

Short and Snappy – The Path to Leadership Awards



Objective

To provide a suggested timeline and direction for girls to achieve leadership awards, including LiA, PA, and ViT.

Length

20 minutes

Materials Needed

Positive attitudes.

Information to Share (spend 10 minutes on this section)

From Cadettes and older, many leadership award opportunities become available for girls.

Brief descriptions of leadership awards:

- **Leader in Action (LiA):** These awards are earned by assisting a Brownie troop on any of the three National Leadership Journeys. Cadettes can earn up to three LiA awards, one for each Journey (It's Your World: Change It!, It's Your Planet: Love It!, and It's Your Story: Tell It!). Each LiA has specific requirements, which are found in the Brownie Adult Guide book for each Journey. LiA awards require Cadettes to plan, organize, teach, and support Brownies throughout their Journey experience. LiA awards are structured programs, providing significant direction to the Cadettes. This is an important step to developing leadership skills, before attempting to take on a full program by themselves.
- **Program Aide (PA):** This award is a certification that qualifies Cadettes to lead younger girls in a variety of programs, including community day camps and council events. To earn the PA, Cadettes must first complete a minimum of 1 LiA. It is recommended that Cadettes complete more than 1 LiA before earning their PA. After earning the LiA, Cadettes attend the Council PA Training, which involves two 2.5 to 3 hour sessions. After completing the Council PA Training, each Cadette must plan, organize, and carry out 6 meaningful program sessions with younger girls (Daisies or Brownies). These may involve badges, Journeys, or other programs.

Information to Share (continued)

- **Volunteer in Training (ViT):** This award is a certification that qualifies Seniors and Ambassadors to facilitate younger girl programs. To earn their ViT, Seniors and Ambassadors must have prior experience working with younger girls (for example, having earned their PA and worked at community day camps). Girls must find a mentor who is currently a volunteer for a group of younger girls (any younger age group). Then each girl must take the Council ViT Training, which involves two 2.5 to 3 hour sessions. After taking the training, girls must work under the supervision of their chosen mentor to create and implement a thoughtful program based on a Journey or badge that lasts over four or more sessions. The girl is responsible for all planning, organization, and implementing of her program, which should last 3 to 6 months.

Leadership is all about progression. Girls should start small, and take on more responsibility as they grow in their confidence and maturity. That is why it is important that girls work toward these leadership awards gradually, building up their leadership abilities and emotional maturity, such that they are ready to fulfil all requirements.

The handout has a recommended timeline for earning these leadership awards.

Activity (spend 10 minutes on this section)

1. Break up into groups of 4-6. (Try to have groups that mix experienced volunteers who have gone through earning leadership awards with their girls and volunteers who have not yet begun the process).
2. Pass out the timeline (handout), and ask each group to read and discuss the suggested timeline.
3. Bring everyone together again to reflect on their small group discussions.
4. Answer any questions from volunteers.



Handout: Recommended Timeline for Earning Leadership Awards

Cadettes: It is recommended that girls take PA training near the end of their 6th grade year, or beginning of their 7th grade year.

- Grade 6:
 - October/November: Complete a Cadette Journey
 - This kicks off a Cadette's leadership progression, helping her to discover, connect, and take action, and preparing her to take on more leadership responsibility than she did as a Junior.
 - December/January: Earn an LiA award
 - Even though girls are responsible for organization, planning, and leading younger girls, this first LiA will require guidance and support from the troop leader. The girls will be experiencing leadership responsibilities that they have not yet faced, and will need their leader's support in meeting this challenge.
 - February/March: Earn a second LiA award
 - Now that the girls have worked on a LiA with Brownies, they will have gained more confidence and ideas in how to successfully carry out a girl program. Try taking a step back, but still support the girls by asking difficult questions that get them thinking, and being ready to back them up in challenging or unexpected situations.
 - April/May: Earn third LiA award
 - Girls should feel more confident. Now is the time for the leader to step back and observe.
 - Spring/Summer: Take Council PA Training
 - This training helps girls to discover their own unique leadership strengths and weaknesses through reflection of past experiences, and takes them through how to prepare and organize programs. Because they have already worked with younger girls in structured programs (the LiA awards), they will be able to discuss leadership concepts more in-depth, and will prepare to take on the full duties of planning, structuring, and carrying out their own programs.
- Grades 7 and 8:
 - Complete the PA requirements and earn PA pin (plan and carry out 6 meaningful program sessions with younger girls)
 - Act as PAs at community and council events, including day camps and other programs.
 - Each time a girl acts as a PA, she should take on more responsibility, and grow more confident in her leadership skills.

Seniors and Ambassadors:

Now that girls have built their skill level and confidence in leading younger girls, they are ready to work toward their ViT award. After choosing an adult mentor who works with a younger troop, they are ready to attend the Council ViT Training. This training goes into depth on what it means to be a volunteer, and realistic responsibilities that accompany that role. Girls are equipped and prepared to plan and carry out their own meaningful, long-term program (3-6 months), under the supervision of their mentor. After completing their program, girls earn their ViT pin.