



VENTURING · BSA

## Section 4 - Synergism

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An effective leader must strive for synergy. Synergism is the combined action of two or more people achieving an effect greater than that of which each individual is capable. It is the state in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

In the evolution of leadership skill training, synergism is the final skill taught. Without it, an organization may appear successful on the surface, but lacks the energy to fully empower and engage its members. Stephen R. Covey defines synergy by comparing it with compromise: "Compromise means that  $1 + 1 = 1 \frac{1}{2}$ . Synergy means that  $1 + 1$  may equal 8, 16, or even 1,600. Valuing the differences is the essence of synergy—the mental, the emotional, the psychological differences between people. And the key to valuing those differences is to realize that all people see the world, not as it is, but as they are."

The Venturing Leadership Skills Course provides four modules to help understand and create synergy. Building relationships of trust is the foundation of a synergistic organization. The Trust Circle module and reflection emphasize the importance of trust in all relationships and teach Venturers about making deposits in "emotional bank accounts."

The Venturing on the Moon module provides an opportunity to learn about teamwork, another key element to synergism. Venturers are placed on the "surface of the moon" in a problem-solving situation that requires teamwork to succeed.

Knots is a short but meaningful module that highlights the importance of cooperation and teamwork in problem-solving situations.

Another key element in developing synergism is the leader's ability to be flexible and sensitive in all situations and adjust leadership styles accordingly. The Potato City Council module provides a fun and challenging activity to teach five styles of leadership.