

The Gold Award Project Advisor, and more

Choosing a Gold Award Project Advisor

Choosing the right person is an important part of your project planning. Girls, parents and troop leaders may all have some input into this process. It's great if it is someone you already know, but sometimes relationships are built when an adult introduces you to someone that they know who fits the role of an advisor. It could be another troop parent, community member, a teacher, or a neighbor. It cannot be your parent or other close family member, or your Girl Scout leaders. When you are deciding whom to ask to be your advisor, think about these questions:

- Are you comfortable reaching out to this person for help, to review your ideas, to talk about and solve any problems that develop? Would they make a good mentor?
- Do you think they will advise, but not make decisions for you? Your advisor should be able to offer several solutions to any problems you encounter, and together you should decide which would work best for YOU.
- Do you have an easy way to communicate with her...by phone, email, etc. that will accommodate your school/sports/work/family schedule?
- Did you explain the project to your advisor so she understands how much time it will take and for how long? Most projects span many months so you want her to know when you will need her, and for how long. Tell your advisor of any important events or dates that you have planned if you want her to be present.
- Does the person have some interest or expertise in the area that the project deals with? Does she have tools or equipment or a workspace that you will be counting on using? Does she work at/volunteer /have contacts at an agency/place that you want to do your project at?
- If your parent or troop leader has recently introduced you to this person, did you get a good feeling about working with her?

The role of the Gold Award Project advisor

It is important that you (with the help of a parent or your troop leader) talk to your potential advisor about the role of Gold Award Project advisor. She will be your ally, advocate and cheerleader. You'll want to talk over these topics:

- Tell your advisor all about your project as you finalize the part of the application that includes a detailed project description and the steps you will need to take. This will help her understand the scope of the project and some specific tasks. Your advisor may have some good ideas that will enhance your project. If the advisor is not familiar with Girl Scouting and the Gold Award requirements you will also want to have your troop leaders review your application to be sure that your project includes the

necessary Gold Award Project components like service and leadership and does not contradict any GSUSA safety and financial guidelines.

- Let your advisor know if there are any specific dates that you will need her to be present.
- Tell your advisor the areas that you anticipate you'll need help in.....is it proofreading and editing? Networking and finding contacts? Specific skills like artistic design? Tools or resources that you'll want to borrow?
- You will both be busy with lots of other things in your life! Decide on a method of communication that will work best for you...regular emails, or by phone or in person? Be sure this method will work for the advisor as well.
- Let your advisor know that you will count on her encouragement to keep you motivated and focused! She won't want to nag you, but let her know to reach out to you if she has not heard from you in a while.

And More

It's not just your advisor who will help you. Your troop leaders and parents are going to play big roles, too. The division among the advisor, parent and leader will differ by girl and by project. Maybe the proofreading and editing is more easily done with mom or dad. You might need to be driven to lots of places and likely your parents will do that if you do not have a license. Your troop leader might be the one who will most effectively help you to stay on track and keep at it. Your project might need some redirecting or refining. Help with that could come from *any or all* of these adults. It is YOUR project, but most girls benefit from support from three adults- advisor, parents, and troop leaders.

And don't forget your troop mates!

Your troop mates will also help you. They will be excited about your project; and they will motivate you when you are hitting a difficult time. They will brainstorm and network with you if you need to refine your project. They will show up to help you build, lead, carry, pack, play, sing, work.... or do whatever the tasks are needed to carry out your project. You'll do the same for them. Let them know how you need their help. If you all help each other, you'll all be more successful. And you can all celebrate your success together.

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