

JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

A COMMISSIONER'S (RT or UC) SCRIPT FOR INTRODUCTION TO UNITS

For the past four years, our council has been using the Centennial Quality Unit Award (CQUA) for units to set goals and priorities at the beginning of each year, and to assess a unit's achievements against those set goals. Commissioners have helped with that process by coaching, guiding, and continually providing their own observations and encouragement throughout the year to help units achieve or improve on their CQUA goals.

Starting in January 2011, a new quality program called Journey to Excellence (JTE or sometimes J2E) has become the new national performance assessment, communication, and recognition program for units, as well as for councils and districts.

By now, your district's commissioner staff should have introduced the new process through information distributed during rechartering, at roundtables, during unit visits by commissioners, and at several training events.

In my role as your (unit/roundtable) commissioner, I am here to help you learn about and understand Journey to Excellence (JTE), including how it relates to your unit and ways to continuously make it better year after year! JTE will help good units get even better, and units that are just getting started or are reorganizing achieve a good program!

JTE helps you get there. It brings a structured approach with predetermined, nationally established levels of performance and expectations for a unit (this is the main difference between CQUA and JTE). Here is a simple PowerPoint summary of JTE [*distribute the single PPT chart, and copies of the forms appropriate to unit(s) comprising the audience*].

As Chuck Keathley from the BSA National Council stated in the latest *Scouting* magazine, JTE uses a balanced approach and key performance indicators to measure outcomes versus process, with increased emphasis in quality programs. Chuck said, "We've always measured growth, but this looks at the kind of experience boys are having. Are they camping, are they advancing, are we retaining them and increasing our market share [of youth]?"

JTE hopes to accomplish a number of tasks for you as leaders in your unit.

- JTE is a **framework** for planning for your unit and for your adult and youth leaders (if you are a troop, crew, team, or post) to use.
- JTE is a **method** for evaluating your unit.
- JTE provides an **assessment** of how you're doing in the key areas found in great units.
- JTE helps provide **guidance** in areas where you might do better in conjunction with advice and counsel from your commissioner.
- JTE sets specific **guidelines and standards** of what the BSA considers good performance.

- JTE gives an **early warning** of potential problem areas—as a commissioner, I can always help you get help, such as resources, training, expert assistance, etc.
- JTE encourages **recognition** for your good performance.
- JTE provides **benchmarking** to get ideas and tips from other good units in your district.

JTE gives you **national standards** that let you assess your performance in key areas, including:

- Advancement
- Camping
- Service projects
- Training
- Membership
- Retention
- Leadership
- Budget

Depending on whether your unit is a pack, troop, Varsity team, or Venture crew, these eight areas of performance are weighted and prioritized differently (e.g., advancement is much lower priority for a crew than for packs and troops) [*now is a good time to show the different JTE weighted scores*]. Programs and participation in the unit are the most important factors. JTE areas that are early indicators of unit strength and health are identified and assessed.

JTE is not just a process to measure good practices that are simply repeated year over year. Instead, the goal is continuous improvement over many years.

- Did your unit do measurably better in key areas compared to last year?

OR

- Are you already performing at a high level in those areas?

Either way, you can qualify for an award based on the performance standards set by JTE. You receive points in each of the categories (gold, silver, or bronze—just like the Olympic medals). Your points across every category are added to give your total score, which determines your final JTE achievement level. Requirements are weighted as they correlate most with success. No one requirement is mandatory.

For 2011, the minimum number of total points units must score is as follows: gold (“excellent” performance) is 1,600 or more points, silver (“effective” performance) is 1,000 points to 1,599 points, bronze (“satisfactory” performance) is 700 points to 999 points. Remember that all three

levels are considered “quality.” Note that it is intentionally challenging to achieve the gold level—there is 600 points difference between gold and silver, versus 300 points difference between silver and bronze.

However, with each passing year, continuous improvement is expected of a unit. In 2012, the point totals to achieve a given level might be different and more challenging than in 2011. Guidance for 2012 levels of JTE performance will be established near the conclusion of 2011 and will be based on national trends in unit performance.

JTE assessment is to be made at the time of your rechartering month, but because this is a new system, commissioners are planning to meet with you before mid-February to ensure that you understand and are committed to JTE and will be ready for assessment during rechartering next year.

[script addition for roundtable commissioners]: So expect to visit with your unit commissioner over the next few weeks, get more information on JTE, and look to achieve a great year of Scouting in your unit and with your Scouts through the Journey to Excellence program.

[script for unit commissioners after presenting to unit leaders]: Any questions so far? Now let’s talk about how to use and implement JTE in your unit. We’ll start by discussing whether you think you can achieve gold, silver, or bronze. *[Start discussion. Conclude with a goal on what level they envision they can achieve, and how the unit thinks they will get there through their annual planning process. Make sure you have a written record of that desired goal between you and the unit leader.]*

More information is available on the national JTE website at www.scouting.org/scoutsourc/Awards/JourneyToExcellence.aspx. Review the site occasionally to make sure that you are using the most current version of the scorecards. When errors or corrections are identified in the field, the national office will correct the scorecards on the national site so the errors don’t continue throughout the year.

Also, in late March, spreadsheets will be available for units on the national website. Units can download these spreadsheets and enter their information, and their performance will automatically be calculated.

You can also “tune in” to prerecorded national JTE webinars designed for your unit. Go to the national JTE website and follow the links on the main page to access prerecorded webinar information.

All commissioners should use the official JTE scorecards for each kind of unit (available from the national website listed above).