Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Planning Guide

Attention Life Scouts - If you are beginning the planning for your Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project, this guide is for you. 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.

NEW Eagle Project Support sites:
· Guide to the Eagle Scout Project for Adult Leader
· Benefiting Organization Representatives
· Troop-level Eagle Candidate Seminar

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Background on this Guide

After working with many Scouts, at both the troop and district levels, it became 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 Leadership Service Project Workbook is somewhat vague, the adults helping the Scouts are free to interpret the requirements differently. These different interpretations tend to cause problems in advising the Scouts and in receiving approval at the council or 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 and final report.

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. Perfection is not expected, but a Scout is expected to "do his best".

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, planning, and completing your project. This information is compiled from several district, 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. You are considered a Life Scout the day you successfully complete your Board of Review.

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 BSA 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 or picking up trash along the road). 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 workers may include members of your or other Scout units, or may be done entirely by non-Scouts, if you choose.

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 council or 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.

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 interests you. You should not spend much time actually planning a project until you have talked the idea over with your Scoutmaster or troop's Eagle Project Advisor to insure that it is a valid idea. Also, be aware, that the Council or District Advancement Committee (as appropriate in your local council) is the final approval authority of the project idea, as well as the detail plan (before beginning the actual work), and the final report (after all work in complete). If there is any doubt about your idea being a valid project, you or a troop leader should contact the Council or District Advancement Committee and get their buy-in before spending a lot of time planning a project they will not accept.

The project cannot be for the benefit of a business or individual. Not benefiting a business is straightforward, since that is a commercial enterprise. However, Scouts occasionally get confused about helping a needy individual. Building a wheelchair ramp at an elderly person's home would seem like a worthy project, but the BSA does not permit that (see the Limitations section of the Eagle Project Workbook). Whereas building a wheelchair ramp at a church or community building is acceptable. Keep this in mind when choosing a project.

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 [Google](#), [Yahoo](#), [DogPile](#), [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
> * 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
> * Repaired a local troubled youth facility, inside and out, including woodwork, painting, carpeting
> * Collected children's 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
> * 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-road vehicles from damaging grounds
> * Conducted a bicycle safety program at a community summer camp for underprivileged children
> * Built a nature trail and erosion dams in a city park
> * Rebuilt and greatly improved a patio at a local troubled youth home

Other examples of projects are listed on page 3 of the BSA Eagle Project Workbook and on the new [NESA (National Eagle Scout Association) website](#).

A large percentage of Eagle Projects involve building something that is relatively permanent, as listed above. However, you are not required to build a permanent structure. You may choose to do service for a particular group, or present an entertaining or educational program. Each type of project has its own challenges and value. In all cases, remember that you are to demonstrate leadership of others, so you must involve enough other people to accomplish that. Painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (like Michael Angelo did in 1508-1512) alone would not be a valid Eagle Project.

If you choose a construction project, then you can think of yourself as the project engineer or construction supervisor. In this case, the leadership role is straightforward. You develop the plans, obtain the materials, and then lead your crew in the labor.

If you choose a program type of project, then you'd be considered the writer, producer, and/or director. Being the leader on this type of project may be harder to grasp. Review the Leadership section near the end of this guide and see if you can plan how to establish yourself as the man-in-charge.

You may choose a project where you would work closely with an established community organization; an organization that's mission is to benefit the community on a continuing basis. Examples are blood banks, food pantries, women's shelters, Habitat for Humanity, the Salvation Army, and probably hundreds more. These can be the basis for great Eagle projects, however, there are some challenges you need to be aware of. Since these organizations are already in place and have developed processes and procedures they have found work best in their particular area of interest, you may find it more difficult to establish yourself as the true leader. If you would like to do a project to support a community organization like this, make sure you can define your leadership role. You may also want to verify with your council or district Advancement Committee that they will accept such a project before you spent too much time developing a detail plan.

Another issue to keep in mind when choosing a project is what becomes of your project once you have submitted your final report, passed your Eagle Board of Review, and moved on to other, exciting challenges in your life. Many more permanent structural projects are normally turned over to the benefiting organization for long-term maintenance. If you choose to do a one-time entertaining or educational program, then this is may not be an issue. However, you may have started a valuable program that should be continued for the community's benefit. Consider how you will handoff your project plan so others can follow-up and keep your good idea going. Some projects are not much value, at all, if not maintained long-term. An example would be an Internet website. Just producing a website and maintaining it for a couple of months is worthless. In this case, you would be expected to ensure its long-term upkeep as part of your original plan or it most likely would not be approved at all.

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 councl, 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 BSA *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* (BSA 512-927), 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 council or 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 and understand everything in the BSA workbook before beginning to write up your plan. You may use an electronic version of the workbook. The PDF (Acrobat Reader) version is available for downloading from the official BSA Eagle website: [National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) website](#). This PDF version may be edited, printed, and saved edited on your computer. It is also available from Scouting Forms from the National Council - http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-927.pdf.

The project plan may be typed on a typewriter or computer, or may be hand written, but it must be very neat. While this is not an English paper, you should use your best grammar. You may want to have your parent, teacher, or troop leader read over your final version to find any errors before submission to district or council.

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 that do not apply to your project.

As you decide how much detail to include, try making a goal that in your absence, a friend or another Scout could successfully work the entire project, doing only what was written in the submitted project plan. Of course you'll not really be that detailed, but this will get you thinking what you would want to be see if you had to do someone else's project based on just what he included in the plan. In the end, just do your best.

A. - Project Description

Briefly (approximately one to two paragraphs) describe the project. This section 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 that 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. Some possible benefits to consider are: improves safety, enhances appearance, helps needy people, provides essential services, provides entertainment to a needy group, or improves functionality of a facility. These are just examples and are not all possible benefits to your 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 Benefiting Agency*

Discuss your coordination with the agency that 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 full names (no nicknames) and 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 have them stated in writing. Are they going to "fund your project" (which you might assume means they will pay for everything) 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 pick up the materials? Dealing with government agencies can be particularly frustrating if you do not ensure that 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 that will require the most work. The plan should include all details needed to carry out the project. 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 or how it will be in the future, 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 Council or 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.

Local Government Compliance Issues

There may be local laws or other requirements / limitations that could impact your project. Check with a knowledgeable authority to see if your project is in compliance with all community zoning laws. You may also be required to obtain a Building Permit for some construction projects. These are rarely a problem for Eagle Projects, but they are better resolved in advance than to be surprised on your workday or after the project is completed. If you will need to dispose of a significant amount of trash / garbage, investigate possible community dump fees, or other waste disposal regulations / limitations. Pay particular attention to hazardous waste regulations. Some permits may take some time to acquire, so plan ahead.

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 that 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.

Scripts / Program Outlines

If you chose to put on an educational or entertaining program for an authorized group, you should include the program outline, to include the times each activity is allotted. If a script is required for your participants to play their individual parts, that should also be included here, as well. You may not have the final script worked out before submitting your plan for approval, but you need to have a detailed outline of the script to show what is being presented.

Written / Printed Information

If you are going to use handouts, posters, letters, or other written materials as part of your project, include a copy each in the plan. These should be included as attachments to the workbook 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.

Materials

Materials are those things that 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/amount 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:

Table 2 - Materials

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 parts 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 that 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:

Table 3 - Tools

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 is 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 Workday Instructions

In addition to the schedule, which shows the dates when you think tasks will be worked, you will also need detailed instructions. These should read like a recipe in a cookbook and 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 cleanup 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 & juice/coffee 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.
        Discuss safety.
        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 and 2 volunteers take 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 shown on your list of materials/supplies. If items are loaned or donated, state so. Remember to include any fees (e.g. building permit fees, city dump fees, etc.) 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 which you are doing the project, donations from others, from your allowance, from your parents, 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.

> **Hint – Requesting Funding:** You will have better success in getting funds or materials donated by an organization or business if you can show them exactly what you need. Take your list of Materials / Supplies, with associated costs, when you meet with an organization or business leader. They will be more likely to help if they feel that you know what you are doing and have a real plan.

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 safekeeping? 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 that 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 (normally 6 to 8%) in your budget plan.

Helpers / Workers

You may recruit your workers from your Scout unit, your school, your friends, or anywhere you can find willing volunteers who you feel will follow your leadership. You are not required to use Scouts to work your project. Your workers may be youth or adults, but a word of caution – adults will be more likely to 'take charge', thinking they are helping you. However, their leadership may actually interfere with your chance to demonstrate leadership (which is the purpose of the project). If you are going to use adult workers, make sure they understand that you have to be the leader to get credit for this Eagle requirement.

In this section, 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? 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? 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).

> **Hint – Recruiting Workers:** Don't just make an announcement at a couple of troop meetings and assume that everyone you need will just show up. While you do not need a list of workers by name when you turn in your initial project plan, you should make a list of potential workers no later than a couple of weeks before your workday. Remind any Scouts on your crew that they will earn service hours toward their own advancement by working on your project. You should then contact each potential volunteer and get a commitment from them that they will be there on the workday. If they hedge by saying, "I'll try to be there," (which often implies they do not really want to help, but are reluctant to tell you so) remind them about how important this is and how much you really need them. Try to get them to say, "Sure, I will be there."
>
> The final task in getting your workers to show up is to call each one a couple of days before the work date and remind them. Tell them how much you appreciate their help and how you won't be successful without them. If someone said they would help and they do not show up on the workday, you may consider calling them and seeing if they just forgot. You may feel like you are pressuring people – and you are. As the leader, it is your responsibility to make things happen and you need help to get the job done.
>
> Also, it helps if you give each potential worker a handout telling him or her the date, time, and location for the project. Include a map to the work site, if it is not well known. You should also let your crew know if you are serving lunch or if you expect them to bring a sack lunch. Try to give them an idea

about when you expect to finish, too. People are more likely to participate if they understand what is expected of them.

Safety

The supervisor of any project, in Scouting or otherwise, is responsible for the safety of the workers. While the adult leaders who are present during your project will step up to handle any real emergency, you as the project leader should prepare for the overall safety of your workers in your project plan. The key to a safe project is avoiding accidents and being prepared to handle likely consequences if an accident does happen.

There will be safety hazards peculiar to your project and your worksite(s) and you should review these as part of your planning. Inspect the worksite for potential hazards and either plan to correct them early on your workday or develop a way to keep your workers away from the danger. Simply marking minor hazards to alert workers may be acceptable. Watch out for the life-threatening hazard of tools or work materials coming in contact with overhead electrical wires. You should review the worksite hazards during your first project briefing to your workers.

Often the tools you will be using may create a safety hazard. Picks, axes, hammers, electrical wires / extension cords, and motorized vehicles may all cause injury if not used properly. Power tools are especially dangerous and you should ensure that only qualified people operate them. If youth are to operate power tools, they must do so under the supervision of a trained adult. Anyone (youth or adult) using special tools must be trained in their safe operation. You or a qualified person may need to provide training before dangerous tools are used.

Do not forget the common health & safety issues like sunburn, poison ivy, heat stroke, heat exhaustion, hyper / hypothermia, and a supply of safe drinking water. Warn everyone to watch out for poisonous snakes, if appropriate. Discuss these and any other safety issues during your worker briefing, before they begin any physical work.

As with any Scouting activity, you should have a suitable first aid kit available on-site. It would be a good idea to actually open it up and ensure it is clean, properly stocked, and that items are organized so you can quickly find what is needed in an emergency. A serious accident will require more than a first aid kit. It may become necessary to seek professional medical attention, either at a doctor's office or hospital emergency room. Ensure a suitable vehicle is available at the worksite and that you know where the nearest hospital with an emergency room is located. In case of a very severe injury, you may need to call an ambulance, so access to a telephone or cell phone should be planned.

The BSA Guide to Safe Scouting is a valuable resource in planning a safe project workday. You must also ensure that you follow all BSA safety policies. There are

strict policies on the use of fuels, vehicle operation, adult leadership, and use of power tools, so read through this document and address any areas applicable to your project.

Adult Supervision

Boy Scout policy (Guide to Safe Scouting, p. 4) states: "Two registered adult leaders, or one registered adult and a parent of a participating Scout, one of who must be at least 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips or outings."   It is your responsibility to ensure that this policy is followed. Don't assume that the required adults and leaders 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.

Also, remember that the adults are not your Eagle Project's leaders. They should be there as safety monitors or they may do some work at your direction. You may need to help the adults resist the temptation of taking charge of your project. (see the Hint in the [Leadership](#) section below)

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 affect 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 unit project advisor that your idea will qualify as a valid project. You should get this before spending too 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 plan is now ready to turn in to the Council or District Advancement Committee for approval to proceed. Note: you should keep a photocopy copy of the project, exactly as turned in to the council or district, in case it is lost during the approval cycle. It is a good idea to write down the date and the name of whom you gave the plan to, in case follow-up is necessary.

Be aware that each district and/or council has their own particular procedures for submitting and approving Eagle Project Plans. Many larger councils delegate the approval to the districts, while some councils approve the projects at the higher level. I have indicated "Council or District" throughout this guide, but you will only need approval from one or the other, depending on your local process. Check with your council and/or district and make sure you follow their procedures.

It is very important that you do not DO any of the project work, except planning, until the Council or District Committee has signed it. Once they have approved the project plan, it will be returned to you in accordance with the particular Council or District Advancement Committee's procedures. After you have the approved version of your project, THEN you can begin to DO the project!

Working on 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 approved by the council or 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 you original plan. Save all receipts.

Leadership

A couple of years ago, the title of the Eagle Scout Service Project was changed to the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project. As stated in the BSA Project Workbook, the real purpose of the Eagle Project is to give you an opportunity to "demonstrate leadership of others." This is not to say that service to the community is not important, just that leadership is equally important.

Eagle Scouts are considered leaders, both in Scouting and in their community. From the time you first joined Scouting, you have been receiving leadership training. Hopefully you have been a member of a "boy led troop." The Patrol Leaders Council (PLC), which is made up of the Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leaders, and several other youth leaders should have been leading your troop: planning the troop meetings and campouts. To reach the ranks of Star, Life, and Eagle you have served in several leadership positions in your troop and most likely served on the PLC. The Eagle Project is just another chance for you to lead others in accomplishing a significant goal for the benefit to your community. This time, you get to choose the activity that interests you.

So how do you "demonstrate leadership of others?" First, you need to establish yourself as the man in charge, the one who others look to for guidance. This means you must take the initiative to choose your project, coordinate it with the appropriate agency, and prepare the detail plan on how to accomplish the goal. Don't wait for others to do your job. This makes you the expert – the man with the answers. Others will come to you to learn what they need to do to complete their task.

The leader coordinates all the activities of others to make sure the final goal is reached. He considers everyone's talents and decides which tasks each member is given, and then makes sure they understand their assignment. The leader takes care of his team. He ensures they are safe and have sufficient food and water to remain healthy and productive. He makes sure they have the proper training and tools to do the job.

The leader is the problem solver. No matter how well a project is planned, there will be things that don't go according to plan. When problems arise, the project leader must consider all available information and make a decision on how to resolve that problem. If it is not safe or practical to force the project to follow the plan, he may need to revise the plan, or even redefine the final goals. It is ok if your project doesn't reach all the original goals, but you need to be able to explain why and how you solved the problem.

A good leader will consider advice and suggestions from others, but in the end, the leader must make the final decisions. A wise Scout would listen to his troop's adult leaders and

parents because they have many years of experience to share. However, be careful that the well-meaning adults don't lead your project. Beware of a common problem, which can easily hamper your chance to lead. During projects where an adult's technical skill is required, the adults often tend take over the leadership role. Both you and your adult technical advisor should be very aware that YOU must lead the project. Your advisor should only give you guidance and suggestions, but he should not give direct instructions to your work crew, unless you have directly assigned him to supervise a small team for a specific task. That would deny you your leadership opportunity.

> **Hint**: You and your advisor should talk this over and agree on a signal which you will politely give him if you see him taking too much control of your workers (which is a very natural thing for adults to do). For example you may agree to say something like, "Mr. Coffman, would you like something to drink?" He would get the point and agree that he was thirsty and go "get a drink." No one else would know what you were doing, but later you and Mr. Coffman can laugh about how "thirsty" he was on that workday.

The leader gets the job done and keeps the group together. Getting the job done is fairly easy to understand. Keeping the group together means you help the group enjoy the activity, feel appreciated for their efforts, and earn a sense of pride in the accomplishments of the group. A leader continually encourages his workers and gives them positive feedback on what they do well. He helps his workers understand when they are doing something that does not help the group accomplish the goal and he gives them guidance on how to do the right thing. Often when workers aren't doing what the leader wants, it is because the leader did not do a very good job of explaining the task to them.

Leadership is a very rewarding activity. As the leader, you should feel a sense of pride for what your team accomplished under your guidance. A well-led activity is also rewarding for those who follow. In the end, the goal is reached and the team feels good about their collective accomplishment. The leadership skills you have learned in Scouting and demonstrated in completing your Eagle Project will serve you throughout your life.

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, titled, 'Carrying Out the Project'.

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! In the 'Carrying Out the Project'

workbook section, briefly describe what was done and how you deviated from the plan. The following sections are required.

Changes

You should use your project plan as guide for preparing the final report. Go through each section of the plan and write a summary of the results versus the plan. Summarize the actual costs, the tools used (and tools needed that you did not have), what objectives were accomplished or not accomplished (and why not), how your workers performed their tasks, how you handled any major problems, and anything else of interest (both positive or negative).

Materials required to complete the Project

Discuss if you had all of the materials and supplies you needed or if you had a lot left over. If you had a shortage, how did you resolve this? If you had a significant surplus, what did you do with those items? The simplest way to show this information is to include an updated version of the Materials / Supplies Table from the original plan, with all changes annotated (possibly in a 'Remarks' column replacing the 'Source' column). You may also choose to just describe the materials in a text paragraph.

Hours Spent Working the Project

Provide a record of all the time worked by you and your volunteers. Don't forget to include all the time you spent planning the project, writing the plan, getting approvals, and gathering tools / materials, not just the time doing the labor. This can be documented in a list or table showing names, dates, hours worked, and tasks performed by you and each volunteer. Also, don't forget to give your Scoutmaster a list of those who worked on your project so that they can get credit for service hours toward their own advancement.

> **Note on Minimum Hours –** The BSA Eagle Project Workbook specifically states: "Size – How big a project is required? There are no specific requirements, as long as the project is helpful to a religious institution, school, or community. The amount of time spent by you in planning your project and the actual working time spent in carrying out the project should be as much as is necessary for you to demonstrate your leadership of others."
>
> The BSA Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures (#33088D) says: "There is no minimum number of hours that must be spent on carrying out the project." (pg. 27) This BSA document also states: "No council, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to or subtract from any advancement requirement." (pg. 23)

Therefore, it would violate the stated BSA policy for anyone to add a new "minimum hour" requirement.

Photographs

Include a section in your final report for representative photographs, which you took during each phase of the project. The photos help the Eagle Board of Review members better understand your project and it will be easier for you to discuss the project if you can show them the actual work in progress and the final results. A photo of you presenting the finished product to the organization for which you did the work helps show off the value of the project. A group photo of your work crew is also a good memento of your project. Of course, the photographs should be securely mounted and labeled, not just thrown in an envelope.

Since the objective of the project is to demonstrate leadership of others, you should discuss your leadership role. 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 task and you most likely learned something about this. The final reviewers want to read about what you learned about leading people.

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 / her often as you are completing the report. As with the original project plan, you may want to have a parent, teacher, or troop leader read over your final version to find errors before submitting to the council or district. Once you and your advisor are happy with the result, it is time to get the final approval signatures.

Suggestion: While you are writing your final report would be a good time to write thank-you notes to those who donated materials or made other significant contributions for your project. Many companies have a budget for donations to organizations like Scouting and a small thank-you can help them understand the value of their donations and encourage them to continue helping future Eagle candidates.

The organization may also appreciate a copy of your final report, which will reinforce the significance of the Eagle Leadership Service Project. Many people not associated with Scouting are very impressed with the effort required and the special talent it takes for a young man to complete the Eagle Project.

You aren't expected to write notes to all your volunteer workers, but some recognition at your next troop meeting would certainly be appreciated.

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 unit 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. Remember that each district or council has their own particular procedures for submitting and approving Eagle Project Reports and Eagle applications, so check with your council or district and make sure you follow the required procedures. The full project write-up is kept until your Board of Review, and then returned to you. Remember to keep a photocopy of the final write-up when you submit it, just in case it is lost.

Hint – The Eagle Board of Review

Among other topics, the members of the Eagle Board of Review will ask you about your Eagle Project. This is the final judgment on whether your overall project (the plan, how it was carried out, and the final report) meets the BSA requirements. While your plan was approved in advance of beginning any work, how you worked that plan and your final write-up are evaluated here.

The Board members will likely ask you to describe what you did and why you chose that project. They will want to know how it went, and in particular how the actual work compared to your original plan; what went right, what went wrong. They will probably ask how you handled any changes in plan; any shortage in materials, supplies, and tools; and any worker issues. While you are not required to accomplish every objective of the original plan, you should be prepared to discuss why it was not possible to meet all of your goals. Beware: Poor planning is not a very good excuse, however.

Since the real purpose of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project is for you "to demonstrate leadership of others", they will certainly want to discuss this area in some detail.

Getting Printouts of this Guide or Project Workbook

This Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Planning Guide is one continuous file (approx. 12 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 Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* (BSA #512-927), download it from the official BSA National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) website. It is also available from Scouting Forms from the National Council - http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-927.pdf. Both forms are the same PDF "savable form-fill" of the 2009 printing of the workbook.

The BSA *Guide to Safe Scouting* is available at http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34416.pdf.

While not required as part of your Eagle project plan or final report, you will son need the Eagle Scout Rank Application, so you may want to download a copy of it while you are at the BSA forms website. The Adobe Acrobat Reader PDF "savable form-fill" version of the 2009 printing of the Eagle Scout Rank Application, (BSA 512-728) is at Scouting Forms from the National Council http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-728_web.pdf.

Disclaimer

This is an unofficial guide, which should help you in producing a complete, well-planned project. Some elements stated here might exceed the minimum BSA requirement. Think of this as the guide to an "A+" project. If you are only interested getting by with the minimum (a "C-" project), then disregard anything stated here which is not specifically listed in the official *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook*.

There are two BSA publications, which present all of the official Eagle Project requirements and limitations: the BSA *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook* (BSA #512-927), and the BSA *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* (#33088). Other BSA publications may repeat some of this information, but do not offer anything additional. The final approving authority on your project is your unit and your district/council Advancement Committee, but they must work within the requirements of these two BSA documents.

I hope this guide proves of value to you. However, if you have any questions concerning the approval of your project, please seek the approval of your troop leaders and/or district committee before proceeding.

NEW -- Top Eagle Service Project Award Competition (Optional)

The National Eagle Scout Association (NESA) has just introduced a new award -- the Glenn A. and Melinda W. Adams National Eagle Scout Service Project of the Year Award -- to recognize a Scout for his Eagle Scout service project. This is a completely <u>optional award</u> which any Eagle Scout may apply to win in a national competition. This award does not have any bearing on earning the Eagle rank.

The details are at the NESA website (www.nesa.org; follow the *Awards* link to the *Adams Award Nomination Form [www.nesa.org/PDF/542-026.pdf]*) but in summary: Any Scout may submit his completed project to his council; each council will select one project to go forward to the region; each region will select one project from their council winners and submit it to national. One overall National Top Eagle Service Project annual winner will be selected from the regional submissions. There are monetary awards for the top region and national winners.

Check out the NESA website and see if you think you would like to go for this new award. If you used my guide to help plan and carryout your project and then submitted it to your council, I'd love to hear from you.

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. I make revisions based on your comments and questions, so help me help other Scouts with your input.

Troop Leader Resources

I have posted two additional web pages to help the adults as they guide the Life Scouts through the Eagle Project experience. These are specifically for the adults, since everything for the boys is in this project-planning guide. Although the Scouts may find the information interesting, they do not even need to go to those sites in order to prepare for their projects.

This is an extra resource for troop leaders to explain the Eagle rank requirements and process to their Scouts and the Scout's parents. This [link](#) takes you to an Eagle Candidate Seminar overview web page. There is also an associated PowerPoint presentation, which may be adapted for your unit's use.

I have finally posted my long-promised guide to the Eagle Project for parents, troop leaders, and the benefiting organization to help them help the Eagle candidate with his project: [Guide to the Eagle Scout Project for Adult Leaders and Benefiting Organization Representatives](#).