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Succession Planning

Succession planning helps ensure that you can fill future openings in Service Unit team positions. When you plan for succession, you identify and develop volunteers so they are prepared to assume Service Unit roles. Service Unit teams thrive when position candidates bring diverse experiences and are committed to the Service Unit.

Tips and tricks to succeed:

- Look beyond current troop volunteers; consider former volunteers, lifetime members, parents, and community members.
- Speak with enthusiasm about volunteering with the service unit. Potential volunteers are always listening.
- Always be on the look-out to identify the strengths of the adults in your community. Ask them to join a position that is a natural extension of their skills.
- Prioritize the development of new service unit leadership over service unit traditions. It can be hard to let a new volunteer take on a role or plan an event that has been traditionally carried out in a specific way. Keep in mind that your role is to coach volunteers when they take on new opportunities. Allow them to develop their own style and to try new things.

Habits to avoid:

- Avoid negative talk about Girl Scouts or the Service Unit. Volunteers are always listening.
- Avoid waiting to ask a volunteer to take on more responsibilities until the last minute.
- Avoid using a narrow vision of what leadership or events look like in your service unit. Encourage a spirit of risk-taking and innovation when asking new volunteers to tackle service unit project.

Strategies for succession:

- Consider creating “assistant” or “shadow” positions to work alongside current team volunteers and provide support as needed with the possibility of assuming the leadership role in the coming year.
- Send a survey to leaders asking them to nominate a fellow volunteer for a role.
- Work with your community development manager to identify potential team members.
- Partner with the volunteer stepping down to coach a fellow volunteer toward stepping into the role.
- Encourage volunteers to accept small service unit roles and then coach them toward positions of higher responsibility.
- Have fun! Volunteers will be drawn to a team that is lighthearted.