

Train Our Future Leaders!

Sixer and Seconder Workshop – Part One

by Bill Milner

They are an important part of your leadership team. They can provide ideas for programming. They can be used to help maintain order in the pack. Who are they? They are your Sixers and Seconds!

An important part of our responsibility to the youth is to ensure that they are prepared for leadership roles. They should be comfortable with being a leader, and know how to be a good leader. We do this by giving them progressively more responsibility in a leadership role. We take an experienced Cub, and make her a Second. We take an experienced Second, and make her a Sixer. But adding a new epaulette is not enough. In order to provide the necessary skills, many areas will provide Sixer and Second Training Days.

If your area is one of those, get your youth to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to learn some useful skills, and meet some new friends. If you have no idea what I'm talking about, here is enough information to be the first to offer this invaluable service! Just follow these simple instructions.

1. First, find some good help. Do not do everything on your own (the first lesson for a good leader!). Get a team to help plan and carry out the event. What equipment and supplies are needed, and who is responsible for bringing them?
2. Find a suitable location. I prefer to be outside, but the location will depend on the offerings of the day. The activities tend to be based on stations, so the more room to spread out, the better.
3. Find a suitable day. Saturdays or Sundays are preferred. While there is nothing wrong with offering multiple courses during the year, you should consider the best time to take advantage of all the newly-appointed Sixers and Seconds. Build on their new enthusiasm.
4. Find a suitable time. The courses I have run and otherwise been involved with have taken anywhere from four to eight hours. Will you supply food or have people bring their lunches? My preference is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with time out for a quick lunch. (Starting at 1 p.m., then going through the afternoon and finishing with a dinner and sing-along/campfire works as well.)
5. Find some good activities. This is the key to your event; we are trying to teach some good leadership skills. What makes a good leader? Take your team and choose some important aspects of leadership. Find an appropriate activity for each and set up a series of bases or stations. You may also want to use a station to teach some useful skills — setting up a tent, starting a fire, etc. To add a bit more variety, you might want to offer a unique craft opportunity. I have found that no more than thirty minutes makes a good activity. Keep the activities varied.
6. Are you going to have to charge for the event? Will there be costs incurred for rentals or purchase of sup-

plies? Will food be brought, cooked on site, or needed at all? How about campfire blanket badges to hand out at the end? Providing certificates to participants would be a nice touch.

7. When you are done, thank everybody involved. Public recognition is important to retention.
8. Keep good notes of what worked and what didn't, and keep them for the next training seminar. Get photographs in the local newspaper. Do a short write up to go with them.
9. Plan your schedule. Ensure you leave time for registration, and an opening, a closing, and explanation of the day. Your schedule should include adequate time to get to the next station. Where are the toilets? First aid kit? Make sure everyone understands the schedule. What is the signal to change stations? If you are including meal times, leave a space in the schedule. Do the meals require the participants to wash up, and prepare their meal? Are you going to have a group activity (songs, campfire, etc.)?

Here is a typical schedule:

09:30	Start to arrive, register, activity leaders set up. Leaders are responsible for their Cubs. Divide the participants into groups, one group for each station available.
10:00	Grand Howl, opening greetings, explain the rotation system.
10:15	Move to first activity
10:20	First activity
10:50	Move to second activity and have a snack
11:05	Second activity
11:35	Move to third activity
11:40	Third activity
12:10	Break for lunch
12:40	Fourth activity
13:10	Move to fifth activity
13:15	Fifth activity
13:45	Everyone gather for the closing ceremony. Talk about what was learned, have a Grand Howl, hand out badges/certificates, clean up, and go home.

Look for Part Two of this article in next month's Paksak! X
 – Bill Milner is a longtime Scouter, currently working in Australia.