



Quarterdeck Seminar

Sea Scout Ship 468, Bay Area Council, BSA
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Pearland, TX



The Ship officers' seminar is the main training and planning session for newly elected officers. The Skipper, the Boatswain, and Mates lead it. A successful seminar provides a clear road map for the coming months and enables the officers to begin assuming leadership of their Ship. The content of the seminar is based on the following seminar description and Sea Scout Handbook.

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SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

Objectives

- To have the youth officers learn their position responsibilities
- To build a working youth leadership team
- To acquaint the officers with Sea Scouting leadership skills and the contents of *Sea Scout Manual*.
- To plan the Ship's program schedule for the coming year

Timing

The seminar takes eight hours. A Saturday morning and afternoon session is typical. An overnight seminar is ideal because it provides more time for the group to get acquainted and work as a team. As another alternative, the officers could plan several evenings of after-school sessions. Whichever option you and your officers select, take care not to lose continuity. Build into the schedule time for relaxation and fun.

Location

Find a location that is comfortable and quiet with adequate tables, chairs, and wall space for charts. An area should be available for exercise and recreation. To avoid disruptions, arrange for outside help for refreshments or meals.

Preparation

Much of the seminar's content is based on your Petty Officer Handbook. Carefully review the material before the seminar. Meet with your Boatswain's Mates to review the seminar agenda, and assign specific responsibilities for obtaining needed materials and for conducting segments of the seminar.

Managing the Seminar.

This seminar might be the first time your officers have worked together on a project. Their development as a team is important. Planning the Ship program as a group commits each officer to its success. Use the following guidelines to help you manage this seminar:

- Encourage every officer's involvement.
- Avoid lecturing. Be involved as a participant, not as the director.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage thoughtful discussion and action.
- Direct the group back on task when the topic diverges too much.



SEMINAR RESOURCES

References Needed.

Collect the following information:

- Calendar of known events that could present program conflicts
 - holidays and religious, school, community, and Sea Scouting events, entered on large monthly calendar pages
- Sea Scout Activity Interest survey
- Current Program Capability Inventories
 - summarized by the Skipper's Mate for program onto the Program Planning Form
- Chart of your Ship's organization

Obtain the following from your BSA local council:

- *Sea Scout Manual* – one for each officer who does not already have one
- Venturing Program Planning Calendar

Additional Resources

- *Skipper's Handbook*
- *Sea Scout Purser's Log*
- *Sea Scout Yeoman's Log*
- Ship Officer Job Descriptions
- Ship Organizational Chart
- "Leadership Skills"
- Activity Planner
- "Planning The Ship's Program" handout
- "How to Plan Your Superactivity" handout
- Sample Quarterdeck Meeting Agenda
- Ship's Code and By-laws

Other Materials

- Notebook paper and pencils for each officer
- Felt-tip marking pens or crayons
- Easel for chart display
- Chalkboard, chalk, erasers
- A newsprint or flip chart pad
- Refreshments



QUARTERDECK SEMINAR AGENDA

I. Welcome

The Skipper and Boatswain open the seminar.

- A. Explain the purpose and objectives of the seminar.
- B. Describe the manner in which the objectives will be pursued throughout the seminar – group participation, discussion, reflection, and cooperative decision-making.
- C. Review the agenda with the officers.
- D. Be sure each officer has a copy of the *Sea Scout Manual*.

Suggested time: 10-15 minutes

II. Duties

Review and discuss Officer and Skipper responsibilities and roles.

- A. Encourage each person to tell the group why he or she joined the Ship, what he or she hopes the Ship will accomplish in the next year, and one goal this person has for the way Ship members work together.
- B. Using their position descriptions, officers describe what he or she does.
- C. Using their position descriptions, the Skipper and each Mate describes what he or she does.
- D. The Skipper explains the role of the Ship committee.
- E. The Boatswain explains what activity chairs and activity committees do.
- F. Use the organizational chart to explain how all the positions fit together.

Suggested time: 30-45 minutes

III. Leadership

Discuss leadership skills.

- A. Have the Mates and the Sea Scouts review the handout "Becoming and Being a Leader".
Ask: "What is the definition of leadership?"
Ask: "How is leadership learned?"
- B. Turn to "Leadership Skills" handout. Assign all the leadership skills to the Mates and officers present – there should be no more than two for each person. Ask each person to take a few minutes and prepare to teach the rest of the group
 1. What the skill is
 2. Why it is important
 3. How it can be used in Sea Scouting

- C. Each skill should take no more than five minutes.

Suggested time: 75 minutes

IV. Scheduling

Plan the Ship's annual program.

Follow these steps, summarized here, in planning your year's program.

- A. *Gather information* about the activities that have been suggested from the program capability inventory (PCI) and the Sea Scout activity interest survey, and acquaint everybody with its



content. The superactivity can be planned at the same time, or you can go through this process separately for that activity.

- B. *Brainstorm* for more ideas without any judgment about which are better. Put out the monthly calendars, writing in the dates of events that would conflict with program activities.
- C. *Evaluate* each idea on the basis of whether it (1) fits the Ship mission; (2) provides balance to the program, based on the six experience areas; (3) addresses the needs and interests of Ship members; and (4) is an activity that is possible.
- D. *Choose which activities* you would like to schedule. Pencil them in on your calendar. Review the goals of Sea Scouting and the qualities of a good program. Evaluate whether your program will have these qualities. Decide what fund-raising activities might be necessary, using the same process.

Suggested time: 3 hours

V. Activities

Practice the process of planning each activity.

- A. Select one activity (other than the superactivity) for practicing the process of planning using the "Planning Your Ship's Program" handout.
- B. Plan this activity, using the following steps:
 - 1. Consider the objective. What is its purpose? What should Ship members gain from this activity?
 - 2. Identify resources. What expertise, facilities, and materials are needed? Whom can we get to help? Who would be the best consultant, activity chair, and committee members? What is available at the location? Where can we get the necessary equipment? (The PCI is a good source of information.)
 - 3. Plan an alternative in case of an emergency or bad weather. What are the possible obstacles that could arise and how would we handle them?
 - 4. Share the plan. Decide how to publicize it.
 - 5. List all the tasks necessary to carry out the plan.
 - 6. Evaluate. After the activity, using reflection, evaluate it as officers and as a Ship. Did the activity accomplish what was expected? Was it successful? Why or why not?

Suggested time: 30 – 60 minutes

- C. Apply this planning process to your Ship superactivity.
 - 1. Begin to think about all the considerations necessary for your Ship's superactivity, using the handout on "How to Plan Your Superactivity"
 - 2. Briefly consider the above planning steps and apply them to your superactivity. Fill in the dates that planning steps should be done, using the activity planner worksheet.
 - 3. Consider who might serve on the superactivity committee.

Suggested time: 30 minutes

VI. Ship Meetings

Develop a Ship meeting agenda.

- D. Review the section on regular Ship meetings and the sample meeting agenda.
- E. Develop an agenda for your Ship, if any changes from the sample one are needed.

Suggested time: 15 – 20 minutes



VII. Ship Code and Bylaws

Review the Ship code and bylaws.

- A. Review the information on Ship code and bylaws in the handout.
- B. Review the Ship's bylaws. Ask each officer to make notes on points in the Ship bylaws that apply to his or her job.
- C. Ask the officers to consider whether this is consistent with how they see their jobs and how they would like to see their Ship run.
- D. Ask whether they feel that the bylaws are realistic, that they are rules that the group can live by and enforce. Discuss whether any bylaws should be changed or added.
- E. The Boatswain appoints a committee to develop a Ship code and bylaws if this has not been done before or if you are a new Ship.

Suggested time: 10-15 minutes

VIII. Closing.

Close the seminar.

- A. Ask group members to consider the activities they have participated in during this seminar. Then ask them to think back to the leadership skills that were discussed earlier in the day. Now that they have had a chance to experience what it means to lead a Ship, ask them how these skills will be important to them in the year ahead.
- B. Lead a reflection based on the goals the group members set for themselves earlier in the day. Ask the group: "Did we live up to the goals we set? Why or why not? What should we keep on doing? What should we change about the way we work together?"
- C. Congratulate the group on a job well done, and review the responsibilities to the activities they have planned. Consider having each officer write a contract of the responsibilities to which he or she has committed. Remind the group that, as soon as possible, their newly planned program should be printed and distributed to all Ship members, the Ship committee, and parents.

Suggested time: 15 – 20 minutes