

Troop 160 Eagle Scout Leadership Project Process

This document provides an overview of the Eagle Scout Leadership Project process for Troop 160. The goal is to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions, as well as to describe the specific Troop 160 processes.

Overview

There are a number of steps that you need to follow, mostly in order, to successfully plan and complete your Eagle Scout Leadership Project.

- Complete your Life Board of Review
- Get an Eagle Guide
- Read the project documentation
- Come up with an idea for a project
- Talk with your Eagle Guide about your project
- Start a log of your activities and time spent on the project
- Write up your project proposal
- Get your proposal approved
- Execute your project
- Send picture and short write-up to the Lexington Minuteman
- Place small plate on project
- Obtain final signatures showing completion of the project
- Write up your completed project and submit your Eagle application

Complete Your Life Board of Review

You must be a Life Scout before you can start on your Eagle Project. However, it's completely reasonable to be considering possible Eagle projects before you become a Life Scout.

Get an Eagle Guide

At some point in the process, and preferably pretty early, you should have found or been assigned someone to help guide you with your project plan. This is an adult member of the Troop Committee or an Assistant Scoutmaster. The Guide isn't responsible for setting your deadlines, or writing your plan. The Guide is there to help you successfully write a plan, obtain your approvals and get the plan accomplished.

The Scoutmaster or Troop Committee will see to it that you have an Eagle Guide. If you have any questions about Eagle requirements, your project, the status of approvals, or anything else, your Eagle Guide should be your first stop. Keep your Eagle Guide informed when you're dealing with the Council, your sponsoring organization, or other groups outside the Troop – that way he or she can advise you on any issues you may encounter.

Read the project documentation

It's hard to hit a target without knowing where it is, or seeing it. In the same fashion, it's difficult to write up a project plan without knowing the goals. Take a look at existing Eagle Project documentation. The Troop 160 website has a page on advancement that can point you to some resources (<http://tinyurl.com/35zocu>). These resources include information about previous Troop 160 Eagle projects, and a Boston Minuteman Council web page that points to a number of pieces of information including the *Eagle Guidebook* and the *Eagle Project Workbook*.

The *Eagle Guidebook* has specific tips and information about Eagle Projects. The *Eagle Project Workbook* has the specific project information that you need to present. Be sure to read the "After Completion" section (know your target!)

Come Up With an Idea for Your Project

At some point, you'll need to come up with an idea for a project. The most important criterion is one that you won't find on any review sheet: pick a project that's of interest to you. An Eagle Project is a reasonably large undertaking, and it will be much easier and go more smoothly if it's something that you have an interest in doing.

Look around your community for ideas and opportunities. Use the Internet to find and research possible ideas. An idea does not have to be completely original, but it does need to demonstrate leadership. **If you have trouble coming up with a project idea, your Eagle Guide can often be helpful** – the Troop has connections with a number of organizations around town who often have projects they'd like someone to do.

Your project needs to meet a number of requirements. The major ones are:

- Demonstrate leadership – Eagle Scout Projects are primarily about you demonstrating leadership. An Eagle Scout Project is not about what you can do individually, it's about what you can do leading others as a team
- Adequate planning – is the planning sufficiently detailed to present an accurate view of the project?
- Significant magnitude – is the project of significant magnitude? Neither too large nor too big? A rule of thumb is to aim for about 100 hours of time
- Benefit to the community and lasting value – does this benefit the community and leave something of permanence and lasting value?
- Potential to succeed – can this project succeed as planned, can it be accomplished as written, could someone else take the plan and successfully implement and complete the project

- Adequate finances and materials – have you planned for enough materials and financial support to complete the project
- Safety and legal – does the project address possible safety issues, does it plan for 2-deep leadership, are all legal (e.g., permits) and permissions planned for, etc. A good reference is “The Sweet 16 of BSA Safety” (<http://www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/gss09.html>).

There are additional items that will be checked by the Council approval process. These include: are all three signatures and approvals on the project, are the dates and times correct, is there Scout participation. Additionally, the project will be checked to see if it is routine labor, of a business or commercial nature, only a fundraiser, or a direct benefit to Scouting. **Any of these latter elements are not allowed in an Eagle Leadership project.**

Talk with your Eagle Guide about your project

Once you have an idea that interests you, talk with your Eagle Guide about the idea. This alerts the Guide to what you’re considering, and in this way he can provide the best assistance to you. The Guide can also let you know if the idea meets the criteria for an Eagle Project. Everyone wants you to succeed, and your Eagle Guide is the first link in getting your Troop’s assistance as well as insuring that your project has the correct scope and will meet project requirements

Start a log of your activities and time spent on the project

Create a binder – a 3-ring notebook with pockets works well – to organize and protect your project proposal and supporting materials. One of the first things in your notebook should be a piece of paper on which you list all of your project-related activities. Include columns for the date, description of what you did, and the time you spent doing it. Also save receipts, emails and other documentation that will help you remember what happened when. At the end of the project, it will be difficult to remember the details you need to complete the project write-up unless you keep records along the way.

Be sure to turn in your log when your project is complete, so that Scouts assisting you will get service project credit.

Write up your project proposal

Your project proposal is a complete, ready-to-implement plan indicating how you would accomplish your project. It’s not a suggestion, or possibility or something that might happen. It’s exactly what you would do to accomplish the project and goals that you have laid out. It specifies, in detail, what you need to do. This may seem backwards in that you say exactly what you’re going to do, and then get it approved. But, this is exactly what you need to do. A project cannot be approved until it’s understood, and it won’t be understood until you write it up.

There are a number of ways to write up your project. You may use the *Eagle Project Workbook* directly and fill in the sections. You may also write up a new document, being

sure to follow the pattern of presentation and questions in the *Workbook*. The method of presentation is entirely up to you. Chose whichever approach makes it easiest for you.

However you chose to write up your project, consider making your signature pages as separate, distinct pages from the rest of the project. This allows you to make very minor edits to your project while getting your approvals, without having to re-obtain signatures on your edited, reprinted project plan.

The project write-up, like all other parts of the project, is for you to conceive, write and execute. This is your project. Not your parent's project, not your best friend's project or your Scoutmaster's project. Write it up in your own words and in your own way. Be sure to keep the goals of an Eagle Scout project in mind. Does your plan show leadership, participation, scope of effort and so forth?

Generally, the write-up takes place over time and multiple edits. As you refine your project plan, you modify the write up to reflect these changes. This is done in cooperation with your Eagle Guide, who will help you get the project write-up to a state that's ready to be approved and then executed.

Get your proposal approved

Once the project proposal has been written, you now have the materials to get it approved. Your plan provides the specifics of what you want to do. It needs to be reviewed, and approved, by a few people:

- A representative of the organization it will help
- Your Scoutmaster
- A member of the Troop Committee (usually the Committee Chair)
- A representative of the Council.

Reviewers approve your proposal by signing an approval sheet that is part of your project proposal. You may NOT start work on your project until all approvals have been obtained.

Not all projects are approved immediately. Don't worry if yours need some tuning or additional work. It's very easy to talk about a concept; it's another thing to have specific details and get it approved. Your plan is the specific details and helps prevent any miscommunications or misunderstandings later on. This is why you get the specific plan approved at this point. Your Eagle Guide can often be helpful in sorting out how your proposal needs to be improved to satisfy the people who need to sign off.

In some circumstances, which do not occur often, it's possible for your or one of your advisors to discover something that make your plan impractical. You may need to revise your concept and make up a new plan. *DON'T WORRY*. This happens in the real world, too. Remember, everyone in your Troop is behind you and supports your success.

Execute your project

Once you get to this phase, you have an approved plan. Now, just follow it!

More easily said than done, isn't it? One thing to bear in mind is that you'll almost surely find that you need to make some changes. This is not a problem – it's actually expected. In your final write-up you'll need to document the changes. Dealing with changes is an important part of demonstrating leadership.

Bring your logbook to the project, and have everyone sign in and out so that you have a record of the time the project takes. Make sure to have fun, take pictures, and do the great job everyone knows that you're capable of.

Of course, your project proposal will call for a certain amount of adult supervision. You can call on your Eagle Guide or other adults for help on your project, but you're in charge. You should expect your Eagle Guide to show up once or twice in any event.

Send your time record to the Advancement Team

Time that other Scouts spend working on your project also applies to those Scouts' service hours for other (non-Eagle) ranks. So be sure to send your record of time spent to the Troop 160 Advancement Team, so that those Scouts get credit toward their own advancement.

Send picture and a short write-up to the Lexington Minuteman

While you were executing your project, you took pictures. One of the Troop requirements is to send one of your representative pictures (preferably with people helping out) and a short write-up to the Lexington Minuteman. Your project was designed and approved to help out an organization within the community, and some local press coverage amplifies that assistance and also gives you public credit for your efforts and hard work.

Place a small plate on your project

One of the requirements for an Eagle Project is something of permanence. In most cases, there's room for a small plaque or plate to be attached. The Troop will reimburse you for this item. It's up to you what to acquire such that it fits well within your project and can be mounted somewhere. The suggested text would include:

<Your Name>
Eagle Scout Project
<Date>
Troop 160, Lexington, MA

Often, people are curious about the projects and this plate lets them know how the fantastic results that they are using or seeing came about.

Obtain final signatures showing completion of the project

Once you're done, you get the final approvals that your project was completed, as designed and planned. You may need to schedule a time to walk through the project with the representative of the organization your project is helping.

Write up your project and submit your Eagle application

It would seem like you'd be done once you've obtained those final signatures. But you're not really done until you've completed the final project writeup and submitted your Eagle application. Remember, if no one knows you've done it, it doesn't really count.

Your project writeup calls for a description of what actually happened and how long it took. Your logbook and the pictures you took will come in handy here. Also, the writeup calls for a discussion of what changed in the project, compared with your plan. It's expected that there will be some changes; how you deal with them is one of the ways that you show leadership.

The Eagle application can be found on the Council website; there are links for it on the Troop website (<http://www.troop160lexington.com/home/reference/advancement-and-eagle-trail/>).

Part of the Eagle application is a short statement on your life purpose. The reason for this statement is mostly to provide a basis for discussion with your Eagle Board. You won't be graded on it, and they won't try to hold you to it later in life. It's just a discussion of what you think now.

You should review your project writeup and application, including the statement of life purpose, with your Eagle Guide. He may have some suggestions for how to make them clearer for your Eagle Board. Once you're satisfied, be sure to fill out the Council's form requesting an Eagle Board, and submit the whole package.

Good luck!

(Thanks to Ben Thomas of Troop 114 in Bedford for allowing us to adapt their memo)