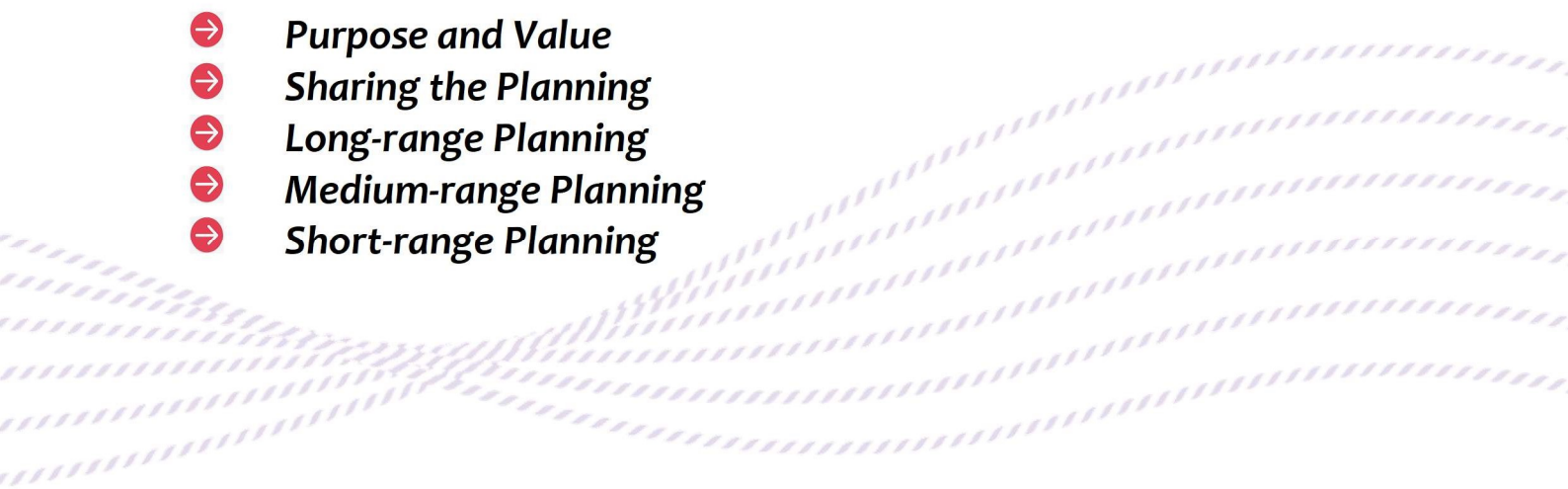


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# Chapter 8

## PLANNING AHEAD

- Purpose and Value
  - Sharing the Planning
  - Long-range Planning
  - Medium-range Planning
  - Short-range Planning
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## Purpose and Value

Effective planning is the key to providing a programme which meets the aims of Scouting. It is the difference between a programme which offers no meaningful fun, and a programme that gives a variety of quality activity and experiences to the Members. The Beaver Scout programme is not simply a weekly recreational event for children; it is a well-balanced programme that encourages Beaver Scouts to:

- Find examples of God's love for them and the world (family, nature, environment).
- Experience and express love and joy.
- Express themselves.
- Be healthy and have good feelings about themselves.
- Develop a sense of belonging and sharing in small group activities.
- Spirituality.
- Develop a sense of cooperation through non-competitive activities.

For example, if you choose an activity for a meeting, and after thinking about it in terms of the Programme Standards, find that it does not meet any of them, discard it. If, when you look over the activities you have planned, you find one of the Standards has not been met, you can insert activities to add balance to the programme.

## Sharing the Planning

In an effort to reinforce the practical and applied benefits of cooperative activity, Beaver Leaders use a very obvious shared Leadership style. The Beaver-aged child is influenced to a great degree by what we do, how we do it, and how we feel about it. In other words, by the model we present. Great attention should be placed on the image we project as Leaders and the example we give the children in our care.

### → **Leaders**

Although group decision-making may sometimes be slow, individual burdens are greatly lessened when responsibility for planning is equally shared. Not only that, but the think-tank of ideas, resources and contacts is enriched and multiplied each time you work collectively with others. Be certain to encourage new Leaders to play an equal part in all planning and programming.

### → **Beavers**

Before we get too carried away with planning, let us consider two excellent resources.

First and foremost are the Beaver Scouts themselves. Since our planning aims to promote and encourage values that children can use throughout life, it is important to involve your Beavers in the process. One such way is by means of a Log Chew. Ask your Beavers what things they like to do. It is a great opportunity for a group discussion, and

to ensure activities remain Beaver Scout oriented and driven.

Check resources available such as for example the downloadable section on Scoutkeeper. Here you will find a section dedicated solely to the Beaver Colony, wherein you will find all sorts of ideas on all parts of the Beaver Programme and more to help you in the planning.

## Long-Range Planning

One of your main long-range plans as Beaver Leaders is to provide programming that stimulates and challenges members and encourages all of them to participate fully. This becomes increasingly crucial as Colonies have Beavers in more mature stages of development. Many Leaders are faced with the question of what to do for Beavers in their last season before Cubs. Good long-range planning has proven the best way out of this dilemma.

Good records of past activities help alert Leaders to programme items which might be new to brand new Beavers, but “old hat” to older Beavers. When you efficiently recycle tried and true ideas for young Beavers, and introduce a few new ideas for older Beavers, you keep all children happy and interested.

Sounds like you will need a lot of ideas, you say? That is right; but sit down with your Leaders and their record books at a sharing session, and you will be amazed how easy it is to find them.

When you are feeling overwhelmed by the idea of planning, here is another trick you can try with the Leadership team. Pull out a large calendar and:

- Mark down regular group events - for example: Group Anniversary, Annual Fundraising events, Religious events.
- Mark down district/national events - for example: National Beavers’ Day, National Leaders’ Forum, Annual Rally
- Note Investiture and Moving on Ceremonies (approximate) dates/months. (It would be ideal if the Beaver Scout Leader has a database that is being constantly updated)
- Note special days - for example: Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Public Holidays.
- Note seasonal special events - for example: Carnival, Easter, Christmas.
- Note the special events on school calendars - for example: Open days, school holidays.

You will see an overall framework develop quickly before your eyes.

Use this type of process for setting long-range goals once or twice a year, and supplement it with more detailed short-range planning every few months. Your team will

soon have a great programme all mapped out.

## Medium-Range Planning

You will find additional planning tips in the programme building section of Chapter 7, but here are some other ideas.

Short-term planning is particularly important during the early stages of a new Colony's development. But, once a Colony has reached its initial goals of establishing a functioning Leadership team, it enters the next phase.

New colonies in the middle phase of their first year often plan around seasonal themes like Mid-Term holidays and Christmas holidays. Although seasonal themes provide an adequate framework for one seasonal cycle, the question of repetition soon forces you to explore further planning.

After you have outlined the year and generated many ideas, outline each month.

- Block in the meeting dates.
- Block in events that will happen during the month.
- Have a list of the themes produced by the Beaver Scouts during the Log Chews and introduce them into your long-range planning.
- Discuss and list what you know about the theme or themes:
  - Objectives to be fulfilled.
    - Goals to be reached.
    - Understandings to be developed.
    - Breakdown of topics.
    - Suggested activities that interest the Beavers.

This helps Leaders see how others on the team are thinking. Once you have all these notes jotted down you can start prioritizing.

Find out more about the activity. Use all available resources to find the information you need, and to clarify or build up ideas for programme activities.

- Decide upon the objectives of the programme. State clearly and specifically how or what you want the Beavers to:
  - Know (fact(s) you want them to learn).
  - Do (activities).

- Feel (emotions and attitudes you want them to experience).
- Respond (kinds of behaviours or actions you want to encourage them to develop).
- ➔ Choose specific ideas and materials. This means choosing the right type of movie to see, the appropriate expert to speak, the best equipment, and the most suitable location so that you can provide the best possible experience.
- ➔ Choose methods. Decide how you will present, discuss or act upon information. It is important to choose methods which provide opportunities for every Leader to be involved. Use a combination of the programme activities (games, crafts, songs, stories, outings, special visiting guests), and develop each activity you choose fully.
- ➔ When developing your monthly programmes, use a combination of programme elements to ensure variety in how activities are presented. These elements include music, storytelling, playacting, crafts, games, outdoors, and spiritual fellowship. Use these elements to avoid a boring programme and to keep the children interested.

## Short-Range Planning

You are now ready to prepare detailed plans for a specific time period – a month, a few months, an event, a number of events, etc. Sit down with the entire team to prepare the meeting plan. During this meeting, the team may want to “preview” the theme by doing such things as:

- ➔ Making crafts.
- ➔ Practicing ceremonies.
- ➔ Learning new songs.
- ➔ Purchase items needed.
- ➔ Confirm speakers for a meeting.
- ➔ Have a plan B

This “practice” prepares the whole team to help implement the activity and ensures that all of them are ready to fill in if needed. At the end of the planning meeting, review the plan to see if your programme activities met the Beaver Programme Standards. These Standards help you evaluate whether your programme fulfils the needs of Beaver-aged children. If your Beavers are having fun, you can bet it meets their needs!!

Remember... plan your work, then work your plan, and **HAVE FUN!**

**Wow! You have just completed a planning process. Excellent work!**

After approval from the Group Scout Leader you may now share your plan in some detail

with the parents/guardians of your Beaver Scouts. Consider giving them a three month overview, and then more details for the month you are in. When parents know what is happening, they can be better prepared to help your programme work.