

**EXPLORING™**

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**EXPLOSION**  
**2018**

**Playbook**

[www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org)

## An open letter to the field:

It's been a remarkable year for Exploring, and I'm excited to share the results of the unprecedented Exploring Explosion in 2017. Through your concerted efforts with businesses in your communities, participation in the Exploring program maintained growth for more than 22 consecutive months in 2016 and 2017! Congratulations, and thank you for your hard work!

To continue this momentum, the 2018 Exploring Explosion playbook has been updated to better serve you as the program grows. In this playbook, you'll find key materials including:

- A list of training opportunities
- A description of the new Exploring sales tools
- Position descriptions for your Exploring staff advisor and volunteer chair
- The steps to success, including a list of resources already available to you
- A suggested agenda for your staff planning conference

Additionally, all Exploring program resources have been moved to the Exploring website. You can find what you need to start out strong in the new year at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org).

I know I speak for our organization, as well as the communities we serve, when I say that I am excited and committed to the continued growth of Exploring membership in 2018.

While last year was exhilarating, we now have the power to prove that this success is more than a spark. Rather, it's a rekindled and ongoing energy that has made Exploring a key force in the strategy for involving, engaging, and adding value to communities through our values-based youth development program.

I challenge you to get your staff and volunteers fired up about Exploring.

Yours,



Michael Surbaugh

Chief Scout Executive



## Position Description–Staff Advisor

### What Is Exploring Explosion?

Exploring Explosion is a mission-driven, nationwide Exploring growth campaign that engages more volunteers and professionals, advances local programs, and ultimately improves Journey to Excellence scores for local councils.

### Staff Advisor Responsibilities

1. Recruit an Exploring Explosion volunteer chair for your council (approved by the Scout executive).
2. Promote and champion the Exploring Explosion campaign in your council.
3. Be sure your council is listed as a participating council at [www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org).
4. Champion and support your volunteer chair in developing an Exploring growth plan.
5. Become familiar with the Exploring Explosion playbook and view the Exploring Explosion orientation webinar at [www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org) with your volunteer chair.
6. Help promote Exploring growth by utilizing all current volunteer and professional structures available within your council, including the executive board, in order to ensure a successful campaign.

## **Position Description–Volunteer Chair**

### **What Is Exploring Explosion?**

Exploring Explosion is a mission-driven, nationwide Exploring growth campaign that engages more volunteers and professionals, advances local programs, and ultimately improves Journey to Excellence scores for local councils.

### **Volunteer Chair Responsibilities**

1. Work with your designated council staff advisor to promote and champion the Exploring Explosion campaign in your council.
2. Become familiar with the Exploring Explosion playbook and view the Exploring Explosion orientation webinar online at [www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org) with your staff advisor.
3. Be sure your council is listed as a participating council at [www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org).
4. Help promote Exploring growth by utilizing all current volunteer and professional structures available within your council, including the executive board, in order to ensure a successful campaign.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Is Exploring a Scouting program now?**

Exploring started as, and has always been, a program of the BSA. Learning for Life is an affiliate of the BSA, and Exploring is a youth-serving program under the Learning for Life umbrella. However, it is not considered a “traditional Scouting” program. But does it count? Yes!

### **What do we mean when we say “it counts”?**

It means that we are serving even more youth through one of the many BSA organization programs. It also means Exploring is counted in JTE measurements, and is considered a character development and leadership program. You can find the official BSA-LFL affiliation statement at [MyBSA > Resources > Learning for Life > Exploring > MISC](#).

### **How can I order Exploring business cards?**

You can order Exploring business cards from BSA Supply Group using the business card order form. Download the form from [MyBSA > Resources > Learning for Life > Exploring > Forms](#). If you use a local, licensed vendor to print business cards, download the new Exploring logo from the BSA Brand Center at <http://scoutingwire.org/bsa-brand-center/exploring/>.

### **When will Exploring be included in Commissioner Tools? In JTE dashboards?**

Exploring is now included in Commissioner Tools so that visits to Exploring posts and clubs can be logged. Unit commissioners who will be serving Exploring units must first complete the “Serving Exploring Units” training module at [my.scouting.org](http://my.scouting.org).

While there is a JTE scorecard for an Exploring-only district, there are no current plans to build a JTE dashboard to reflect those districts. Instead, we recommend that staff leaders or unit-serving executives (USEs) who serve only Exploring units utilize the Exploring District JTE Scorecard as an in-council measurement tool and set Performance and Development System (PDS) goals.

### **Where are the new Exploring leader training modules?**

Unit leaders, unit committee members, and service team members can access the new training modules by starting at [www.exploring.org/training-safety](http://www.exploring.org/training-safety). Users will be redirected to [my.scouting.org](http://my.scouting.org). Please use the Google Chrome internet browser; results with other browsers can be unpredictable. After logging in, click on the Exploring image on the right to go to the full Exploring training course catalog.

# EXPLORING SALES TOOLS

## GENERATE LEADS

### ACTIONS:

Follow up on leads generated from [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org), and schedule a cultivation event.

### TOOLS:

- Cultivation Event Guidebook<sup>^</sup>
- Strengthening Youth Through Exploring career brochure series<sup>^\*</sup>
- National supporter fact sheets<sup>^</sup>

## IN-DEPTH SALES CONVERSATIONS

### ACTION:

Follow the BSA sales model.

### TOOLS:

- Exploring Sales Kit<sup>\*v</sup>
- Unit Performance Guide-Gold Edition<sup>#</sup>, chapter 5
- Sales Slide Deck<sup>\*</sup>, follows the flow of Sales Kit
- Exploring testimonial videos<sup>\*</sup>
- Detailed, one-page fact sheets<sup>\*</sup>

## AFTER THE COMMITMENT

### ACTION:

Put two dates on the calendar: program planning meeting and open house.

### TOOLS:

- New unit online playbook<sup>^</sup>
- Meeting agendas from the Exploring Guidebook<sup>^</sup>
- Activity Library<sup>^</sup>

\* Available at [scoutingwire.org/bsa-brand-center/exploring/](http://scoutingwire.org/bsa-brand-center/exploring/)

<sup>^</sup> Available at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org)

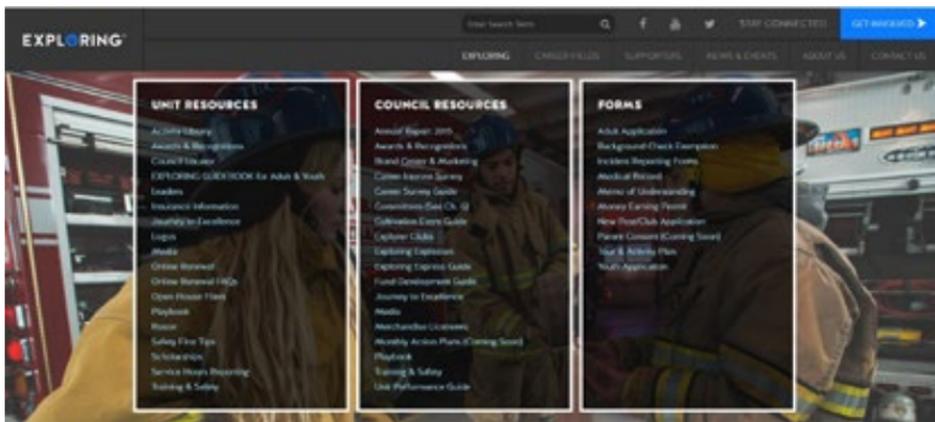
<sup>v</sup> BIN item available through Supply

<sup>#</sup> Available at [scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/](http://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/)

## Steps to Success

1. Include Exploring in your council's strategic plan and have a council Exploring chair.
2. Distribute 4 Post/Club Challenge award flier to every professional at your first staff planning conference.
3. Distribute Post/Club JTE scorecard to all posts and clubs within your council.
4. Coordinate and conduct an Exploring Explosion kickoff in your council and develop an Exploring growth plan using your Council Market Analysis Report.
5. As many staff members and volunteers as possible should plan to participate in the various Exploring training webinars and virtual instructor-led trainings (VILTs) scheduled throughout 2018.
6. Promote the Exploring Certification training course to your staff members and volunteers. Area directors will be working with the National Exploring Team to host at least one certification course in every area during 2018.
7. Coordinate an Exploring Express campaign OR a cultivation event within your council. The Exploring Express Guidebook can be found at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org) in the Council Resources box at the bottom.
8. Schedule as many Exploring sales calls as you can during the first two quarters of the year. This will allow you time to facilitate program planning meetings before the fall recruitment season begins.
9. Contact middle and high schools about either utilizing the Career Interest Survey (CIS) OR sharing their own student career interest data.
10. Aim to have Exploring growth. Remember, both posts and clubs count in JTE.
11. Consider starting a variety of career-specific programs from which your local youth can choose to join. This allows you to reach even more young men and women!

## WHAT are the resources? And WHERE can I find them?



The National Exploring Team—with collaborative feedback from the professionals and volunteers, the national career committees, and the LFL executive board—has diligently worked to consolidate, update, and reorganize the Exploring program resources. Our goal was to make it as easy as possible for you to find what you're looking for. Sometimes, you might not *know* what you're looking for. For this reason, the design of the new Exploring website was very intentional. Here's what you need to know:

- Always begin at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org).
- The majority of resources are located in the three resource boxes you see above. Scroll to the bottom of the [exploring.org](http://exploring.org) home page to find these boxes.
- There are only a handful of resources still available to councils on the Exploring internal site in MyBSA > Resources > Learning for Life > Exploring.
- The Exploring Guidebook has been updated and is available at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org) in the Unit Resources box at the bottom.
- Exploring has been added to the Unit Performance Guide—Gold Edition. Check out chapter 5!
- If you aren't sure what you're looking for, or can't find it, contact us at [exploring@lflmail.org](mailto:exploring@lflmail.org) or 972-580-2433.

## Training Opportunities

### Traveling Exploring Certification

Register online at <http://bit.ly/2018Certifications>. Volunteers as well as professionals are invited to attend. The National Exploring Team will work with each area director to schedule one Exploring Certification in each area during the first half of 2018. A council in each area will be selected to host the training course at a venue that they secure. The host council will also be asked to provide basic presentation equipment like a projector, flip charts, and internet connection. There is no course registration fee. However, a small fee of \$10–\$15 is usually collected by the host council for lunch and snacks. Training dates and locations are frequently added so check the registration page regularly.

### Webinars

Register online at <http://bit.ly/2018WebinarsVILTs>. Volunteers as well as professionals are invited to attend. For those looking for a quick update and review of some of the basic parts and processes of Exploring, these webinars will meet your needs. Professionals and volunteers are invited to participate. All times listed here are Central Standard Time. Browse additional webinars in the archives at [www.exploring.org/training-safety/](http://www.exploring.org/training-safety/).

### Virtual Instructor-Led Trainings (VILTs)

Register online at <http://bit.ly/2018WebinarsVILTs>. This series of VILTs offered online focuses on the phases of (re)starting an Exploring post or club. Three times throughout the year, a separate VILT is offered for each of the four phases of starting a post or club. Anyone—professionals and volunteers, unit level and district/council level—can register to attend at no charge.

<b>Monday at 2 p.m. CST</b>	<b>Tuesday at 2 p.m. CST</b>	<b>Wednesday at 2 p.m. CST</b>	<b>Thursday at 2 p.m. CST</b>
<b>Phase 1 Research</b>	<b>Phase 2 Leadership</b>	<b>Phase 3 Program</b>	<b>Phase 4 Participation</b>
Feb. 5	Feb. 6	Feb. 7	Feb. 8
May 7	May 8	May 9	May 10
Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4

## Career Interest Surveys (CIS)

We have heard from across the country that the printed versions of the Career Interest Surveys (CIS) are too expensive. To help remove this barrier, a number of changes have been made that should allow every council to include this important tool in their yearly membership strategic plans. Whether completed online or via the printed Scantron, the Career Interest Survey is the leading indicator of Exploring growth. The results help councils identify their students' "top two career interests" and "top two hobby interests," which can be helpful in Venturing recruitment as well. Councils should identify student's top interests, then visit with business leaders in those industries about sponsoring an Exploring post or club. Find all you need to know about the career interest surveys in the Career Interest Survey Guidebook at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org). Scroll to the bottom of the home page and look for the link in the Council Resources box.

### Free Online Career Interest Surveys in 2018

Available at [www.exploringyourcareer.com](http://www.exploringyourcareer.com), the online version of the survey is meant for young men and women ages 13 and up. Each council can utilize this online tool to survey as many schools and students as it wishes, at no cost to the council. Council users can get instant access to data. To set up an account, councils must contact the national Learning for Life service center at [exploring@lflmail.org](mailto:exploring@lflmail.org).

### Reduced-Price Paper Career Interest Surveys

The paper version of the survey can be utilized for all ages (including Exploring Club-aged youth) and is available through the National Distribution Center (use the LFL NDC order form located at MyBSA/Resources/Learning for Life/Exploring). The pricing for these surveys has been reduced dramatically to make them a more affordable option. In fact, the 30-pack (item #618833) price has been cut in half! Plus, the national Learning for Life service center will scan these surveys for free with a three- to five-day turnaround. Here is the updated pricing structure:

- 1 package (30 surveys): \$3.49 each
- 10–19 packages of 30: \$2.99 each
- 20+ packages of 30: \$2.49 each
- 1 package (500 surveys): \$41.29 each
- 10–19 packages of 500: \$40.99 each
- 20+ packages of 500: \$37.19 each

## Get Reimbursed for Your Scantrons

In addition, to recognize those councils that go above and beyond, Chief Scout Executive Michael Surbaugh has approved a rebate plan that will reimburse councils that utilize the Scantron surveys to recruit a specified number of Explorers. Reimbursement is based upon a net gain of 50–250 new Explorers over year-end 2017, depending on the size of the council:

<b>Council Level</b>	<b>Net New Explorers Registered</b>	<b>Number of Career Interest Surveys Reimbursed</b>
100	250	10,000
200	200	8,000
300	150	4,000
400	100	2,000
500	50	1,000

Please note: The net gain includes youth recruited into both posts and clubs. Also, the council may use surveys purchased this year prior to this announcement to count toward their total for reimbursement.

Download the Career Interest Survey Guidebook—your one-stop shop for everything from “how much” to “how to”—at [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org).

## Recognitions

### Exploring Explosion

Councils that notify the National Exploring Team that they will participate in the Exploring Explosion initiative in 2018 will gain access to the online Career Interest Surveys for free throughout 2018!

### 4 Post/Club Challenge

The 4 Post/Club Challenge is a new incentive in 2018 for any youth-serving executive who services Exploring units. Those who complete the requirements by December 31, 2018, will be eligible to receive an Exploring branded waterproof jacket. In addition, recipients will receive a collectible coin to recognize a key Exploring volunteer. District directors and field directors can qualify when their entire team qualifies.

Requirements:

1. Show positive gain in Exploring units and youth participants at 2018 year-end over 2017 year-end.
2. Have an active district Exploring chair.
3. Start four new Exploring posts and/or clubs in 2018.

It is highly recommended that professionals reference chapter 5 of the Unit Performance Guide–Gold Edition when developing an Exploring growth plan.

## 2018 Exploring Journey to Excellence Recognition

This Exploring District JTE recognition is designed to recognize those professionals who have Exploring as their primary responsibility.

It is available only to Exploring executives, senior Exploring executives, and Exploring directors who are specifically focused on Exploring. These employees should utilize the Exploring District JTE scorecard found at [www.scouting.org/filestore/mission/pdf/2018\\_JTE\\_Exploring\\_District\\_Scorecard.pdf](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/mission/pdf/2018_JTE_Exploring_District_Scorecard.pdf).

Exploring professionals who earn Bronze, Silver, or Gold recognition for their Exploring district will be eligible to receive a special Exploring Journey to Excellence polo.

This award is not for district executives who primarily serve a traditional district and may have Exploring duties as an additional assignment.

## Staff Planning Agenda

When developing your next staff planning conference, consider setting aside two hours for the coordination of your local Exploring Explosion kickoff. Here is a suggested agenda:

### 15 minutes: Introduction

- Play one of the Exploring testimonial videos from the “learningforlifeusa” YouTube channel.
- Discuss the significance of participating in this nationwide growth campaign in your local community.
- Discuss your overall council total available youth and your current Exploring market share (how many Explorer-aged youth you are currently serving).
- Discuss the opportunity for Exploring growth within your council.

### 30 minutes: Review Exploring Explosion Playbook

Consider inviting a member of the national Learning for Life and Exploring team to review the playbook with your staff via Skype at your planning conference.

- Share a copy of the playbook with all staff members. It can be downloaded from [www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org).
- Take time for everyone to visit [www.exploring.org](http://www.exploring.org) and become familiar with all of the resources.
- Review the recognition plan on page 10.

### 45 minutes: Establish Your Customized Growth Plan

- Review the steps to success on page 5.
- Determine which support materials and resources your council will use to reach success in your Exploring Explosion campaign.
- Review the Post/Club JTE scorecard. Also, discuss how Exploring positively affects JTE on the traditional District JTE scorecard as well as the Council JTE scorecard. If you have specific Exploring districts, be sure to review the Exploring District JTE scorecard with those districts.
- Distribute the 4 Post/Club Challenge incentive and 2018 Exploring Journey to Excellence scorecard to all staff members.

### 30 minutes: Calendar Planning

- Register for 2018 training opportunities. Set a date for your local Exploring Explosion kickoff.
- Brainstorm a list of volunteers and community leaders whom you should invite to the Exploring Explosion kickoff (to make the biggest impact).
- Set additional important dates.

### Suggested Resources from exploring.org

- Unit Performance Guide
- Cultivation Event Guide
- Exploring Express Guide
- [www.exploring.org/playbook](http://www.exploring.org/playbook)

## Let's Get Started!

1. Your Scout executive and council board commit to participating in the 2018 Exploring Explosion.
2. Designate a staff advisor and volunteer chair for your Exploring Explosion campaign.
3. Staff advisor and volunteer chair view the Exploring Explosion Orientation in the Webinar Archives at [www.exploringexplosion.org](http://www.exploringexplosion.org).
4. Review the Exploring Explosion Playbook and begin to organize your campaign at your staff planning conference.
5. Host a local kickoff early in the year.
6. Monitor your progress throughout the year.
7. Recognize your key staff and volunteers for their successes along the way.