

The Teaching EDGE Model

In Scouting America, we use the EDGE method to strike the right balance between adults teaching and learning by doing, which is a key part of the Scout Method. In Scouts, we tend towards minimal instruction and then holding the container for the scouts to figure it out (safely). Here is a guide to making that happen.

The EDGE Method

First Stage - Explain

- Explain the value of the subject
- Evaluate the skill level of the group/scout
- Assess previous knowledge of the subject
- Catch the interest of and motivate the learners

Second Stage - Demonstrate

- Share information or show skills to the group
- Allow those with previous knowledge or experience to shine - help, share, ask questions
- Ideas for format: lecture, video, game, role-play, coaching
- Toward the end, scouts are likely to naturally start moving into the next stage by testing it out themselves

Third Stage - Guide

- Scouts start practicing on their own, with occasional help and/or advice from you

Fourth Stage - Enable

- You and the scout(s) both agree that they have learned the material, and you feel comfortable declaring that they now know how to do the task. In doing so, you both end the session and encourage them on their scouting (and learning) journey.

These stages aren't always linear. Sometimes you need to jump around in them, or do Demonstrate and Explain at the same time. Other times, especially with Cub Scouts, you may not be able to complete all four at one time. You may have to re-teach skills, or split up the phases into several occasions. The important part of the Scout Method here is that they get some initial teaching from someone who knows but that they then start learning by doing, even though they will make mistakes at first. Make sure they get to try it themselves (and not just briefly), and allow them to get it wrong (as long as it's safe to do so). Make it a safe space to fail and learn from mistakes in.