

A GUIDE TO SCOUTS CANADA'S HONOURS AND AWARDS PROGRAM

FORMAL RECOGNITION

This document outlines the process for nominating someone for a Scouts Canada honour or award. People appreciate being recognized for the work they do and it is important that youth and adults in Scouting have the opportunity to not only receive such recognition, but also to be able to make the initial application for people they admire for their commitment, skills, actions, perseverance or gallantry. Honours and awards provide a formal method of recognizing the special efforts of Scouts Canada members and demonstrate to recipients that their actions have contributed significantly to Scouts Canada's Mission. See "Scouts Canada's Honours & Awards – An Overview" on our web site for a description of the awards available within our Honours & Awards program. Application forms are also available on our web site.

The Nomination Process

The process involves the following steps:

1. You observe a person performing a Scouting role or task in a noteworthy manner that deserves recognition.
2. You nominate the person for an honour or award by completing an application form and forwarding it to your council's Honours & Awards Committee through your local Council Office. NOTE: Your direct input is now completed.
3. Your Council Honours & Awards Committee can approve an award up to the level of the Bar to the Medal of Merit. Your Committee will send a recommendation for a higher award to the National Honours & Awards Committee clearly indicating the level of award they are applying for. The Council Committee may also recommend a more appropriate form of recognition to the local Council.
4. The National Honours & Awards Committee reviews the recommendation and either recommends the presentation of a nationally administered award or recommends a different level of award.
5. After the Chief Commissioner approves the honour or award, it is presented to the candidate at an appropriate Scouting event.

If your nomination is turned down, you probably did not provide enough information. Get more details about your candidate's contributions and resubmit the application.

Who can earn Honours and Awards?

Any Scouts Canada member who demonstrates outstanding courage, meritorious conduct or extra special service to the organization is a candidate.

The nominee's actions need to involve more than routine performance of normal duties. Many of Scouts Canada's volunteers extend their work for the organization far beyond the boundaries of their job descriptions. In each case, all it takes is for someone to notice and make the appropriate application.

Your nomination needs to show clearly how the candidate has exhibited real effort, application and dedication. If fortitude and courage form the basis of the nomination, the nominee's actions and perseverance need to be exemplary. Successful candidates have coped with physical or mental suffering with stoicism and others have faced grave danger with courageous action.

Make your application even if you are not sure that it is appropriate. The committees at both levels will make their decisions and it would be a shame if a deserving candidate does not get an award because nobody took the proper steps.

Examples of action worthy of recognition

How do you decide if a Scouter's or youth's actions are worthy of recognition? It's really quite easy.

Look at Michael's activities in his first Scouting year as a Pack Akela:

- Helped eight Cubs reach Six Star level.
- Ran seven weekend camps for his pack (average attendance was 19).
- Hiked three 5 km sections of a local trail.
- Encouraged his pack to field 22 Kars in the district Kub Kar Derby. (He was also official gatekeeper for the ramp).
- Completed Basic Woodbadge training.
- Attended a Scouter's Club 2 hour seminar on child abuse.
- Attended a Scouter's Club 8-hour workshop on pack program tips.
- Attended an 8-hour Scouting conference.

That's an impressive start to anyone's Scouting career! If that fact is not acknowledged immediately, Michael's second year may not be so impressive. He may not even be around for a third year. Look at the accomplishments and recognize that even some experienced Scouters don't exhibit this kind of commitment.

Talking of experienced Scouters, look at Maria's recent performance. In her fourth year as a troop Scouter her activities included:

- Helping five Scouts earn their Chief Scout Award. This troop consistently produces CSA recipient every year.
- Ran eight weekend camps for her troop of 17 Scouts. The troop plan called for one weekend outdoor activity every six weeks year round.
- Hiked five 8 km sections of a local trail.
- Canoed 65km down a local river with 12 Scouts in six days last August. The troop has a one-week camp or trip every summer.
- Participated in the district Outdoor Survival Skills Contest.
- Ran a one-hour camp cooking session in the Scouter's Club workshop. (Maria has done this before).
- Attended a regional conference.
- Chaired the district Apple Day Committee.
- Completed her Advanced Woodbadge training.

Was it a banner year for Maria? No, it was one of her fairly typical years. Don't make the mistake of taking her for granted or allowing her to burn out. Make sure her work and dedication is publicly recognized.

How about youth members? Look at Kyle's actions. During Thanksgiving dinner, Kyle's uncle started to choke. Others at the table tried to help. They patted his back and gave him water. Nothing worked and panic took hold while the uncle struggled for breath. Calmly Kyle applied the Heimlich maneuver on his uncle and a piece of food popped out. The incident lasted less than three minutes but without Kyle's able demonstration of a skill he had learnt at Scouts it could have ended in tragedy. To avoid embarrassing his uncle, Kyle didn't mention the incident outside the family, you heard about it from his uncle a month later.

Is Kyle worthy of recognition? Absolutely – submit an application right away; better a little late than not at all.

What about the people who work behind the scenes to make sure everything is organized and all the security matters are taken care of? Meeka is a good example.

For seven years she has served on her local Group Committee: three years as secretary and four as chairperson. During this time she has:

- Interviewed 23 adults for Scouting roles in the group and ensured that the screening process was properly completed for all of them.
- Recruited 19 new section Scouters for the four sections in the group.
- Negotiated with the group sponsor for better facilities for section and committee meetings.
- Organized five annual parents' banquets (involving more than 150 people each time).
- Organized an annual food drive for the local food bank collecting more than 2000 kg of food each year.
- Visited 37 of the weekend camps to make sure everyone was OK and to learn more about section programs.
- Let the troop use her backyard to practice winter camping for first timers (who were welcome to take shelter in her family room if the outdoors got too cold).
- Completed a group committee training course.
- Served as a trainer on three group committee courses.
- Served as a resource person on a Woodbadge Advanced course.

Who can deny the incredible services of Michael, Maria and Meeka and the calm courage of Kyle? Consider their accomplishments and how poor Scouting would be without their skills, dedication, thoughtfulness and perseverance. Make sure you recognize their efforts.

THE BENEFITS OF HONOURS & AWARDS

What's in it for everyone?

Who benefits from Honours and Awards? Everyone does.

It starts with the honoured person but it also includes youth members who model themselves on this individual. It extends to those who prepare the nomination, parents who are reassured that their children are in capable hands, group committee members who can show that their team consists of winners, sponsors who see some returns on their investments, and communities enjoying the benefits of volunteers making positive contributions.

Appropriate recognition helps:

- *Keep good Scouters* and will also help retain the youth, parents and sponsors who want to be associated with a quality program and those who deliver it.
- *Reinforce excellent behaviour standards* by raising expectations of even better future performance. Not only will the recipient's actions improve, but also those working closely with the individual.
- *Improve the program* by demonstrating how to excel in Scouting.
- *Identify resources.* By regularly identifying potential award recipients you will notice particularly gifted and innovative people. With good guidance, they can help others develop skills and improve the resource pool.
- *Gain positive publicity.* This is not only true for the group, but for Scouting in general. Use local newspapers and/or local newsletters. Sometimes a letter to an employer can make a difference for the recipient.

The benefits for the honoured person are more obvious, they include:

- *Positive feedback.* Recipients are assured that their efforts are correct and contribute to the successful achievement of Scouting's Mission. Without that feedback at frequent intervals, good people tend to look elsewhere for more rewarding challenges.
- *Prestige and status among peers.* Everyone needs and seeks recognition from their peers and an award for good service confirms that recognition and respect.
- *Revitalization.* Experienced Scouters who carry out their duties confidently year after year are often overlooked because they perform their tasks in a quiet unassuming way. Don't take them for granted. Make sure you recognize their contributions and perseverance to help them recharge their Scouting batteries.
- *Improved self-esteem.* Every pat on the back enhances the recipient's self respect. To deny recognition could well mean losing a good Scouter.

By honouring and awarding outstanding service, everyone gets something valuable. Take advantage of all your benefits and resources.

NOMINATING A CANDIDATE FOR AN HONOUR OR AWARD

What do you do?

Anyone can nominate a person for an honour or award. You can recommend a candidate if you feel the person has demonstrated outstanding courage or yielded some extraordinary service to Scouting.

Your role in the nomination process involves four steps:

1. *Decide the appropriate award to apply for.* Consult your B.P. & P or Scouts Canada's Honours & Awards – An Overview for detailed information.
2. *Get a printout of your candidate's Scouting history.* This needs to be attached to the application form. Your group registrar or your local Council Office will have access to this information. The records show:
 - key positions held
 - years of service
 - training completed
 - previous awards earned
3. *Collect details of your candidate's special actions.* Talk to others who know the candidate's Scouting activities, including:
 - section leadership team members
 - section or group youth members
 - Scouter's Club members
 - training course colleagues & trainers
 - family members
 - friends and neighbours
 - in the case of medals for meritorious conduct, gallantry or fortitude speak to witnesses, medical personnel, emergency service personnel involved in the action or other knowledgeable individuals
4. *Complete the application paperwork.* Don't be intimidated by the application form. Start with notes to answer a few basic questions
 - what special things did the candidate do?
 - when and where were they done?
 - was anyone else involved?
 - what makes the service or action special?
 - how did it affect Scouting's Mission?

Concentrate on one activity at a time. Ask the same question about each action to build up a clear picture of the person's contribution over time or the action to be awarded.

Ask someone else to help you work on the nomination; teamwork helps in planning and creates a commitment to finish the nomination process.

Why does your candidate deserve recognition? Focus on collecting and presenting information that clearly answers this question. The more information you gather, the easier you make it for the Honours & Awards Committees to approve your nomination.

Make sure you keep copies of all your notes. If you have computer access, keep an electronic file. This will help you complete the next application and give you some background to work from if anyone else asks for your help to complete their own nomination.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Accentuate the Positive

Every deserving candidate also has some flaws. You may easily find reasons **not** to nominate someone – but are they good reasons?

The wrong word at the wrong time can stop the recognition process before it starts. Below are some phrases to avoid – do they sound familiar?

- “She’s not as good as her predecessor”.
- “He’s a fantastic Scouter, but he dresses like a slob”.
- “She got an award last year”.
- “If we give out too many awards they will lose their value”.
- “He doesn’t do it for recognition”.
- “I don’t have time to do all that paperwork”.
- “I don’t know the details”.
- “Maybe the committee will reject the nomination”.
- “Nobody gave me an award for doing that”.
- “That’s his job. He’s supposed to do it”.
- “If he gets an award, everyone else will expect one too”.
- “It’s not worth all the bother”.
- “It’ll upset the other members of the team”.
- “I don’t know where to start”.

None of these comments are valid reasons for failing to nominate a deserving person for an award. Don’t be deterred by negative statements – even if you hear them from your candidate.

Don’t worry about spelling and grammar in your application. Just make sure the details are accurate, clear and complete.

Don’t specify the honour or award your candidate should receive, your Council H & A Committee will decide on that detail. If you complete your part correctly, the reviewing committee will know what level of recognition to recommend.

Don’t let negative comments deter you. If you know a deserving member, start the nomination process right now!!

AVOIDING SOME COMMON ERRORS

Get it Right the First Time

Below are some common errors made in the nomination process.

1. *Waiting until the person is leaving before making the nomination.* Honours & Awards are not farewell gifts. They are recognitions made on an ongoing basis during the Scouter’s volunteer service. In the case of fortitude, meritorious conduct or gallantry they need to be made as soon after the event as possible.
2. *Inadequately describing the candidate’s actions.* Give as much information as possible. The Honours & Awards Committees depend on your descriptions to guide them in their decisions.
3. *Over-emphasizing recent performance.* The latest significant contributions of your candidate may be very important but don’t forget the past. The Committees need an overall picture of outstanding service.
4. *Relying on emotions.* Provide specific details. Don’t nominate someone for being a nice person or friend. Describe accomplishments and specific successes objectively.
5. *Insufficiently documenting performance or action.* Don’t just repeat details listed in your candidate’s Scouting record. Describe the impact the person had within his or her sphere of influence.
6. *Running out of time.* Don’t wait until the month before your annual recognition ceremony to submit a nomination. Give each committee plenty of time to evaluate the information. Rushing them is not helpful to your candidate.
7. *Lacking a plan for alternative recognition.* Don’t depend entirely on formal honours and awards to recognize your candidate. Express your appreciation in other ways while you wait for the committee to process your nomination. How many different ways can you say “Thank You”?

GATHERING RELEVANT INFORMATION

Getting all the Facts

When collecting information, ensure that all details demonstrate why your candidate deserves recognition.

Who is your candidate's senior Scouter? Find out and ask that person to describe the nominee's past and present assignments and accomplishments. Use this description as your framework to add facts about special activities the candidate has performed. Speak to other Scouting colleagues and find out which section, committee or events your candidate worked hard on.

Invite friends, family and neighbours to describe the person's behind-the-scenes Scouting activities. These might include hours spent sorting and repairing equipment, negotiating and shopping for special deals on new gear, or recruiting resource people for section events.

Make this type of information gathering part of your Scouting routine. You'll soon identify those people who deserve special recognition. Keep a record of events as they occur. Collect stories; write a log to describe who contributes to local Scouting successes. Review your notes periodically to make sure you recognize those who make special efforts.

Make a list of all the activities and efforts a replacement would need to accomplish to replace your candidate.

Most people enjoy surprises so don't tell your nominee that you are applying for a special recognition just in case the committees don't agree with your assessment. The only exception is if secrecy keeps you from gathering important details to back up your application. In this case, even if the award is not approved, the nominee will appreciate your support and efforts. A word of warning; judge your candidates individually. Can they handle disappointment? Recognition is supposed to please recipients, not upset them.

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

Doing the Paperwork

No committee will consider your nomination without a fully completed application form.

A completed form ensures that you have supplied all the required information. It also helps your council maintain a complete record of all applications.

Don't worry. The form is really quite easy to understand and complete once you have done the preparatory work. Just follow the headings within the form and fill in the blanks. Use extra sheets if necessary for descriptions, training and other information.

Ask your nominating partner to check the completed form to make sure you have not misrepresented or omitted any important details.

Some Writing Tips

Don't write about yourself! Describe your candidate. The committee wants to read about his or her activities and efforts.

Avoid phrases like:

- "Janice has spent countless hours..." Instead, estimate those hours for a much more dramatic demonstration.
- "It's difficult for me to describe Janice's contribution..." Without your description, it's impossible for the Honours & Awards Committees to assess her contribution.

Start with action verbs and nouns. These help capture the facts accurately. Leave adjectives and adverbs until the end so the description is not lost to sentimentality.

Feel free to go to your Council Office or Admin Centre for help if you get stuck or write to us at irse@scouts.ca for further assistance.

PRESENTING AN HONOUR OR AWARD

Making the most of it

Presenting the honour or award to your candidate may be almost as important as the decoration itself. Make the ceremony dignified, but not solemn.

Share the event with the recipient's family, Scouting colleagues, youth members, employer and community. Make sure you inform the group's sponsor. Sometimes the recipient will prefer a private ceremony; respect such a wish without question.

Make sure a photographer takes pictures. Present a framed copy of the best photograph to your celebrity and consider making up a small album of the ceremony. Send a photo and a brief write-up to your local newspaper; the group sponsor may also want to run a story in their newsletter.

Most councils present a number of awards at special occasions such as group or council banquets or at a special group camping event. On such occasions your local Commissioner and/or Scout Executive may be available to make the presentations.

Make sure you mention that the award is not just for past accomplishments but also for those expected in the future. Take the opportunity to raise expectation levels, everyone will benefit from the challenge.

Awards are presented at all Scouting levels depending on the level of award. The Chief Scout (Governor General of Canada) may present the very highest honours and awards at a ceremony in Ottawa. Alternatively these may be presented at more suitable occasions.

ON TO THE NEXT ONE

Be Prepared

Don't stop at the completion of one nomination. Help someone else initiate an application for a deserving person. Scouting has many unsung heroes. Search for them, and then applaud their services.

Encourage new members by building on their small successes. Celebrate every accomplishment and be generous with positive reinforcement. Point out positive outcomes to help them improve their skills.

Identify people who demonstrate the characteristics and behaviour of an ideal Scout or Scouter. For

example, observe those who PLAN programs and those who deliver PLANNED program.

Find out if the nomination process is alive and well in your council. Conduct an honours & awards needs assessment. Run a workshop at your local Scouter's Club and explain to your colleagues how they can benefit by nominating others.

Make recognition a part of your planning process. Every event needs to include some form of appreciation for the organizers and participants. Keep a journal of the Scouters, sections, groups or teams that you work with. Record each Scouter's strengths, what does each individual do and what do they do best? How would it affect Scouting if they stopped doing it?

Are you a Pack, Troop, Company or Crew Scouter? Swift recognition and sincere appreciation for a job well done is an essential leadership skill. However, none of the badge schemes require that youth members demonstrate proficiency in identifying and rewarding meritorious behaviour. Start building appreciation awareness in our youth. At your next Sixer's Council, Court of Honour, company or crew executive meeting, focus on recognizing several worthy candidates for a "Thank You" or a "Job Well Done" at the next program event. By focusing on recognition, you will set a more positive meeting agenda than dealing with only discipline problems.

For more information on alternative recognition, read the following section on "Informal Recognition".



INFORMAL RECOGNITION

While waiting for your formal honours and awards application to be approved, feel free to show your appreciation to those who deserve it. Make this part of your monthly Scouting routine. Say "Thank You" for all jobs well done.

When you say "thank you", try to be original. Personalize your token of appreciation so the recipients feel that it is directed especially at them. Make it clear that an award is in fact an award. For example, if you send a Scouter trainer on a training course, the volunteer may consider it just more work unless you point out that only the best trainers are invited to these events.

Express your appreciation in a meaningful and creative way. This is not difficult; you can say "thank you" in a hundred different ways.

Say thanks by being nice

- Smile
- Act pleasantly
- Be sincere and real, don't act the "Big Cheese"
- Greet people by name
- Shake hands (Scouts handshake)
- A pat on the back goes a long way
- Greet as appropriate for the time of day
- Take time to talk
- Take time to explain things fully
- Hold rap sessions
- Express your appreciation, let people hear you
- Say "I missed you"
- Treat to coffee or a soft drink
- Accept people for who they are
- Respect people's sensitivities
- Honour everyone's preferences
- Recognize personal needs and problems
- Accommodate personal needs and problems
- Respect people's wishes
- Don't waste time with unnecessary meetings
- Say "thank you" at every opportunity

Say thanks by putting it in writing

- Send a birthday card
- Send seasonal cards to volunteers' families
- Send newsworthy items to the media
- Post an honour roll in the lobby of your meeting hall
- Recommend those who ask to a prospective employer
- Write a thank you note
- Nominate those who deserve it for volunteer awards
- Maintain a good file of accomplishments
- Send impromptu fun cards and e-mails
- Send letters of appreciation to employers
- Plan a "recognition edition" of your Scouts newsletter
- Send a hand-written personal note
- Get peers and/or youth to sign the note
- Keep copies of letters on file

Say thanks by assigning meaningful duties

- Contact volunteers in emergency situations
- Keep challenging people
- Give additional responsibilities

- Let individuals grow on the job and out of the job
- Enlist those with the skills to train other volunteers
- Consult volunteers as appropriate
- Include people in team planning
- Ask for reports on activities and events
- Invite the team to executive meetings
- Provide opportunities for conferences and evaluation

Say thanks at special moments

- Make a special trip to greet recipients
- Escort them to the commissioner's meeting for a special "Thank You"
- Say "thank you" in front of youth, peers, parents, sponsors
- Hold an informal social events
- Have a public reception

Say thanks indirectly

- Send a note of thanks to team leaders
- Relay thanks from third persons
- Award a plaque to sponsors on volunteer's behalf
- Defend against hostile/negative comments
- Praise individuals to their friends and family
- Plant a tree in their honour in a public place

Say thanks any way you can imagine

- Give service bars promptly
- Plan annual ceremonial occasions
- Provide good training for assigned duties
- Spring a surprise of coffee and cake
- Instigate planned surprises
- Promote a "Scouter of the Month" program
- Awards special citations for special achievements
- Plan a theatre/movie party for volunteers and spouses
- Have a picnic
- Hold community-wide recognition events
- What other ideas can you try?
- Award a personalized inexpensive trophy or certificate.

With access to computer software it should not be difficult to come up with funny, personalized certificates on short notice.

How about an MVP (Most Valuable Player) Award? Perhaps a ribbon with WOW! on it, along with a card for a coffee and doughnut? Anyone would love a \$25 gift certificate for the local Scout Shop.

Include a thumbnail sketch or biography of your trainers in your training calendar.

Name sites at a camp for deserving leaders and make sure everyone attending the camp is aware why these sites were named as they were.

Send a letter to a trainee's employer explaining that the Scouter has completed a particular course that may have elements that can be applied at work.

Send flowers or cards to a recipient's spouse or perhaps a basket of fruit or unusual vegetables (with recipes).

Make up a book of BBQ or camping recipes. Collect the recipes from Scouters and have youth draw the pictures. Bind the book between two sheets of

colourful construction paper, punch holes in the layers of paper and use a matching ribbon to hold it all together.

Make a souvenir scrapbook in the same way. Include newspaper clippings, photos, drawings and comments from youth members, other Scouters and parents.

Informal awards don't have to be expensive; a potato peeler with some potato recipes may be just as effective when showing sincere appreciation as a bronze medallion.

Fill a pretty tin with home baked goodies, perhaps cookies shaped like beavers or wolf heads.

Alternative recognition can take many forms, the key ingredients are sincerity and frequency.

To that end **THANK YOU** for taking the time to read this; you are well on the way to recognizing the efforts of your Scouting colleagues.

RECOGNITION WORKSHOP

Here are some ideas to help you train more people in how to show recognition and how to recognize individual volunteers for the services and efforts.

GUIDELINES

If your group or council has been reticent in showing appreciation to deserving Scouters, you won't change that simply by giving everyone a copy of this paper – however that would make a great start.

Like any skill, learning how to show appreciation takes some training to achieve a higher level of competency and comfort. Why not offer a Recognition Workshop using the following guidelines? Schedule an evening at your Scouter's Club, or a couple of hours during a conference. For extra impact, organize a separate workshop.

A Recognition Workshop will only take a few hours. If you devote too little time to the subject, Scouters may decide to pass on it. Take it seriously, show how it will benefit everyone and demonstrate the advantages.

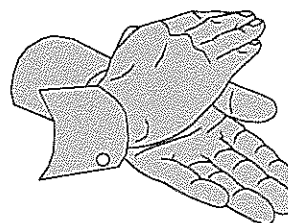
Recognition is one of the three R's of Scouting (the others being Recruiting and Retention).

Icebreaker Activity (15 minutes)

Randomly divide participants into pairs. Each pair should be made up of two people who don't know each other well.

For five minutes, participants must try to discover anything about their partner that might be considered noteworthy. (Taking the time to attend the workshop is special.)

Each participant then introduces his/her partner to the rest of the group. They explain notable details and invite the other participants to applaud the partner's actions.



Exercise 1

(every 20 minutes during the workshop)

1. On their own scorecards, participants award themselves a point (from 0-10). They must base their choice on their individual level of participation during the previous 15 minutes of the workshop.
2. On the group scorecard, each individual awards other participants a point (from 0-10) based on the participation level of each person during the previous 15 minutes of the workshop.
3. After 90 minutes, participants should discuss the following questions:
 - What are the differences between individual scores and group scores?
 - How did participants change their behaviour when they saw the group scores?

Lecture

(15 minutes)

One of the most important duties you can perform as a Service Scouter is to nominate other Scouters for an honour or an award.

- Say "Thank You"
- Show appreciation
- Provide tangible recognition
- Tell nominees that their efforts have not gone unnoticed

Sounds a little one-sided, doesn't it? YOU do all the work involved with the nominating process (research, paperwork, interviewing), and THEY get all the glory (wild cheers, flowing banners, back-slapping). It doesn't seem quite fair, does it?

Maybe that is why the honours and awards nomination process is one of the least developed skills Service Scouters have mastered. But what's in it for you, the Service Scouter?

If you stop and analyze the outcomes of the recognition process, you will find that the givers are as blessed as those who receive.

What does immediate, sincere recognition bring?

1. You keep good Scouters (and Scouts, parents and sponsors who want to be associated with both a quality program and those who deliver it).
2. You reinforce high behaviour standards. You also raise the standard of future behaviour. Expect the performance level of all team members to increase.

3. The program improves. Awards can show leaders what Scouting needs in a more tangible way than mere section visits.
4. Resource identification. You'll find out who possesses special gifts for certain tasks. These people can help others develop skills. You can't wisely use your resources until you identify them.
5. Positive publicity. Both Scouting and the awards recipients benefit by publicity in local newspapers, community/sponsor newsletters, or letters to employers.

Does the paperwork scare you? Start by answering these simple questions:

- What special thing did the candidate do?
- When?
- Where?
- What makes it special?
- Was anyone else involved?
- How did it affect Scouting's Mission?

Concentrate on only one activity or event at a time.

Ask the same series of questions about each activity so you build up a clear picture over time.

Be specific. Provide concrete details. Paint a verbal picture.

Get someone else to work with you on the nomination.

Keep a copy of all your notes

Don't worry about spelling and grammar. Just be sure the details are clear.

Don't specify a particular honour or award. The Honours & Awards Committees will make this decision.

Don't announce the award before it's confirmed. If you tell the person that you have nominated him or her for an award, you open the door for a possible great disappointment if nothing comes of the application. Everyone loves surprises. Why not keep it secret until the honour or award is confirmed? On the other hand, a nomination by itself is a form of recognition.

Don't make honours and awards an afterthought. They should form a major part of your Service Scouter activities. Guide all leaders towards activities that will earn them awards. Make them all heroes.

Exercise 2 (20 minutes)

Give participants ten minutes to write an award nomination for themselves.

Without using the personal details they included in their drafts, discuss what difficulties they faced in trying to write the nominations. Explain how to overcome the difficulties.

Exercise 3 (20 minutes)

Give each person 10 minutes to start writing a nomination for another Scouter.

Without using the personal details they included in their drafts, discuss what difficulties they faced in trying to write the nominations. Explain how to overcome the difficulties. Encourage them to complete the nomination and to submit it at the earliest opportunity.

HONOURS AND AWARDS WORKSHOP

This is a step-by-step guide to assist you and Service Scouters to complete an Honours and Awards nomination. Note that you can download all the application forms from this web page. Make sure you print all the pages for each form you use. The forms are interactive but make sure you print them when you have finished inputting the required information – the Adobe software will not permit you to save the completed form as an electronic file.

The Process

1. *Identify the Scouter you think deserves recognition*

- Check with the council Honours & Awards Committee to see if an application has already been initiated.

2. *Gather information*

- Check with the Council Admin Centre for any prior recognition.
- Contact others who know, or have worked with, the nominee. Keep the application a secret from the nominee.
- Sit down in a quiet place and list all the information you have gathered.
- If the nominee has received a previous award, list only the service since that time.
- Do not include service to church, civic, governmental or other organization.
- Obtain a copy of the application form (it can be downloaded from the web site or you can get a copy at your Council Admin. Centre).

3. *Identify outstanding service*

- Using the information you have listed, focus on what makes this Scouter an award candidate.
- Consider each point of information separately.
- Remember the service must be outstanding.

4. *Describe points identified in step 3*

- Develop a statement clearly explaining each of the points.
- Some typical questions to ask yourself:

- What was done?
- When was it done?
- How was it done?
- Who else was involved?
- What was the result?
- How did Scouting benefit from what was done?
- What is happening now (is there a legacy)?

5. *Don't get discouraged*

- The Honours & Awards committee is not judging literacy excellence.
- Information can be provided in point form if necessary.
- Have someone help you review your work and give feedback.
- Remember: the committee is judging content, not writing style.

6. *Important*

- Committees at council and national levels may not know the person.
- Don't assume anything. Provide all the information you feel is necessary.

7. *Timing is everything*

- Award applications go through several steps.
- Allow time for the system to work.
- Expect up to three months lead time before presentation.

Honours & Awards sample criteria

Length of Service/Type of Service

- Outside own group
- Outside own council
- Does the nominee get others involved?
- Strong program
- Recruiting others
- Operating in isolation
- Traveling – time and distance
- Training others
- Fundraising – management skills
- Support for other groups
- Multi-role involvement
- Taking training
- Things which are beyond what would normally be considered part of the appointed position
- What form of innovative and creative ideas or activities has the person used or introduced
- An identification of what might be considered as adverse conditions under which the person has functioned
- The amount of networking with other sections, groups or councils
- Ability to attract and motivate other adults
- A displayed attitude of supportiveness
- Participation in what might be considered as outside of the normal activities with his/her section
- Proven dependability and loyalty.

Degree of involvement

- Jamborees (local, Council, national, international)
- Weekends
- Meetings
- Sacrifice of own holidays.

No true or tried method to determine “especially good” or “especially distinguished” service exists. The above points are those that tend to stand out time and again over the course of reviewing hundreds of requests for awards. Allowances must be made for degree of involvement and particularly for the case of poorly written or presented requests.

Some quotable quotes

You may find some of these quotes useful during awards presentations.

“Once in a century a man may be ruined or made insufferable by praise. But surely once a minute, something generous dies for want of it.” – John Masefield

“It’s a sure sign of mediocrity always to be moderate with praise.” – Marquis de Vauvenargues

“He too serves a purpose who only stands and cheers.” – Henry Adams

“If you call a thing bad, you do little. If you call a thing good, you do much.” – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

“When someone does something good, applaud. You will make two people happy.” – Samuel Goldwyn

“The applause of a single human being is of great consequence.” – Samuel Johnson

“I can live for two months on a good compliment.” – Mark Twain

Last, but not least, we want to thank Colin Wallace who wrote the original manuscript for “A Guide to the Honours & Awards of Scouts Canada” which formed the basis of this guide. His bibliography included:

D. Dunn, *Try Giving Yourself Away*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Height, New Jersey, 1970

B. Nelson, *1001 Ways to Reward Employees*, Workman Publishing Company, New Yourk, NY, 1994

D. Deeprise, *How to Recognize and Reward Employees*, American Management Association, New York, NY, 1994

K. Prior, *Don’t Shoot the Dog*, Bantam Books, Toronto, ON, 1985

P.M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, Doubleday/Currency, New York, NY, 1990