Short & Snappy—Learning Opportunity for Girl Scout Ceremonies

Girl Scout ceremonies offer a rich tradition to our organization. These ceremonies reinforce the values of Girl Scouting. They may be a part of a meeting such as a simple flag ceremony or more elaborate as when the girls are receiving badges and other recognitions. Ceremonies may also recognize other accomplishments or special Girl Scout Days. Whatever the purpose and whatever the ceremony, the girls must be an integral part of the planning process.

All ceremonies have certain elements in common. The best ceremonies use a combination of all:

- **Purpose:** the reason, the motivation for, or main idea. It is the driving force of the ceremony and its complexity.
  - Welcome new members
  - Celebrate accomplishments
  - Express Girl Scout values

- **Mood and Atmosphere:** sets the tone for each particular ceremony
  - Pleasant surroundings appropriate to the purpose/theme
  - Music, songs
  - Readings—poetry, stories
  - Dramatics—dance, skits
  - Use symbols—archway, bridge, candles or battery votives, Trefoil, etc.
    - *Allow the girls to be creative in determining the props and equipment to be used. Bringing their individual personalities to each ceremony will also help drive the events atmosphere.*

- **Characters:** bring out the characteristics of the girls involved
  - Allow the girls to take on roles that express who they are as an individual
  - Highlight the person qualities of the girls
  - Allow the girls to flourish at their own level; personal growth

- **Setting:** held at a special location that impacts the ceremony. The setting will also drive the mood.
  - Time—impacts attendance; can be mood setting
  - Place—location relevant to the purpose and mood and atmosphere desired (outside in the woods, inside on a stage, part of the meeting, etc.)
    - *If the girls are bridging to the next level of Girl Scouting, they might want to include some kind of bridge to cross over.*
  - Group size—accommodate for activities planned
  - Think safety first!

- **Theme:** focuses on developing the purpose

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**Things to Remember**

- Have participants sign the sign-in sheet and keep for Service Unit records.
- Stay within the allotted time.
- If you don’t know the answer, seek the correct answer from the appropriate support person.

**Supplies Needed**

- Poster with Promise and Law
- Girl Scout pins for the new leaders

10-15 minutes
There are many types of ceremonies. The girls are limited by their imaginations and resources! There are a few that are traditionally a part of the Girl Scout experience. These include:

- **Investiture** is a ceremony that welcomes new members into Girl Scouting for the first time, giving Girl Scout pins to both girls and adults.

- **Rededication** is a ceremony for girls and adults who have already been invested. It is a time for them to reaffirm their belief in the Girl Scout Promise and Law and to reflect upon the meaning of Girl Scouting in their lives. Usually it is held at the beginning of each Girl Scout year and can be done simultaneously with the investiture of new members. This is also a good time to give the returning girls their membership stars. Because of the importance of these events, a beautiful and meaningful ceremony should be planned and carried out.

- **Scout’s Own** is a ceremony that has a specific theme and includes whatever the girls want it to include. A friendship Scout’s Own might include poems, songs and reflections from each girl on what friendship means to her.

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Please note that Girl Scouting, while being spiritual, is not affiliated with a specific faith. Each ceremony should be inclusive of all participants. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their spiritual beliefs.

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**Activity**

Invest your new leaders and rededicate the returning leaders with a short and simple ceremony. Provide new leaders with a Girl Scout pin, pinned on upside down until they do a good deed—or right-side up because their good deed is volunteering to be a Girl Scout leader!

Have the group stand in a circle. Ask the new leaders to step forward and pin them with a Girl Scout pin. Once they are all pinned, ask them to step back into the circle. Together as a group, recite the Girl scout Promise and Girl Scout Law together. Our you can do a more formal ceremony.

Ideas for ceremonies can be found online at [www.scoutingweb.com](http://www.scoutingweb.com) or on Pinterest.