River Scout Services: 10 Responsibilities of the Executive Steering Committee

An Executive Steering Committee (ESC) is a group of executives whose charter is to oversee and guide an initiative or program. Typically, its members represent both internal and external stakeholders of the project. The roles and responsibilities of an Executive Steering Committee can vary depending on the specific program, organization, or industry. Below are the common themes and River Scout Services' definitions.

1. **Vision:** establishes and communicates the vision of the program. The vision should align with the strategic direction and priorities of the organization.

2. **Alignment:** assures that the program or initiative is aligned with the organization's overall strategy and goals, as well as ensuring alignment and prioritization across different departments and teams within the organization.

3. **Leadership:** provides leadership, direction, and support to the program team. They also assist in recognition and rewards programs to maintain the program's momentum.

4. **Accountability:** Takes accountability of the overall project and holds the project team and all stakeholders accountable for their roles in the project's success.

5. **Oversight:** actively engages to provide oversight of the project's goals, milestones, and timelines. They participate in steering committee meetings and read project status reports to remain informed and current on the project progress.

6. **Resources:** approves the initial allocation of resources (budgets and other resources) and acts to clear constraints when they arise.

7. **Risk Management:** understands the risks associated with the program or initiative. Actively monitors the potential of risk realization and the veracity risk management plan.

8. **Stakeholder Management:** assists the team with managing the expectations of stakeholders through frequent communication.

9. **Decision Making:** acts as the highest-level decision maker for major program changes, such as changes to scope, budget, schedule, and resources. Acts as the highest escalation point for project issues.

10. **Communication:** communicates the program's progress to the broader stakeholder community. They also assist the project team to understand the best methods and styles for this level of communication.

Overall, the Executive Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing and guiding the success of the program, ensuring it is aligned with the organization's overall strategy and goals, and managing the risks and challenges associated with the program's implementation. Critical to its success, the Executive Steering Committee members must be actively engaged and participating. This committee is usually named before the project is started and remains engaged throughout the project closeout and lessons learned.