



# Merit Badge Counselor Orientation



Northern New Mexico District  
Great Southwest Council  
Boy Scouts of America



# Aims of BSA

To Develop:

**Character**  
Citizenship  
**Fitness**



# Methods of Boy Scouts

- Ideals (Oath and Law)
- Patrol Method
- Outdoors
- *Advancement*
- *Association with Adults*
- *Personal Growth*
- Leadership Development
- Uniform



# BSA Advancement

*The Scout learns*

*The Scout is tested*

The Scout is reviewed

The Scout is recognized



# Rules – Time limits on badges

There are **NO** time limits upon how long a Scout can work on a badge.

*Except:*

The Scout has until he is 18 to complete the badge requirements.



# Rules - Requirements

The Scout uses the current requirements when he starts the badge. If requirements change before he is finished, he may use the newer requirements, the old requirements or any in between (*his* choice).



# Rules - Requirements

- Scouts are expected to meet the requirements as they are stated - no more and no less.
  - If it says “show,” then telling is not enough.
  - If it says “Do two ....”, you can’t require three.
- Counselors do not have the discretion to change the requirements.
- You can (and should) tell/do more to add interest, but you can’t require it for the badge.



# Rules – Limits on badges

- There is no limit on the number of badges a Scout may earn.
- There is no limit on the number of badges for which a person may serve as counselor.
- There is no limit on the number of badges a Scout may earn from one person.
- Scouts may earn badges counseled by a parent.

*BUT, the intent is “association with adults.”*



# Rules - Buddy System

- One-on-one meetings in private are NOT allowed
  - Scout must meet with counselor with a buddy.
  - Or, someone else must be present during meetings with the counselor.



# Rules - Group Sessions

- The counseling relationship is a counselor-Scout arrangement (individual).
- Group sessions are permitted for efficiency, special facility usage, etc.
- **BUT** - requirements **MUST** be completed on an individual basis.

*Scouts should get individual attention.*



# Rules - Exceptions

- Lone Scouts
- Handicaps



# Process

- Scout discusses merit badge interests with Scoutmaster
- Scoutmaster gives Scout a signed “blue card”
- Scout sets up meeting(s) with counselor
- Counselor coaches Scout
- Counselor initials requirements on blue card as each requirement is completed
- When requirements are finished, counselor signs blue card
- Scout returns blue card to Scoutmaster



# What you agree to do:

- Follow requirements of the merit badge (keep up to date with the requirements)
- Enforce the buddy system
- Renew your MB Counselor registration annually



# The Counselor's Job

- Assist the Scout as he plans assigned projects and activities.
- Coach the Scout through the badge - give him a deeper awareness of the subject; enthusiasm!
- Satisfy yourself that each Scout (individually) meets the requirements of the badge.
- Make it FUN!
  - Field trips
  - Hands-on activity
  - Guest speakers
  - Games



# Role of Counselor

Coach

Counselor

Examiner



# Effective Teaching/Learning

- Learning objectives
- Discovery
- Teaching-learning
- Application
- Evaluation
- Recycling

*Learning is most effective when it is self-directed.*



# Coach

- Teach the skill
- Give Scout an opportunity to practice the skill
- Take a genuine interest in the projects and encourage completion
- Help Scout assess progress



# Counselor

- Make the Scout feel welcome and relaxed
- Interview the Scout to determine his preparedness
- Set short-term and long-term goals
- Follow up with the Scout
- Help Scout evaluate his progress
- Encourage the Scout to ask for help



# Examiner

- Assure yourself that the Scout has completed the requirements
- Individual attention; individual completion



# Sources of information

- THE SOURCE of requirements – “Boy Scout Requirements” book, published each year
- Merit badge pamphlets
- US Scouting Service - [www.usscouts.org](http://www.usscouts.org)
- MacScouter - [www.macscouter.com](http://www.macscouter.com)
- Meritbadge.com - [www.meritbadge.com](http://www.meritbadge.com)

