

Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Planning Guide



Attention Life Scouts - If you are beginning the planning for your Eagle Scout Service Project, you **NEED** to read this guide. Other web sites may give you project ideas, but this guide tells you **HOW TO PLAN** the project, write up the proposal, carry out the work, and prepare the final report. **READ ON.**

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Revisions 97, 98, 99, 2000, 01, 02

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Background on this guide

After working with many Scouts, at both the Troop and District levels, it has become obvious to me that they do not know what was expected of them or how they should begin working their Eagle Service Projects. This led to delays and frustration in doing what was required. Since the BSA Eagle Service Project Workbook is vague, the adults helping the Scouts were free to interpret the requirements differently. These different interpretations have caused problems in advising the Scouts and in receiving approval at the district level. This guide has been developed to help the Scouts and adult leaders understand the requirements, provide a benchmark to judge the project, and provide an aid in preparing the Project Plan.

Since 1989, I have helped more than 50 Scouts through their projects with slowly evolving versions of this guide. Even though they ranged from 13 to 17 years of age, these Scouts proved they were capable of performing to this high level and were proud of their accomplishment when their projects were complete. My criteria, as outlined in this guide, is simple -- a Scout should prepare his Project Plan in such detail that, in his absence, another Scout could successfully work the entire project, to everyone's satisfaction, doing only what was written in the original Project Plan.

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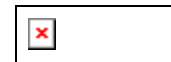
Introduction

The hardest part of your Eagle Leadership Service Project is getting started because you are not sure what is expected. This document has been prepared to provide you guidance in choosing and completing your project. This information is compiled from several Tejas District, Longhorn Council, and BSA sources. Nothing stated herein overrides the higher authority of the district, council, or national, but is a compilation of that information to help you in doing the project. If at any time you do not understand what is expected or do not know what to do, ask a troop leader for help.

The Eagle Project will require a lot of time to complete, possibly 2 to 6 months. Since you do not have to complete all 21

Eagle merit badges before beginning your project, you should choose a period when you can most afford to put in the time. For example, summer would be a better time than the period just before Christmas. Remember, you must work within your helpers' schedules, not just your own. For the leaders and your own sake, please begin your project at least 6 months before your 18th birthday. All Eagle requirements must be completed, and that includes the project and the final write-up, before you are 18 (NO exceptions). Plan ahead! However, you must plan and execute your project while a Life Scout, so do not start too early.

Choosing a Project



The Eagle Project must demonstrate leadership of others and provide service to a worthy institution other than the Boy Scouts. This may be a religious institution, school, or your community. See the first page of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook for all requirements and limitations. You should try to choose a project idea which is valuable to the community and a challenge to you. It does not have to be an original idea, but you must do all of the planning for your project and may not use someone else's plan. The project may not be routine labor (like cutting the grass at the church). It may not benefit the BSA or any Scout property or any business or individual. Fundraising is only permitted to obtain money to pay for materials you need for your project. The project may not be a fund-raiser in itself. Your project may include members of your or other Scout units, or may be done entirely by non-Scouts, if you choose.

While it is nice to do projects for your sponsoring organization, it is not at all required. Project ideas can be found in many places: in the newspaper, at your church, at your school, or from community organizations. Let the word out that you are looking for project ideas and see what input you get. As you look around for ideas, write down several which interest you. You should not spend much time actually planning a project until you have talked the idea over with your Scoutmaster or other leader to insure that it is a valid idea.

While not required, it is a good idea to get a troop leader (other than your Scoutmaster) to serve as your project advisor. This leader can help you choose a project, help you determine what needs to be done in planning it, and help you get the write-up ready to go to the district for approval. Always take detailed notes when talking to your advisor -- you cannot remember things nearly as well as you can read them from your notes later. Your advisor may not want to tell you the same thing again and again.

You may choose to build something, do service for someone, present a program to a group, or correct a problem area for the benefit of an authorized organization. There are many Internet web sites devoted to Eagle Project ideas. Use an Internet search engine like [Yahoo](#), [Excite](#), or [Metacrawler](#) to search for "Eagle Scout Project." Some projects completed by Troop 389 Eagles are listed below:

- Built 3 newspaper recycling boxes for an elementary school
- Built 2 camp chuck boxes for a Girl Scout Troop
- Repaired and painted the playground at the church
- Landscaped the church grounds, including shrubs, ground cover, and edging
- Collected 450 pair of used eye glasses for the Lions Club program for the needy
- Repaired fencing and outdoor facilities at a church sponsored nursing home and organized a social function for the residents
- Built a foot bridge in an Arlington city park
- Repaired the church sign and re-landscaped around it.
- Built a janitor closet in the church Fellowship Hall
- Built storage cabinets in Sunday School rooms

- Re-roofed and painted gazebo at church
- Conducted a book fair for a church run bookstore
- Repaired a local troubled youth facility, inside and out, including woodwork, painting, carpeting
- Collected childrens books and toys and setup a play area at a public hospital neighborhood clinic.
- Painted a mural on the wall of his Synagogue depicting Jewish life
- Conducted a program for kindergarten children about dangers of abduction and fingerprinted them for their parents
- Modified church's storage building, adding double door for tractor access, shelves, permanent window covering
- Planted trees and placed boulders in a local park to stop off-roading vehicles from damaging grounds
- Built a nature trail and erosion dams in a city park
- Rebuilt and greatly improved a patio at a local troubled youth home.

Initial Planning & Project Write-up



After you have talked over possible project ideas with your troop leaders and chosen the right one for you, it is now time to begin the detail planning and initial write-up which will be submitted to the district or council for approval. Remember, you cannot begin actual work on the project until it is approved by the district or council, but there is a lot of planning to be done before you get that far.

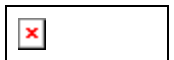
Get a current copy of the Life to Eagle Packet, which includes the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (BSA 18-927A), from the council office or from one of the troop leaders to use in preparing your plan. This is the official booklet which must be submitted to the district for approval. It includes the official BSA requirements that must be met -- while this guide just provides additional information to help you meet those requirements. Read everything in it before beginning to write up your plan.

The project plan may be typed on a typewriter or computer, or may be hand written, but it must be very neat. You may also use an electronic version. A Microsoft Word 97 version of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook is available for downloading [here](#). While this is not an English paper, you should use your best grammar. The plan should tell someone else everything they would need to know to carryout your project without you present. You should include the following information as shown in the workbook. Hint: Make an outline with the following headings, then work your way through each area and discuss each topic as it relates to your project. Leave out the headings which do not apply to your project.

A. - Project Description

Briefly (approximately one to two paragraphs) describe the project. This should not include any details, those will come later. Address this section as though you were telling a friend what you were going to do. Think of this as an executive summary of the overall project. All of the details will be covered later.

B. - Who Will Benefit



Name the group or organization who will benefit from your project and how your project will benefit them. Remember, the project cannot benefit the Boy Scouts (except in the most indirect way). Do not describe the project again, just focus on the benefit of the project. You should also work with an official of the institution in planning the project. See the section below

for some hints on working with an agency.

Hint - Coordination with Agency

Discuss your coordination with the agency which is benefiting from your project. Be sure to include the name, position within the agency (e.g. Personnel Director, Community Relations Coordinator, etc.), and phone number of your point of contact. Use proper titles (e.g. Mr., Mrs., Dr., Chief, etc.) when referring to adults. Discuss your coordination meetings with the agency to include dates you have met or talked on the phone, who was present, and exactly what they agreed to provide to you and what you agreed to do for them. You should also obtain a letter from the agency authorizing you to conduct your project. Do not get into a position of saying, "I talked to some lady a few weeks ago." Whenever you call the agency again, be able to ask for your contact by name.

Finances are of particular interest. Be sure both you and the agency understand all financial obligations, and preferably stated in writing. Are they going to "fund your project" or "pay up to \$100 toward your expenses"? No one should try to cheat you, but a misunderstanding can create hard feelings or cost you more than you had planned.

Another area where you should ensure complete understanding is in the materials to be provided. When an agency says they will provide building materials, make sure you both understand exactly what is to be provided (see the materials section below). Find out if the agency will deliver the materials to your work site or if you must pick them up. If you are going to have to go get materials, find out exactly where (i.e. address) and the name and phone number of the person you need to talk to when you get there. Do you need to call ahead and setup an appointment to pickup the materials? Dealing with government agencies can be particularly frustrating if you do not ensure all details are understood by both parties. Making assumptions is dangerous!

C. - Planning Details

This is the heart of the project plan and the area which will require the most work. The plan should include all details needed by someone else to carryout the project as though you were not around. The plan will include the sections discussed below, if appropriate. All sections are not applicable to all projects, so may be omitted if not needed. Since there is limited space in the workbook, you may attach extra pages with the details. You may prefer to write or type the plan on separate pages and then cut and paste them into the proper section of the workbook after your advisor has helped you get it into the final form.

Present Condition

Describe the current condition or situation that you are going to change. Do not repeat the benefit of the project, but focus on creating a word picture of how things are now. This is a good place to include pictures (either photographs or drawings) of the project area. Remember, the District Advancement Committee does not know what your church or school or park looks like so they cannot understand why your project is important unless you show and tell them.

Plans / Drawings / Designs



If your project is to build something, you will need detail plans or drawings. These are like blue prints and should show all dimensions, paint schemes, floor plans, layouts, or other detail that can be drawn. Plans or drawings are usually done on graph paper which has guidelines, but blank paper is acceptable as long as you are neat. Photographs may also be of value here for some projects. If you have made a design (e.g. emblem, logo, etc.) include it in this section. All plans, drawings, or figures should be labeled with a Figure Number and a Title (e.g. "Figure 1, Playground looking east"). Refer to them in the appropriate sections of the text.

Materials

Materials are those things which become part of the finished product. Examples are lumber, paint, nails, concrete, etc. This is truly a shopping list, so include material specifications (exact size, quality, brand, finish, etc.), number of each item, and cost. Don't just say "lumber", you need to describe exactly what pieces of lumber. If items are to be donated, state so. This section is best presented in the form of a separate list or table attached to extra pages in the workbook. Tables should include a Table Number and Title (e.g. "Table 1, Materials & Supplies") and be referred to in the appropriate section of the text.

The Materials table may look something like this:

Item	Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Source
Plywood	3/4", 4' x 8' B-C interior grade	3 sheets	\$20.00	\$60.00	Home Depot - donation
Paint	Sherwin-Williams interior off-white (#1342), semi-gloss	2 gal	\$15.00	\$30.00	Sherwin-Williams - purchase
etc.	.	.	.	.	.
etc.	.	.	.	.	.

Supplies

Supplies are those expendable things which do not become part of the finished product, but that are used to complete it. Examples of supplies are sandpaper, trash bags, posters, gasoline, pens, markers, paper, paint rollers, drop cloths, etc. Provide a list of all supplies you will need and where you will get them. Since supplies cannot normally be reused, you need to either buy them or have them donated. You cannot 'borrow' something which you cannot return. You may choose to combine the materials and supplies into one list (see above); but label it as such.

Tools

Tools are those items used to aid in making the work easier, or even make it possible to do at all. Tools are not used up and should be saved and used again and again. Examples of tools are hammers, shovels, tractors, or saws. Provide a list of all tools required to work the project, don't take for granted that required equipment will just appear when you need it. Be very specific (e.g. number of hammers, type of shovels, type/size of paint brushes, etc.). Tell how those tools will be obtained. If you must purchase tools, include them in the financial plan. You should be able to borrow most tools from the people who are working on the project or from someone else. Try not to spend much money on tools since they are expensive but not part of the finished product. If you must buy tools, discuss what is going to be done with them after your project is complete. Are you going to keep them, give them to the troop or other organization, or maybe to the organization who is funding the project?

The Tools table may look something like this:

Tool	Quantity	Source
Claw hammers	6 minimum	Workers to bring
Air Compressor	1	Mr. James' company will loan
Garden rakes	4 minimum	2 from church, 2 from Mr. Hightower
Circular power saw (7 in)	1	My dad
Extension cord, grounded / 3 prong, 50' minimum	2	1 from Mr. Haygood, 1 from church
Camera, 35mm automatic (to document work)	1	My mother
Cooler, 5 gallon (for drinks)	1	Scout Troop
etc.	.	.
etc.	.	.

Schedule

A good schedule is a necessity for any successful plan. It shows when everything is done and in what order each step happens. You must make your best estimate of how long tasks will take and in what order they will be done. Your schedule may be in the form of a Gantt Chart (bar chart), a calendar with tasks entered

on the appropriate days, or just a list of tasks and the date when they will be done. Include project planning and approval on your schedule. No project follows the planned schedule exactly, but it helps make things happen logically. When you complete your project and do the final write-up, you will discuss how well the project followed the planned schedule and why you think it deviated from it.

Step-by-step instructions



In addition to the schedule which shows the dates when you think tasks will be worked, you will also need detailed instructions. These instructions should read like a recipe in a cookbook. These tell the workers exactly what to do. Include a list of every task you can think of, what order they will be done, and who will do them. Include the clean-up of the work site in your plan.

A sample detailed workday plan may look something like this:

- 8:00 My dad and I arrive at work site and begin preparation.
- 8:15 Workers and other leaders scheduled to arrive.
Donuts provided for workers as they arrive.
- 8:30 Brief 3 team leaders on their duties.
- 8:45 Get all workers together and tell them what we are going to do. Assign workers to one of 3 teams.
- 9:00 Team 1 begins clearing ground.
Team 2 begins cutting lumber according to plans.
Team 3 begins clearing brush and moving dirt to designated area.
- 10:00 Teams 1 & 2 begin constructing the thing-a-ma-gig according to plans.

etc., etc.
- 12:00 Lunch
- 12:45 Teams 1 & 2 construct the thing-a-ma-gig according to plans.
Team 3 finishes moving all dirt and brush to the designated areas.

etc., etc.
- 3:00 Teams 1, 2, and 3 paint the thing-a-ma-gig with one coat (note: 2nd coat will be applied next week)
- 4:00 All workers begin cleanup and put trash bags in Mr. Haygood's truck.
- 4:30 All workers go home
Mr. Haygood takes trash to dumpster

Financial plan

Every project will cost something and you need to discuss those costs in your plan. Provide a list of all materials, tools, supplies, etc. with a cost of each. This information may be part of your list of materials/supplies. If items are loaned or donated, state so. Remember to include any fees (e.g. city dump fees) in your cost estimate.

Once you have determined how much the project is going to cost, you must find the money to pay for it. You may consider several sources for funding, including the organization for whom you are doing the project, donations from others, from your allowance, or any other legitimate source. While your project **MAY NOT BE A FUNDRAISER**, you may conduct fundraising activities, if necessary, to finance the supplies and materials needed for your project. Obtaining the funds to do the project is your responsibility, don't assume that someone will cover cost until you have asked them.

A major part in any project, whether for Scouts, church, community, or a business, is funding. If you cannot come up with all the money you need, look at reducing the cost to get within your budget. You may even find that the project is too expensive and you will have to choose another one.

After the source of your funding is established, you should also consider how the money is to be handled. As money is brought in from fundraising activities, where will it be held for safe keeping? Exactly how will supplies and materials be paid for? It is strongly suggested [by this author] that you do not put your parents or yourself in the position of holding any substantial amount of money. Discuss this issue with the organization which is providing financial support. Consider letting the sponsoring organization's treasure manage the funds. Your troop treasure may also be willing to help. Whatever you decide, ensure you have a complete paper trail for all financial transactions and include a summary in your final report.

One last financial point to consider -- since your project must benefit a not-for-profit organization, see if the organization has an exemption from state sales taxes. If so, find out how to take advantage of this savings before you go to buy your materials. This may help you stay within your budget. If they are not tax exempt, then don't forget to include the sales tax in your budget plan.

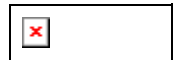
Written /Printed Information

If you are going to use handouts, posters, letters, or other written materials as part of your project, include a copy of those in the plan. These should be included as attachments to the workbook. These attachments should have a Figure Number and Title (e.g. "Figure 6, Sample handout to the troop") and be referenced in the appropriate section of the text.

Helpers/Workers

Discuss who will be doing the work. You do not need to state names (which you most likely will not know yet), just the number of people, what organization they are part of, and what special skills will be required. For example, are you going to need a carpenter? However, if you can make a list of potential helpers (with their phone numbers) it will help you get volunteers later. Describe how you are going to organize the workers to get the work done efficiently. Will they be divided into teams and, if so, who will lead the teams? What tasks will each team be doing? How will you use adult leaders? Discuss how you will ensure the safety of the workers. Remember, you do not have to DO any of the physical work yourself; you are responsible for LEADING others in carrying out the project and ensuring that everything is done the way you want it (i.e. show leadership).

Adult Supervision



Boy Scout policy requires at least two adult leaders be present at all times during any Scouting activity. At least one of them must have 'Youth Protection' certification. It is your responsibility to ensure that this policy is followed. Don't assume that the right people will just 'be there' -- arrange, in advance, for them to be there. You should state how you will ensure this in your plan. Without the proper adult supervision, you will not be able to work your project.

Work Site

Where will the work be done? If you are going to build something, are you going to build it at the location where it will be used or somewhere else then moved? Remember, you must get permission to use any work site from the responsible person/owner. If the location where you are going to work requires special facilities or tools, state so. Think about how the weather will effect your work site.

Transportation

Moving people, materials, supplies, tools to/from a work site will most likely be required. Discuss what needs to be moved, what vehicles you will need, where you will get those vehicles, and who will drive. BSA policy places limitations on drivers under 21 years old; ensure you are aware of these limits and work within them. Remember that all passengers must be seated with a seat belt on whenever a vehicle is in motion. NO ONE, child or adult, should ever ride in the bed of a moving truck under any circumstance! All of this is your responsibility.

Initial Project Approval

There are several approvals required for your project along the way. The first is the approval from your Scoutmaster or project advisor that your idea will qualify as a valid project. You need this before spending much time writing up the detail plan. After your advisor has helped you get the written plan in order and ready to submit, you will then need several signatures in the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook. A responsible representative from the organization you are doing the project for is the first signature required. It is also a good idea to get a letter from the organization if possible. Next, your Scoutmaster or project advisor signs, followed by a member of the Troop Committee. The project is now ready to turn in to the District or Council Advancement Committee for approval to proceed. Note: you should keep a Xerox copy of the project, exactly as turned in to the District, in case it is lost during the approval cycle.

It is very important that you do not DO any of the project, except planning, until the District or Council Committee has signed it. Once they have approved the project plan, it will be returned to you by your Scoutmaster or project advisor. THEN you can begin to DO the project!

Working the Project



Now that the hard part is over, you can begin the fun part -- working the project! If you have prepared a good plan (which you will have or it won't be submitted to the district), all you have to do is follow the plan and make the project happen. Do what you said you were going to do.

It is important that you keep very good notes about everything that is done. Keep lists of all work done, who does the work, and how much time they each spent. For your final report, you will need to discuss how well the plan worked and all areas where you were not able to follow the plan, so keep good track of this information as you go along. Take pictures of each stage of the work. These will be included in the final report and will be a nice souvenir of an important milestone in your life. Keep track of all materials, supplies, tools, etc. used, paying particular attention to any differences from your original plan. Save all receipts.

Final Write-up

After the actual work on the project is completed, you are ready for the last phase of your project -- the final report. This is the section where you describe what actually happened as you carried out the plan. This information is entered in the last section of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook.

As with any project, it is important to review what was done and see what lessons were learned as well as providing a historic record. In this case, you also need to write a final report because your project is not complete without it! You should use the project plan as guide for preparing the final report. In the 'Carrying Out the Project' workbook section, briefly describe what was done and how you deviated from the plan. Go through each section of the plan and write a summary of the results versus the plan. For example, discuss if you had all of the materials you needed or if you had a lot left over. Summarize the actual costs, tools used (and tools needed that you did not have), or anything else of interest.

Provide a record of all the time worked by your volunteers. This can be done in a list or table showing names, dates, hours worked, and tasks performed by each volunteer. Since the objective of the project is to demonstrate leadership of others, you should discuss your leadership roll. Give examples of how you were able to lead the volunteers. Did you have any problem with getting them to come to work or to stay focused on the assigned tasks? Leading people is a difficult skill and you most likely learned something about this. The final reviewers want to read about what you learned about leading people.

Hopefully, you took many photographs during each phase of the project. Include a section in your report for representative photographs. A photo of you presenting the finished product to the organization for whom you did the work help show off the value of the project. Of course, the photographs should be labeled.

You will most likely require some advice from your project advisor before you are ready to turn the project in for final signatures. Consult with him often as you are completing the report. Once you and your advisor are happy with the result, it is time to get the final approval signatures.

Final Project Approvals

Only a couple of signatures are required on your final report, the most important of which is yours. If you are proud of your effort and pleased with the write-up, then sign it on the last page. You also need the signature of your Scoutmaster or project advisor. The representative of the institution benefiting from your project must also sign your workbook after you complete the work. While these are the only signatures required in order to submit it, the project's final approval will come during your Eagle Board of Review. You will submit the project (plan and final report) along with your completed Eagle Scout application to the District or Council Advancement Committee through your Scoutmaster. The full write-up is kept until your Board of Review, then returned to you. Remember to keep a Xerox copy of the final write-up when you submit it, just in case it is lost.

Getting Printouts of this Guide or Project Workbook



This Eagle Leadership Service Project Planning Guide is one continuous file (approx. 10 pages) and may be printed in its entirety using your web browser. Just press the "print" button or go to browser pull-down menu item FILE | PRINT.

If you need an electronic version of the official BSA Eagle Leadership Service Project Workbook (BSA #18-927), [download](#) it from the National BSA web site.

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Disclaimer

This is an unofficial guide, which I, and others who have used it, feel is within the intent of the Eagle Project and the guidelines of the BSA Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook. It has been adopted by the Tejas District of the Longhorn Council and distributed to troops within the district by the Advancement Committee. I hope it proves of value to you, but please seek the approval of your troop leaders before proceeding.

Questions or Comments

If you have any questions, problems, or comments about your project or this web site, please feel free to contact me. I also enjoy receiving feedback from the Scouts, Scouters, and parents who are using this guide.

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(Please include "**Eagle Project Guide**"
in e-mail subject line or my Virus Scanner
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[\(About the Author\)](#)

This page was last updated 25 October 2002

Since November 1997:

