

SCOUTS-L

**PROFESSIONAL
SCOUTERS**

Date: Sun, 4 Jun 1995 08:38:57 -0400 (EDT)
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@capaccess.org>
Subject: "We", "Them" and "Us"

Jim Miller, Sr.,

With regard to your critique of Hank Heine's posting, I think you may be overreacting a bit and assuming too much. Many times you are going to hear "we" and "them" from volunteers on the front line who are frustrated by changes that are perceived as harmful to how the program is being delivered to the Scouts. "Them" can be National, just as easily it can be professionals, and likewise it can be National, Regional, Council or District volunteer leaders who have suggested changes. Most of us who serve have learned to let it roll off our backs and understand that its just simply frustration or irritation and then we get to the source to try and make things work better. If you want to look at it in a positive light, its a signal that tells you when something isn't selling in Peoria so that you know what's going to fly and what's not. Of course folks can just clam up and then you won't know why an excellent volunteer simply quit one day and then another.

Probably the worst case of the "we-them" business started at Schiff in professional development courses where new District Executives were taught that they were responsible when volunteers failed through the use of training material that emphasized a "we-them" theme. I am happy to say, however, that in recent years that I have seen much better attitudes all around.

In my Scouting career spanning several Councils, I have seen this ugly business perpetuated from time to time in the professional ranks when a group of professionals is unhappy with the independent attitudes of volunteers especially in determining priorities - funding v. program. And just as often I've seen volunteers use the same approach when they were frustrated by changes they didn't feel they were a part of making. And as to the latter, I've been on the receiving end as a volunteer when unit leaders were unhappy with the direction of the District Committee or the Commissioner's staff.

Anytime you see this crop up its mostly a matter of failed communication and serves only to be divisive. My point here is to remind you that the "we-them" business crops up frequently and is no respecter of position or status. And people who are dedicated are going to have strong opinions, some are going to be vocal. If these people didn't have strong beliefs, they probably wouldn't be staying around giving dedicated service. The trick is how WE use the feedback so that WE all can get together on serving

the Scouts. WE can learn to resist the temptation to rail at the symptom (criticism of how the message is delivered) and then WE can use the information to strengthen how WE deliver the program, whether its at the National level or the Unit level.

My hat is off to Michael Holmes for seeking that feedback on an issue that cropped up while he was at a National meeting allowing all of US to throw in some thoughts so that WE have a chance to have input into a proposed change.

And lest you think I am trying to perpetuate the "we-them" business, let me say that I am extremely happy with the relations I've had with National. The folks there have gone out of their way more than once to be helpful on a project that I'm working on. Similarly, we've been blessed with some great DEs on the local level, whose deep committment and long hours for the Scouts speaks volumes about the team effort they are part of.

**Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman
Prof. Beaver, Nat. Capital Area Council, BSA mfbowman@CAPACCESS.ORG**

Date: Tue, 6 Jun 1995 02:03:49 -0400 (EDT)
From: "Michael F. Bowman" <mfbowman@capaccess.org>
Subject: Re: We, Them and Us
To: Michael Holmes <MHolmes@mail.coretech.com>

Michael,

I only hope that my own post wasn't too negatively critical. As with you I love the program and believe in it deeply. I disagree with registration before AOL, because I think that it won't solve the problem. My hope was to turn the issue to what we could do to accept the challenge. I'm sorry to see that not many picked up on it.

The tenor of comments on the list is a bit different now than when I was on it before and I would agree with you that we have a few more that seem to delight in potshots. But even there, I try to see this as frustration, lack of knowledge, etc., which helps me to focus back home on preventing the same in our own leaders. And perhaps it helps to have a place to vent. At least folks are talking and not walking. Not much of a silver-lining, but it helps to see it that way for me.

I've gotten some irritating private e-mail this time around, where it is clear that the writer didn't read or understand what I said, which of course is bothersome. I try to write back an explanatory note anyway. At the same time I've gotten more encouraging e-mails too. It is a different group.

Seems like its all the more important for experienced and balanced people like you to stay on and help encourage understanding. I'd sure hate to lose you from the group. Its a breath of fresh air whenever I read a post from a dedicated Scouter who is trying to make the program better.

All I can say is lets keep trying to help folks see how they can run a better program that will help stem the terrible loses we currently see.

Thanks for responding and for your efforts.

Speaking only for myself in the Scouting Spirit, Michael F. Bowman
Prof. Beaver, Nat. Capital Area Council, BSA mfbowman@CAPACCESS.ORG

From <@pucc.PRINCETON.EDU:owner-scouts-l@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU> Fri Jan 24 10:02:10 1997
Return-Path: <@pucc.PRINCETON.EDU:owner-scouts-l@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>

Received: from dns.capaccess.org (root@dns.CapAccess.org [207.91.115.4])
by cap1.CapAccess.org (8.6.12/8.6.10) with ESMTP id KAA03441; Fri, 24
Jan 1997 10:02:10 -0500

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Received: from PUCC.PRINCETON.EDU by pucc.PRINCETON.EDU (IBM VM
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with BSMTP id 8160; Fri, 24 Jan 97 09:55:55 EST

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TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (LMail V1.2a/1.8a) with BSMTP id 5256; Fri,
24 Jan 1997 08:43:18 -0600

Received: from TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU by TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (LISTSERV
release 1.8b)
with NJE id 4095 for SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU; Fri, 24 Jan
1997
08:42:35 -0600

Received: from TCUBVM (NJE origin SMTP@TCUBVM) by
TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU (LMail
V1.2a/1.8a) with BSMTP id 4094; Fri, 24 Jan 1997 03:36:28 -0600

Received: from ALPHA.IS.TCU.EDU by tcubvm.is.tcu.edu (IBM VM SMTP
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TCP; Fri, 24 Jan 97 03:36:23 CST

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(PMDF
V5.0-5 #20456) id <01IEKS0VF7SW000E9Z@ALPHA.IS.TCU.EDU> for
SCOUTS-L@ALPHA.IS.TCU.EDU; Fri, 24 Jan 1997 03:35:25 -0600 (CST)

Received: from rodger (port030.vta.fishnet.net [205.216.133.179]) by
big.fishnet.net (8.7.5/8.6.9) with SMTP id BAA31058; Fri, 24 Jan
1997
01:44:18 -0800

X-Sender: rodger@fishnet.net
MIME-version: 1.0
X-Mailer: Windows Eudora Pro Version 2.2 (32)
Content-type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
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Message-ID: <2.2.32.19970124093648.014b77b4@fishnet.net>
Date: Fri, 24 Jan 1997 01:36:48 -0800
Reply-To: Rodger Morris <rodger@FISHNET.NET>
Sender: Scouts-L Youth Group List <Scouts-L@tcu.edu>

From: Rodger Morris <rodger@FISHNET.NET>
Subject: A WOSM View of BSA's Professional Scouters (Long)
X-To: SCOUTS-L@TCU.EDU
X-cc: Sarah Jones <sacubs@DOVE.NET.AU>
To: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>
Status: RO
X-Status:

At 07:08 AM 1/24/97 +1030, Sarah Jones wrote:

...

>Our District Commisioners are also no paid postions. In fact, all
>commisioners here in Australia are volunteer postions and no one gets
paid
>for these things. Even the Cheif commisioner for each state (the one who is
>in charge so to speak) isnt even paid and even national postions of
>Australia are also voluntry.

...

All Commissioners in the Boy Scouts of America are volunteers. So are all positions on unit, district, council, area, region and national committees. Unit leaders are volunteers. The BSA has roughly 3,7 million youth members, 1.5 million volunteer Scouters and 4000 professional Scouters at any given time. Those figures are some years old and are from memory, so they will actually be a bit different here and now.

All professionals are paired with two volunteer Scouters to form a "Key Three". The two volunteers are a Commissioner and a committee President. The Commissioner handles the "Operations" side of the house. The President handles the "Logistics Support" side of the house, and the professional serves as an advisor and "gofer" for the two volunteers.

The teamwork aspect of the "Key Three" is emphasized to the point that the BSA has "Key Three" training courses at the Philmont Training Center in New Mexico, where "Key Three" teams may go to spend an uninterrupted week getting to know each other, learn their respective jobs, and learn how to work as a team in the year to come.

Examples:

EXAMPLE 1		EXAMPLE 2
District Commissioner		Council Commissioner
District Chairman		Council President
District Executive		Council Executive

...

- >This bit may get me flamed, but I think that not having paid staff could
 - >actually be a bonus given the way some of the BSA people have spoken about
 - >the Paid Scouters in the USA. I believe that you get the best out of someone
 - >if they are there because they truly want to be there and are doing it
 - >voluntarily like everyone below them. This gives them in my mind a bit more
 - >real human face value to them and prevents the us vs them attitude.
- Again,
- >something I have picked up from some of the BSA leaders on the list and the
 - >way they have talked/spoken about the paid people in their councils.
 - >

I have walked both sides of the volunteer/professional Scouting trail in the BSA. Ultimately, I decided that I enjoyed Scouting, the hobby, too much to subordinate it to or to forsake it for Scouting, the profession. There are two sayings in common use amongst the BSA Scouting professional corps of which you should be aware:

"You work the first forty hours per week because you are paid to and you work the next forty hours of that week because you are a volunteer who loves and believes in Scouting."

and

"Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust
What the volunteers don't do,
The professional must."

Both are true statements.

- >Although, I would like it even better if we were paid to do scouting, like
- >most *voluntary* organizations, I think a person must really believe in it
- >to make it a great program that each year kids want to join and stay

>involved in.

>

>

I believe that your concerns are largely answered by the two sayings I have quoted. In actual fact, a professional Scouter averages 55-60 hours per week in the normal run of things, and about 90-100 hours per week whilst he or she is helping to staff long-term Scouting events.

Here in California, the de facto minimum wage paid to a high school kid who flips hamburgers at McDonald's is about US\$5.50/hour. An entry-level member of the BSA professional corps earns about US\$24,000/year. Hourly employees in the state of California must be paid time-and-a-half for work over 40 hours per week, double-time for work on Sundays, and triple-time for work on national holidays.

If one assumes:

- 1) The low figure of 55 hours per week, excluding weekends
- 2) An absurdly low figure of 8 hours per day for 2 weekends per month
- 3) That the BSA professional never works on national holidays
- 4) That the BSA professional never works longterm Scouting events

(that loud snickering noise you hear in the background is all the BSA professionals who lurk on SCOUTS-L trying to keep from laughing uproariously)

At US\$5.50/hour, this works out to:

$$(\$5.50 \times 40 \times 52) + (\$7.75 \times 15 \times 52) + (\$11.00 \times 8 \times 2 \times 12) + (\$16.50 \times 8 \times 2 \times 12) =$$

$$\$11,440.00 + \$6,045.00 + \$2,112.00 + \$3,186.00 =$$

$$\Rightarrow \$22,783.00/\text{annum}$$

Thus, on an hourly basis, an entry-level member of the BSA professional

corps earns roughly what he would if he worked an equivalent number of hours per week at an unskilled, entry-level job. The figures are somewhat worse than are indicated here, because most BSA professionals do spend one or more weeks per year staffing at BSA summer camps and suchlike.

Additionally, all members of the BSA professional corps must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university and undergo an intensive series of professional development seminars, in addition to volunteer courses such as the Wood Badge, et. al. Volunteer Scouting experience is preferred, and the proportion of former Scouts and Scouters in the BSA's corps of professional Scouters is quite high, with a representation by Eagle Scouts all out of proportion to their numbers in the general population.

The BSA professional initially (I think) accrues 2 weeks of vacation per annum. He or she may be dismissed at will upon two weeks notice, regardless of seniority in the professional corps. The medical benefits are substandard when compared with those of other corporations with revenues in excess of US\$100,000,000 per annum.

(Correct me if I am in error, but I believe 4 to 6 weeks vacation per year is the norm in Australia. At least, this is what Hadyn "Skip" McComas, a summer camp International Scouter from New South Wales told me a few years ago.)

Thus, one can readily see that the men and women who enter into the professional service of the BSA do so in spite of the lousy hours, working conditions and pay, compared to those they would enjoy if they were to begin a career in private industry. Indeed, we lose a great many of them to private industry when they "burn out" because of the high sustained operational tempo and occupational stressors attendant to professional Scouting.

It has been ever thus, and so shall it ever be.

If you wish to obtain an evenhanded evaluation of the role and value of the BSA's professional corps in fostering Scouting and its fitness to be part of Scouting as a whole, I suggest that you read, "250 Million Scouts" by Lazlo Nagy, the former "Chief Executive of the World Organization of the

Scouting Movement."

The ISBN for this book is ISBN 0-85013-153-7, published by Dartnell. I have the 1985 printing.

Lazlo Nagy says in part:

pages 116-117

"In countries spared by fighting or distant from war zones, Scouting had continued to develop and in the United States it experienced a great leap forward. At the end of World War II, more than half the world Scout population was to be found in that country which developed its own original methods while remaining faithful to the guidelines laid down by B.P.

It had nothing to do with the two world wars or with their relative isolation that prompted the Americans to 'naturalize' British Scouting and transform it into a typically American product. From the outset in 1910, the Boy Scouts of America followed their own particular path and were the first in the world to demonstrate that a youth movement born overseas, rooted in other traditions and subject to other requirements, could still be transplanted without losing or betraying its original spirit, ideas and principles. It was no easy task and needed a man of the moment to inspire, motivate and coordinate the process of transplantation. That man was James E. West, a lawyer by profession before becoming Chief Scout Executive for 32 years and honorary Chief Scout of the Boy Scouts of America for five more years. The great American philosopher Emerson declared that 'an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man'. The Boy Scouts of America (B.S.A.) are without any doubt the lengthened shadow of James E. West. The B.S.A. was celebrating its 75th Anniversary in 1985, and while Scouting across the Atlantic has certainly evolved considerably during this period, its unique qualities have undergone little basic change."

pages 118-119

"From the outset, the American Movement was a voluntary one organized at all levels by unpaid Scouters. There was one important proviso: Volunteers

are often extremely busy men and a special corps of professionals was established to enable them to carry out their Scouting tasks. The latter are paid specialists in different sectors. Contrary to the 'permanent' staff in European Associations who in fact do not stay on permanently since most of them are seconded teachers or other civil servants, the specialists make their career as professional Scouts. They are systematically trained to perform their varied and often delicate duties with great competence and professional conscience. In the USA, to be a professional Scouter is a fulltime career like being a dentist, electrician or teacher.

When the B.S.A. delegates reappeared in Europe in 1945 there were already

1500 professionals in the service of American Scouting. Today, there are more than 4,000. The ideal proportion is said to be one professional for every one thousand boys, all of whom are members of different units directed solely by volunteers. Just as it was 78 years ago, the volunteer spirit is still one of the foundation stones of Scouting.

Worth noting is the fact that the Americans always and still are in agreement with B.P., who once said jokingly that the Scout age was anywhere from eight to eighty. Which does not mean that the old should be

kept in responsible positions which bring them into direct contact with the young. However, in a movement as global as Scouting, there is a place for all men of goodwill, and for the vast range of qualifications and experience they offer there is room for people of all backgrounds, professions, social and material levels. This total integration under the slogan 'the right man in the right place' spared American Scouting from splitting into heteroclitic groups of the sentimental 'veteran' variety which, albeit unintentionally, tend to take the proverbial road to hell paved with good intentions.

This book is no place to analyse or go into detail about all the aspects of American Scouting, the modifications introduced into the formulation of the

Law and Oath, or the changes in uniform, system and structure. American Scouting still sticks to its grass roots, but is more pragmatic, more practical and more oriented toward competence than European Scouting which

is more intellectual and places greater emphasis on education than training.

The European approach is to do the right things. The American is to do

things right. However, the two approaches are not contradictory and the interacting influence of these two schools of Scouting thought have been, and still are, a mutually ennobling and enriching experience. This subject will be raised later.

One last word on the amazing Scouting Movement in the USA which was only discovered by others after World War II and is further proof of the constant search for improvement, if not perfection. Since 1910 the American Movement has used modern management techniques including the hiring of outside independent consultants, often at high cost, to identify the weaknesses and propose remedies."

One should note at this juncture that Lazlo Nagy was hired to do just such a survey by the Ford Foundation (and at the urging of the BSA) for WOSM, and was then asked to become the professional Scouter in charge of implementing the action plan he had formulated.

I trust that this posting sheds some light on the subject of how the BSA professional staff fits into Scouting in the BSA.

Yours in Scouting,

Rodger
Rodger Morris <rodger@fishnet.net>
Scoutmaster, Troop 852 Wood Badge 416-18
Ventura County Council at Philmont, 1973
Camarillo, California, USA "I used to be a Beaver..."