- How Do You Master a Role Then Move to Learn Something New and Exciting?
 - Example of Cub Den Leader to BALOO trainer to Wood Badge Staffer to Wood Badge Course Director to Unit Commissioner to District Commissioner to District Chairman to Council Executive Board to Unit Leader again

Takeaway Challenge

3 minutes

- Text Your Best Scouting Buddy Now to Commit Yourself
 - What is your BSA transition plan to get 1 thing off your plate?
 - When Will You Sit With Your Buddy to Review Your Career Plan?
 - If you don't have someone to text, might need to start right there....