



girl scouts
of eastern missouri

STEM• Ambassador Badge Blueprint

Research & Development Badge



Purpose: This badge teaches Ambassadors to become Research and Development (R&D) experts by analyzing trends, researching innovations, learning how R&D improves products and coming up with a fun, new way to use an existing product.

Step 1: Analyze sales trends.

Data is crucial to running a successful business. Data helps businesses determine where to sell, how to sell, whom to sell to and much more. During cookie season, set up a system to track your results. If you don't participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, try to connect with a local troop that is participating and use your expertise to analyze their performance. Or, if you have your own business, you can adapt this exercise to it.

Things you may want to track include how sales perform at different locations; how certain marketing efforts affect sales (i.e. if you use Square® to take credit cards at one location and not another); and which cookies sell better than others. At the end of the sale, analyze the data and use the information to plan for future sales.

Step 2: Research how other companies innovate.

Find at least three companies that use new ways to market their products. Are these methods successful? Brainstorm how you could use these ideas to market your cookie business. Again, if you aren't participating in the Cookie Program, you can help a participating troop.

Step 3: Discover how R&D is used to improve products.

Find out what Research and Development means, then learn what careers are available in it and what kind of education you would need to have a career in R&D.

Because developing new products can take years, try to find out more about the process. If there's a local company that makes a food product, for example, contact them and ask if you can meet with one of their R&D staff for an informational interview. Ask questions about the products they are working on, how they chose the product, how long they've been working on it, challenges, how they test it, how it gets approved to sell, etc. If you're unable to do this with a company, spend some time researching this process online and present your findings to your troop or another group of people.

Steps 4 and 5 on next page.

Remember, girls gain confidence and leadership skills through girl-led activities. Whenever possible, let the girls take charge when completing activities. Adult help is necessary for guidance, support and safety.

Step 4: Explore possible projects during your cookie sale.

Use your customers for market research. Since you're probably at the point of thinking about your Girl Scout Gold Award or Take Action project, you can survey your cookie customers. Present your ideas and get their feedback—which idea do they feel would fill the biggest need in your community? If you've already decided on your project, ask your customers for advice on how you can make the biggest impact through your project. You might get some great ideas and possibly meet people who can help with your project.

Step 5: Develop a fun, new way to use an existing product.

Research and Development isn't always just about coming up with new product ideas. It's also about improving existing products or finding new ways to use them. In this step, select a product and brainstorm new ways to use it. For instance, duct tape was created for use in the military, and now it's used for everything from home repair to crafts and fashion. You could choose a Girl Scout Cookie for this activity and create a new dessert using the cookies. Once you come up with your idea(s), create a promotional card or recipe card and share it with a target audience. You could post the idea or recipe online, give a card to your customers, or even ask a local restaurant to feature it on the menu during cookie season.

Congratulations! You have now earned the Research and Development Badge!

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