

# Presentations

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In Boy Scouts knowledge is passed on through older scouts teaching younger scouts what they have learned to the younger scouts may pass on the knowledge themselves. One of the ways to teach younger scouts the necessary scout skills that they will need to move through scouting is by the use of presentations. Throughout scouting, many scouts and scouters do not know how to create and implement a successful presentation that allows scouts to learn what they need to know.

The first thing that is needed for a good presentation is a list of objectives or things that you want the scouts to know by the time you are done with the presentation. The use of objectives helps both you the presenter and the scouts you are teaching know what the key points in the presentation are. While you do not have to write down the objectives, most scouts find it easier to remember what they are by writing them down. While it is good for the presenter to know the objectives it is also beneficial to tell the objectives to the scouts at the start of the presentation so as you do the presentation they know what they need to know and what they should pay attention to. An important thing to remember when creating the objectives is to make sure you have enough objectives so your presentation will last more than a couple of minutes and at the same time making sure you do not have too many objectives so you do not run out of time before you are able to complete all of the objectives. When considering how objectives you should have keep in mind how long you will to do your presentation.

The second thing you must consider when doing a presentation is what the location should be. Most of the time, the location will be determined by what materials you will need. If you are going to be showing the scouts how to build a fire, it may not be a good idea to show them inside a building. As presenter you also need to consider if the scouts will be doing any hands on activities related to your presentation and will be moving around or will the scouts be sitting most of the time therefore you will not need lots of space and a small room will be adequate for your needs.

A presentation does not mean that you should just stand in front of the group and lecture. If possible, create hands on activities for the scouts to do throughout the presentation. Hands on activities allows scouts to focus on what is being taught but also gives them the ability to practice the skill you teaching immediately after they learn it. People are able to remember skills and lessons if they are able to apply them right after they learn the skill.

The third thing that is necessary to know are what materials will you need. It is best to make a list of the materials you need and know how to obtain them before you need to do your presentation. By creating a list, you will not have to go running around for things you forgot you needed for your presentation while doing your presentation. It is also important you obtain all of the materials you need for your presentation far enough ahead

of time so if you discover that you cannot find a something you have enough time to find some other way to obtain it.

After you have figured out what you are going to teach, where you are going to do it and you have all of the materials that will be necessary is it now time to do your presentation. Before you do your presentation, it is very helpful to have a short outline of everything that you will cover. You should have your objectives figured out by now however you now need a strategy of how you are going to accomplish them. An outline will help you remember everything you need to cover so you are less likely to miss something important. Having an outline will also allow someone else to do the presentation if you are not able to do it. Since there is a chance that someone will be using your presentation it is important to make sure that it is readable and the person that does the presentation will be able to carry it out as you imagined it.

There is no one-way to do a presentation however there are things that can be done to make the difference between a successful presentation and a failure. One of the first things you should do at the beginning of the presentation is to tell the scouts what the objects of the presentation are. If you are able to list the objectives on a board, so the scouts can follow you through the presentation easier. The second thing that can be done at the beginning of the presentation is an activity to get the scouts moving around. The decision to do an activity is largely based on how you read the scouts. If they just sat through a long presentation before yours and do not appear to have lots of energy it might be necessary to do an activity that helps the scouts get moving around and will help them focus on your presentation better.

While you are doing your presentation you should be able to read how well the scouts are reacting to your presentation, however at the same time they will be doing the same thing as you. The scouts you are teaching will be able to tell if you are lacking energy, do not understand the material you are teaching or do not have much interest in what you are teaching. As soon as they see you do not have full command of the presentation they will create distractions and you will lose their attention. Remember to show interest in what you are teaching and make sure you fully understand what you are teaching.

After you have the scouts' attention, it is vital that you keep it. The easiest way to keep their attention is to ask them questions about what you are teaching. You need to keep in mind you are doing a presentation not a lecture. Throughout your presentation, you should ask questions to make the scouts feel as if they are part of the presentation.

One of the most dreaded things for a presenter is a scout that causes the other scouts' attention to go from you to the disinterested scout. The fastest way to stop the scout from taking the attention away from you is to ask them easy questions that you know they will be able to answer. By asking the scout that is causing a problem questions about the presentation you make them feel like they are important to what is going on. Once they have answered your questions right encourage them to pay attention so they can answer more. Of course, if this does not work do not hesitate to ask an adult leader to remove the problem scout from your presentation.

While asking questions will help to keep the scouts' attention and will help them learn what you want them to learn, it is doubtful the scouts will learn everything you want them to learn and remember. Many scouts will not learn from you by just hearing and seeing how things should be done. Many scouts will need to do activities and hands on things that will allow them to apply what they have just been told. The activity does not have to be anything complicated or long. In many cases, just doing a short activity will help the scouts learn what you need them to and get them ready to learn what you want to cover next. Sometimes it is best to do several activities throughout the presentation instead of just one big one at the end that covers everything.

The last thing to remember and one of the biggest things you need to do as a presenter is having a closing to your presentation. If you do, a good job with your closing the scouts will be able to tell that you are done and you will not have to say, "Well that's it." If when finishing your presentation you find that you are just repeating yourself and you are losing the scouts attention plus have nothing more you need to say then say your last remarks and end the presentation. Do not just repeat yourself continuously without adding anything new just because you think you need to continue to use up time. Once you decide it is time to end your presentation you should repeat your objectives then give a very short summary of the most important points of your presentation.

The last part of giving a good presentation is after the presentation is done is to receive feedback. After giving a presentation, it is beneficial to you the presenter to see what the scouts learned. Based on what they learned you can figure out what went well and what you can improve on to make the next presentation better. After the presentation is over ask the scouts questions about your presentation to see what they have learned and what might need to be covered again. Based on how they answer, you should see why they learned some skills but not others. Could it be because you did a very good job explaining one skill but since you were not very knowledgeable about thing else, you were unable to give a good explanation?

These are just a few things you can do and keep in mind while you are preparing and doing a presentation. If you would like to see an outline that has been prepared based on the above information go here. The totin' chip webpage will show how an outline should be prepared before the presentation. It includes such things as the objects, location, materials that will be needed and a short outline of what will be covered. You will notice that anyone should be able to take it and do the presentation without much difficulty. If you have any useful advice about doing presentations, please send an email to [presentations@scoutingaround.com](mailto:presentations@scoutingaround.com)