

# University of Scouting 2006

## Scoutmaster Conferences

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

### A Brief History:

- 1911 – Ranks of Life, Star and Eagle established.
- 1952 – Ranks of Star, Life and Eagle must be earned before the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 1958 – “Do your best to live up to the Scout Promise, Law, Motto and Slogan.”
- 1965 – SM Conferences required for Star, Life, Eagle.
- 1978 – Take part in a “Personal Growth Agreement Conference.”
- 1980s – Renamed Scoutmaster Conference.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

### Are They Important?

#### A Scout's Four Steps to Advancement

- Step 1 – A Scout learns.*
- Step 2 – A Scout is tested.*
- Step 3 – A Scout is reviewed.*
- Step 4 – A Scout is recognized.*

- Required for every Scout rank – Scout – Eagle Palms.
- Every Scout will participate in at least 7 on his way to Eagle Scout.
- Every Scoutmaster will perform many of them.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

### Are They Important to the Scoutmaster?

	Scouts	Tenderfoot	2nd Class	1st Class	Star	Life	Palms		
Scout	10	10							
Tenderfoot	5	10							
2nd Class	5	8	4						
1st Class	10	5	3	4					
Star	5		2	3	6				
Life	10			2	3	4			
Eagle	0						2	2	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>68</b>
									<b>1.36</b>

As a check:

- Jun – Dec 04 - 35 Scoutmaster Conferences
- 2005 - 45 Scoutmaster Conferences
- (Not counting ~10 Scoutmaster non-Conferences)

**On average, 1 - 1.5 SM Conf's per year per Scout**

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

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### Purpose of a Scoutmaster Conference

From the Scoutmaster Handbook:

1. Establish trust and understanding between a Scout and SM.
2. Reinforce the ideals of Scouting.
3. Allow the Scout and SM to share ideas and ask questions of one another.
4. Set goals and outline steps for achieving them.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

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### What Can the Scoutmaster Get Out of SM Conferences?

- Get to know the Scout.
- Get to know the Troop.
- Collect feedback on Troop Meetings and Troop activities.
- Reinforce the Scout Oath, Law, Slogan and Motto.
- Encourage the Scout.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

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### What Should the Scout Get Out of SM Conferences?

- Get to know the Scoutmaster.
- See the ideals of Scouting in action
- Questions answered.
- Concerns aired.
- A bond, a relationship, with the Scoutmaster.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

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### How do SM Conferences Compare to BoRs?

#### Scoutmaster Conference

- Scoutmaster
- Familiar with the Program
- One-on-one "chat"
- Is the Scout ready for a BoR?
- Check on rank requirements
- Scout quality control
- Map out a plan for the next rank
- Demonstrate Scouting ideals

#### Board of Review

- 3-6 Adults
- Not familiar with the Program
- Interview
- Ensure rank requirements have been completed
- Unit quality control
- Encourage the Scout to continue his progress
- Reinforce Scouting ideals

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

### Types of Scoutmaster Conferences:

#### Required for Advancement:

1. Traditional, By-the-Book
2. Alternative, Advancement-Oriented

#### Not Necessarily for Advancement:

3. Problem Counseling

#### Combinations:

4. Other approaches, including combinations of the above.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

### Ground Rules Common to All SM Conferences:

1. **Two Deep Leadership** - conference should be private but in public or in sight of others.
2. Conference can be conducted during Troop Meetings, during outdoor activities, at the Scout's home, at the SM's home, other public places.
3. Conference should be special, SM's undivided attention.
4. Conference should be relaxed, unhurried.
5. Conference should be a two-way sharing of ideas and thoughts – not one way, either way.
6. **Keep the tone positive. Keep the conference fun.**
7. Book says 10-15 minutes. About 30 minutes is more reasonable.

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## Scoutmaster Conferences – Problem Counseling\*

### Purpose:

- Poor behavior
- Troubled behavior
- Lack of advancement
- Misunderstanding
- When a situation must be corrected
- Health and safety issues

\* From "Scoutmaster Conference Guidelines" by Ed Schuman, Grand Canyon Council

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## Scoutmaster Conferences – Problem Counseling\*

### Approach:

1. Start on a positive note.
2. Listen carefully and actively.
3. Ask yourself – are you understanding the Scout? Is something else going on?
4. Keep the Scout talking. Repeat and summarize what you're hearing to be sure you're understanding.
5. If the Scout needs more information – supply information, not advice.
6. **DO NOT** solve the problem for the Scout unless danger in the situation requires it.
7. Explore alternative solutions with the Scout. His answer, not yours, is what is important.

\* From "Scoutmaster Conference Guidelines" by Ed Schuman, Grand Canyon Council

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### Scoutmaster Conferences – Problem Counseling\*

*“If you can guide the boy to his own solution, you have done two things: first, you have proven true leadership; and second, you have just helped the boy grow as a person.”*

\* From “Scoutmaster Conference Guidelines” by Ed Schuman, Grand Canyon Council

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### Scoutmaster Conferences – Advancement-Oriented

- Scout – Brand new
- Tenderfoot – Learning the ropes
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Class – Hiker
- 1<sup>st</sup> Class – Camper
- Star – Instructor/Teacher
- Life – Learning Leadership
- Eagle – Demonstrating Leadership

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Traditional SM Conference

#### Questions the Scoutmaster Should Ask\*:

1. Tell me about the best time you’ve had so far in the Troop.
2. Tell me about something that made you think about the Scout Law, or the Oath or something that had to do with Scouts.
3. Tell me about something really messed up about our Troop.
4. Tell me about something you wished that you could do better – in or out of Scouting.
5. Tell me something about yourself that has NOTHING to do with Scouting.

\* From the US Scouting Service Project – “Scoutmaster Conference” by Maj. Mike Walton

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Alternative SM Conference

#### Why focus on the Scout skills during a SM Conference?

- The Scout skills are important to know.
- Where else will the Scout learn the Scout skills?
- Reinforces the instructing being done by the senior Scouts.
- Provides focus for the Scout.
- Familiarization with the Scout handbook.
- Word gets out that the SM thinks the Scout skills are important.
- Provides incentive to junior and senior Scouts.

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

#### Sample Topics for Discussion with a Scout:

*Introduction to the BSA Program for the new Scout.*

- Do you meet the requirements to be a Boy Scout?
- What grade are you in? What school do you go to?
- What is the purpose of a SM Conference?
- Do you know the Scout ranks to Eagle?
- Do you want to become an Eagle Scout? How will you do it?
- Who signs your book off when you do a requirement?
- Show me how to tie a square knot.
- Do you know the Scout Oath and Scout Law?
- What is a merit badge?
- How do you earn a merit badge?
- Did you know that you can work on Tenderfoot through Star at any time?
- Have you ever been camping before?
- Are you planning to go to summer camp this year?
- What does the Scout badge mean?
- Have you done the pamphlet exercises with your parents?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

#### Sample Topics for Discussion with a Tenderfoot:

*Beginning to learn the Scouting skills.*

- How do you like Scouts? Your Patrol?
- Do you want to become an Eagle Scout? When?
- Do you like camping? What is fun about it?
- Do you like cooking? What is fun about it?
- Show me how to whip this rope.
- When do you fuse a rope instead of whipping a rope.
- Show me how to tie a double half hitch. A taut line hitch.
- What are the rules for safe hiking?
- What would you do if you got lost?
- Describe poison ivy. What would you do if you were exposed to poison ivy?
- How would you treat a cut? A blister? Nosebleed?
- What is the Heimlich maneuver? When do you use it?
- Please recite the Scout Oath and Scout Law for me.
- What is the Scout Slogan? The Scout Motto?
- What does it mean to do your best to do your duty to...?
- What good turn did you do yesterday?
- What does the "obedient" mean? Are you obedient?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

#### Sample Topics for Discussion with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Class:

#### *Mastering Hiking*

- What Troop activities have you done?
- Which did you like the best? Which did you like the least? Why?
- Using this map of MD and compass, point me in the direction of Salisbury, MD.
- What factors do you take into account when selecting a site for your tent?
- What factors do you take into account when setting up an axe yard?
- When would you use a backpacking stove?
- Plan a breakfast for a backpacking trip. What cooking eqpt do we need to bring?
- What did you do for your service hour? How did it help someone else?
- What are the "hurry cases"? How do you treat them?
- What is shock? How do you treat it?
- How do you treat an animal bite?
- What are the different degrees of a bum? How do you treat them?
- What is the four-word saying for rescuing a drowning person?
- Do you want to become an Eagle Scout? When?
- Have you discussed joining Scouts with a friend? Who?
- What does it mean to keep yourself physically strong?
- What does "trustworthy" mean? Are you trustworthy? How do you become trustworthy?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

#### Sample Topics for Discussion with a 1st Class:

#### *Mastering Camping*

- While outside, which way is north? How do you know?
- While outside, estimate the height of this telephone pole.
- While outside, pretend this street is a river and estimate the width of the street.
- Plan a dinner for a Klondike Derby. What cooking eqpt do we need to bring?
- How do we wash the dishes on a camp-out?
- How do you handle raw meat safely?
- Name 3 rights of a US citizen? Four obligations of a US citizen?
- Show me how to do a bowline. A sheet bend. A timber hitch.
- Show me how to do a square (or shear) lashing.
- Show me how to splint a broken collar bone.
- What would you do if you find me unconscious, laying on the floor?
- What are the five most common signs of a heart attack? How would you do CPR?
- Have you discussed joining Scouts with a friend? Who?
- How do you think your Patrol is doing? The Troop?
- Where are you on the trail to Eagle? How many MBs? What's left for Star?
- What does it mean to be a leader? How do you demonstrate leadership?
- What Troop position of responsibility are you interested in?
- What does it mean to keep yourself mentally awake?
- What does "thrifty" mean? Are you thrifty? Does thrifty apply just to money?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences – Advancement-Oriented

Sample Topics for Discussion with a **Star:** *Troop Instructor*

- Teach me how to whip a rope. (Or some other Scout skill).
- What position of responsibility did you hold?
- How did it go? Did you learn anything about responsibility and leadership?
- What Troop position of responsibility are you interested in next?
- What did you do for your service hours?
- Did you learn anything about doing something for someone else?
- Did you learn anything about working with others?
- What do you know about Eagle service projects?
- How do you think your Patrol is doing? The Troop? Any problems?
- Have you been elected to the OA? What do you think of the OA?
- Where are you on the trail to Eagle? How many MBs? What's left for Life?
- What is your plan for reaching Eagle Scout? When?
- What does it mean to be a leader? How do you demonstrate leadership?
- What does it mean to keep yourself morally straight?
- What does "reverent" mean? Are you reverent?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

Sample Topics for Discussion with a **Life:** *Learning Leadership*

- Teach me what to do if I were to come upon someone who is unconscious.
- What position of responsibility did you hold?
- How did it go? Did you learn anything about responsibility and leadership?
- What Troop position of responsibility are you interested in?
- What did you do for your service hours?
- Did you learn anything about doing something for someone else?
- Did you learn anything about working with others?
- Do you have any ideas for an Eagle service project?
- How will you go about finding and doing an Eagle project?
- How do you think your Patrol is doing? The Troop? Any problems?
- Where are you on the trail to Eagle? How many MBs? What's left for Eagle?
- What is your plan for reaching Eagle Scout? When?
- What does it mean to be a leader? How do you demonstrate leadership?
- How did you demonstrate the Scout Oath the last week?
- How do you demonstrate the Scout Law at school?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

Sample Topics for Discussion with a **Eagle:** *Demonstrating Leadership*

- Is your Eagle Book (Application) complete? (Review Eagle Book)
- Is your uniform complete and in good shape?
- What position of responsibility did you hold?
- How did it go? Did you learn anything about responsibility and leadership?
- Tell me about your Eagle project? How did it go? Any problems?
- How many others helped out? What did you learn about leading others?
- Tell me about your life's ambitions and purpose.
- Are you going to college? Where? Major?
- What does it mean to be an Eagle Scout?
- What do you know about an Eagle Board of Review?
- What can they ask you? Are any subjects out of bounds?
- Will your parents be able to accompany you to the EBoR?
- How have you demonstrated the Scout Oath and Law?

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### Scoutmaster Conferences - Advancement-Oriented

Sample Topics for Discussion with a **Palm:** *Demonstrating Leadership*

- How have you participated in the Troop during the last 3 months?
- How have you continued to develop and demonstrate leadership?
- How can we improve the Troop for the other Scouts?
- How can you help improve the Troop for the other Scouts?
- How many MBs do you need for the next Palm?
- Do you have a plan for earning them?
- How have you demonstrated the Scout Oath and Law?
- Why is it important do continue to demonstrate the Scout Oath and Law?

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## Scoutmaster Conferences

### Summary

- Scoutmaster Conferences are a very important part of the Scout's advancement process.
- A Scoutmaster should be doing a lot of Conferences.
- The Scoutmaster should be learning from the Conferences also.
- Two Deep Leadership is especially important.
- Conferences should be private, individual, important, meaningful.
- Not all Conferences are advancement-oriented:
  - Problem-counseling can be extremely important
  - Non-advancement Conferences can further develop the SM/Scout relationship
- The challenge is keeping the Conferences fun and fresh.