

girl scouts 
of western ohio

Service Unit Meeting Guide

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In Partnership With:
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Qualities of a Great Girl Scout Leader

Honesty

You are a trusted representative of your service unit and of Girl Scouts. If you strive to make honest and ethical decisions, your team will too.

Ability to Delegate

Where there is trust, there is strength! The ability to delegate tasks to appropriate team members is one of the greatest skills you can have.

Communication

Be clear and be knowledgeable about what you want done or the information you wish to convey. If you can't explain it, they can't understand it.

Sense of Humor

Always try to find the smiles inside the struggles! If you strive to find the "punny" and positive side of any situation, your teammates will too!

Confidence

When setbacks occur, help assure everyone that everything is going to be okay. Be a source of encouragement and calm during life's little storms.

Commitment

Lead by example. If you expect your team to work hard and give of their time and talents, always do your best to do the same.

Positive Attitude

Help keep your team focused on the goals ahead by keeping a smile on your face and in your voice. Positive energy produces positive results!

Creativity

Problems don't always have clear solutions and sometimes the best ideas take a little time to find. Always try to think outside the box!

Ability to Inspire

Motivation is key to achieving your goals. Keep everyone's spirits high by appreciating hard work and recognizing team members' strengths.

Intuition

Use your best judgment. Trust your gut. When there is no roadmap telling you where to go or how to proceed, trust yourself and trust your team.

Preparing for the Meeting

Planning Service Unit Meetings

Running a service unit meeting is an important responsibility of the Service Unit Team, especially the service unit manager. These meetings can happen monthly, bi-monthly, or once per quarter and should focus on the specific needs within your service unit. Ideally, 20% of the meeting should be spent on announcements and service unit business; the other 80% should be spent on collaborating with each other, mentoring each other, planning events, and learning new skills.

Before meeting as a full service unit with all troop represented, a meeting should be held with the members of the service unit team to discuss and address what is to be presented to the service unit at-large. This meeting could be held an hour prior to the full service unit meeting or on another day. Conducting these meeting is a very important part of building the leadership of your service unit.

It is critically important that the meetings be kept to a specific time schedule. Meeting should start and end on time, unless the participants have been warned that the meeting could run longer than usual. Remember, your time—and the time of all the other participants—is valuable and should be honored. Make sure you do not spend too much time presenting information that could have been learned via notes or a post-meeting email; instead, spend the majority of your time on learning opportunities or activities.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Provide time in the meeting for the different grade level groups to meet and share information and concerns
- Include a “fun thing” on the agenda (i.e., learning a new song, playing a game, having a contest, teaching a new craft)
- Regularly thank individuals and recognize special services or achievements
- Have something at each meeting that the leaders can take back to their troop

Using Meeting Time Wisely

Tips & Suggestions:

- Start on time. End on time or early. Always.
- If your volunteers want to stick around and talk afterwards, they should be given a window of time to do so. Sometimes being given the opportunity to share ideas is the best use of your time together.
- Be prepared to keep the building open longer than the scheduled time but know when/if the building manager needs to lock up the facility.
- Be consistent with your meetings. The opportunity to share information and “face time” with service unit team members and other leaders can make a huge difference in a volunteer’s Girl Scout experience.

Parts of the Service Unit Meeting

- 1. Welcome** — This is the beginning of your meeting. Introduce the service team, especially if you have new leaders attending. Use name tags or reusable name plates on the tables in order to call individuals by name. You might explain how the members of your team service in the area. This is also a great time to do a flag ceremony and say the Girl Scout Promise and Law together.
- 2. Icebreakers & Team-Building Games** — Icebreakers and team-building games are a great addition to service unit meetings. These games traditionally give people an opportunity to get to know each other and/or learn new skills. Always try to include information on how volunteers can use these games with their girls, possibly explaining how to alter for younger or older girls. These games can get more challenging as the year moves on and people get to know each other better. If you need suggestions for games and activities, enlist your Service Unit Team to inquire about books on ceremonies and games or other resources that may be available from your local GSWO service center.
- 3. Announcements & Upcoming Events** — This is the third part of your service unit meeting. Here you will present service unit information, council information, and information about upcoming community events. Remember— don't spend more than 10 or 15 minutes making announcements. This information can be sent out via email either right before the meeting or soon after and this valuable meeting time may be better spent learning together instead.
- 4. Training or Activity** — The majority of your time together should be devoted to a training or activity. This is your opportunity to bring in speakers and community resources, or facilitate a Journey, badge, or other outcomes-based training or activity. Be creative! Make sure to ask the leaders in your area about what *they* would like to see at the meetings. Many times the Service Unit Team is made up of experienced leaders, so be sure to keep your whole audience in mind when planning service unit leader meeting activities and trainings.

Consider who can lead the trainings that the leaders choose. Volunteers within your service unit might excel in certain subjects, and you may find a volunteer who is willing to share their experience with others. If you cannot find someone to facilitate a particular training, contact your Community Development Manager and/or have your Service Unit Team contact their council counterpart to help schedule someone to attend and facilitate.

Another great use of volunteer mentors is to engage Girl Scout alumnae. Many alumnae continue to stay engaged and can offer many activity suggestions and resources. Some are even willing to travel and assist with troop meetings or events. Contact your Community Development Manager to find alumnae volunteers.
- 5. Closing Activity** — This is the final part of your service unit meeting. There are many creative options for this portion of the meeting as well. Closing time is the perfect time for a friendship circle or short game. You could ask the volunteers to share something that they learned during the meeting or have used since you last met. It is also the best time to remind you volunteers of the next meeting date and time, especially if you only meet every other month.

Planning and running an informative, helpful, and timely meeting can be easy. If you need additional guidance or if you need help getting runaway meeting back on track reach out to your Community Development Manager.

Basic Elements of a Good Service Unit Meeting

Part 1: Arrival Activity / Snacks / Start Up

Consider adding some kind of self-directed activity leaders may do if they arrive early for the meeting. The activity should not require a lot of time to complete and little, if any, clean up. Supplies for the pre-meeting activity should be set up and ready for the leaders when they arrive. This activity gives the service unit team time to greet people as they arrive and keeps attendees busy with something structured.

Some possible examples include:

- A photo album with pictures of past or the most recent service unit event to look at.
- Pick a single topic such as “behavior management” or “something my troop did that I am proud of” and put out index cards. Ask leaders to write down and share one of their best practices or recent activities.
- Put out a veggie or cheese and cracker tray — people tend to bond over food.
- Do a Google search for simple and quick ice breakers for meetings.

Part 2: Opening

Have an official start to the meeting. We can never emphasize the Promise and Law enough. Some service units have older girls do a flag ceremony if there is time.

Part 3: Service Unit Business

Have an agenda. Print it and stick to it. People feel good when they can visually see that the group is accomplishing tasks. Give them only what is necessary. Data dump overkill, grinding personal axes, and wandering bunny trails tend to frustrate and annoy people.

Part 4: Activity

Pick *one* from the four options below:

- ♦ **Grade Level Roundtables** - Good places for leaders concerns to be expressed and advice to be shared.
- ♦ **Training Snippet** - Teach them a skill at each meeting.
- ♦ **Program Snippet** - Have something at each meeting that the leader can take back to use with her troop.
- ♦ **Sharing Time** - Allow time for leaders to share the troop activities that they are proud of.

Part 5: Closing / Clean Up

Bring them back together. Ask what the most valuable thing they got from tonight’s meeting was. Give them the date and time of the next meeting. Invite them to help clean up after the meeting. Thank them for coming. Wish them a great night. Involving others in the clean up can help make stronger connections.

Service Unit Meeting Topics

The graphic below offers a general overview of **topics to address** at each service unit meeting. Remember, you will choose the topics for each meeting based on the schedule of your service unit. The topics below are suggestions and can be adjusted as needed.

Month	Topics
September	Encourage troop leaders to participate in the fall product program. Encourage troops to host or join recruitment events. Ensure all girls and troop leaders have renewed memberships. Provide training on troop event notifications and activity approvals.
October	Welcome new troop leaders to the service unit. Remind troop leaders that girls must have a current membership to join the fall product program. Ensure new troop leaders know how to open bank accounts.
November	Incorporate an investiture/rededication ceremony into the meeting. Share information about Girl Scout volunteer training options and the Girl Scout Progression. Talk about the roles of the service unit team and any team vacancies.
December	Inform troops of the upcoming cookie program and let them know they must be registered to participate. Begin to plan the service unit Cookie Kick-Off and ask volunteers for support. Troops must begin to identify the Troop Cookie Manager (TCM).
January	Inform volunteers of details for the service unit Cookie Kick-Off Host a special welcome event for new troop leaders. Hold a training on troop finances and strategies for talking to girls about money.
February	Hold a refresher of options for volunteer training and the Girl Scout progression. Inform troop leaders of the details for the service unit World Thinking Day. Introduce council and service unit volunteer appreciation awards and applications.
March	Host a troop leader training about the Troop Annual Financial Report (AFR) submission. Talk about best practices in planning to spend troop funds. Celebrate Girl Scout week!
April	Celebrate National Girl Scout Leader Day! Encourage troops to host recruitment tables at their school's open house. Host a training about completing the council and service unit award applications.
May	Encourage troop leaders to renew their troop's Girl Scout memberships. Host a workshop for completing the Troop Annual Financial Report (AFR).
June	Celebrate volunteers with a special event.

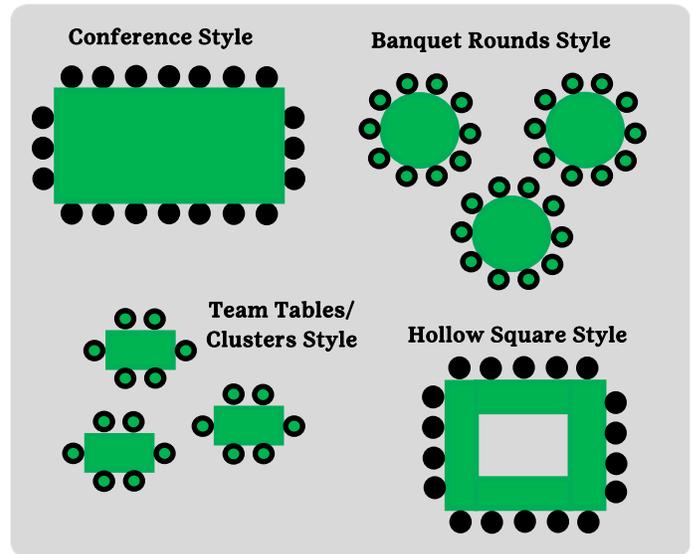
Seating Suggestions

Select the **seating arrangement** that makes the most sense for your meeting. It is always a best practice to plan a seating arrangement where participants can read each other's body language. This visibility allows participants to have a greater awareness of the emotional state and intention with which a comment is made. Greater awareness can lead to less confusion and misinterpretation of comments.

Collaborating or Community Building

These seating arrangements are best suited to any gathering with the intent of collaborating or building relationships within the community. These seating arrangements are also best for avoiding or addressing conflict.

In these seating arrangements, everyone is placed at an equally valued position. Participants can also easily read each other's expressions and body language.

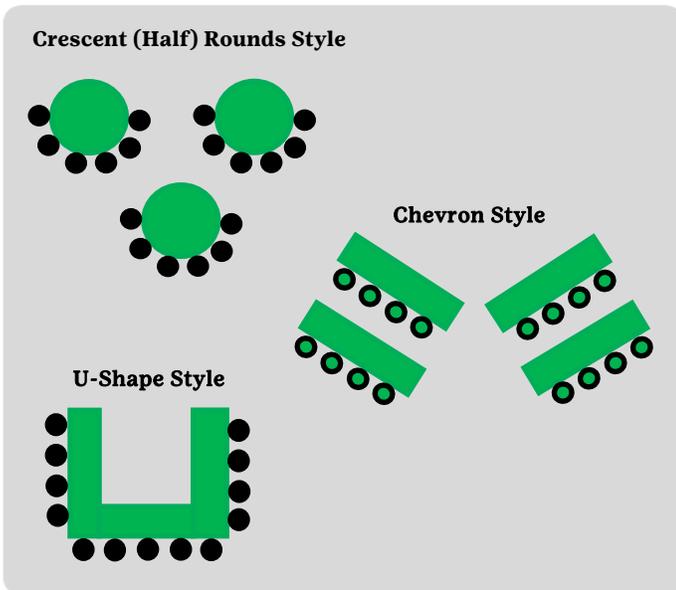


Learning with the Community

These seating arrangements are best suited for a meeting or training where participants will be learning from a formal presentation.

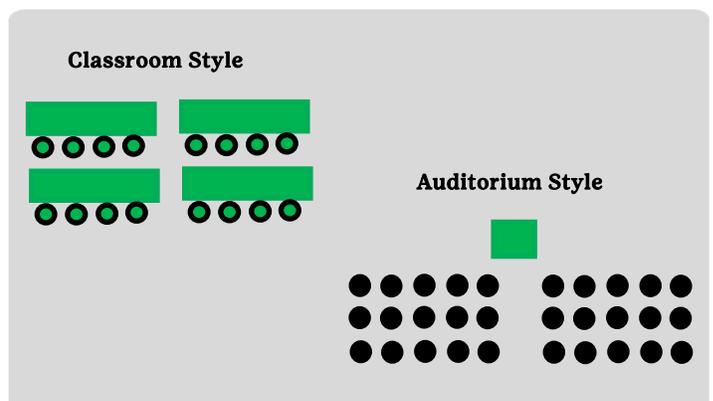
In these seating arrangements, all participants can look toward a presenter and the displayed materials with ease. They can also read each other's expressions and body language.

The leader of the presentation can move between the formal presentation and the participant activities with ease.



Seating for Presentations

In these arrangements, the presenter stands at the front with all eyes turned toward them. These arrangements are best when the role of the audience is only to listen and ask questions.



Leading Service Unit Meetings

Managing Your Service Unit Meeting

Set a schedule for the year for your service unit meets. Service unit meetings can come in multiple forms — a “business” style meeting, program training, networking opportunity, etc. Clearly communicate the schedule in advance to leaders. Information that can be shared electronically should be sent out after the meeting. Every service unit meeting must offer a “take away” for leaders, tangible or intangible. Everyone’s time is very limited and valuable. Be sure to plan every meeting as an opportunity to share, educate, and reward your volunteers.

Arrange for a meeting space:

- School, church, community building or a business with a large room.
- Work with service unit team members and volunteers for an agreed upon day and time.
- Suggested meeting time is 1 to 1.5 hours.
- Arrange chairs/tables so everyone can see.

Work together to set the agenda:

- Solicit topics to be discussed from team members.
- Determine best order of topics and how much time is needed.
- Conduct meetings in an efficient manner with a defined timeline.
- Work in a partnership with the team. Assign roles. Ensure assignments are clear and reasonable in terms of time, skills, and resources.
- Ensure that team members are connected with each other and are empowered to make presentations and informed decisions.

Call the meeting:

- Use the simplest method — mail, email, or phone. Setting a standard date and time is beneficial in establishing regular attendance.
- Make arrangements if equipment is needed (newsprint, markers, laptop, etc.)
- Allot time for open floor discussion and sharing of new ideas.

Set the climate:

- Greet volunteers as they arrive.
- Arrange with new leader consultant for introduction of new volunteers and/or troop leaders.
- Make sure all necessary handouts are present. The service unit agenda is either emailed or printed for all attendees.
- Arrange for note taker, if needed.

Conduct the meeting:

- Start on time
- Adhere to agenda
- Guide discussion
- Summarize the conclusions reached
- Develop rapport
- Don’t read to them
- Keep it short
- Speak clearly, vary your speed/pitch, don’t rush.
- Have other team members present, involve the audience if possible.
- Use humor but avoid jokes
- Smile, look at your audience and have fun!
- Follow up with notes, reminders, etc. Notes should be shared with all troop leaders, not just those in attendance.
- Volunteers should not be penalized for missing a meeting.
- Volunteers should be well informed.

Remember: A successful meeting should include: 1) team building, 2) skill building, and 3) task completion.

Keeping on Track

Meeting Guide

Ensure that a meeting guide is available for each service unit meeting. The meeting guide should include a list of meeting participants and topics. Indicate the time allotted for each topic to help keep the meeting on track.

Post the meeting guide online or send it in an email prior to the meeting. Having access to the meeting guide early helps attendees know what to expect and prepare. You can also bring extra meeting guides to the meeting for those who may need them.

See Appendix for full version of an example meeting guide.

Meeting Notes

Detailed meeting notes are critical because they help you coordinate the activities of your service unit community. Service units are busy! Remembering all the tasks and deadlines would be difficult without notes. Meeting notes serve as a reminder to you *and* your volunteers about agreed upon tasks and goals.

Meeting notes also offer a reference for clarification. They are the official record of the discussion and agreements made at each meeting.

**Tip:* Make it a practice to offer the notes to the group for approval. Then post them so they are available to the service unit community. This helps ensure transparency and accountability.

Service Unit Meeting Guide Date: _____

Group roles		Group norms
Facilitator: _____		⇒ Honor the facilitator
Time keeper: _____		⇒ One mic
Note taker: _____		⇒ Make space, take space
Task manager: _____		⇒ Stay solution-oriented
Encourager: _____		⇒ Speak with intent
		⇒
Agenda		My next steps
Time	Topic	1.
		2.
		3.
		4.
		5.
Meeting notes		

Service Unit Meeting Engagement

Choose the activity and identify the facilitator for each agenda topic.

*Tip for success: A variety of activities lead to greater participant engagement!

Break-Outs or Rotations

- **Break-Outs:** Team Leaders can break into groups by program level, interest, or topic of support.
- **Rotations:** Set up a series of small sessions and troop leaders can rotate spending a short time at each session.

Community Building

- Community building strengthens the volunteer relationships in your service unit. Activities can include games that allow volunteers to share about themselves and learn about each other.

Fast Fundamentals

- Fast Fundamentals are quick activities to do at service unit meetings.

Action/Reflection

- Action/Reflection is any activity that asks meeting participants to identify an action, provide feedback on that action, and then see their feedback integrated into future activities and events.

Troop/Girl Involvement

- Girl Scouts can be included in service unit meetings.
- Troops can present, facilitate activities, or take on leadership roles in the service unit.

Presentation

- A presentation is a formal explanation of a topic to an audience.

Appreciation/Recognition

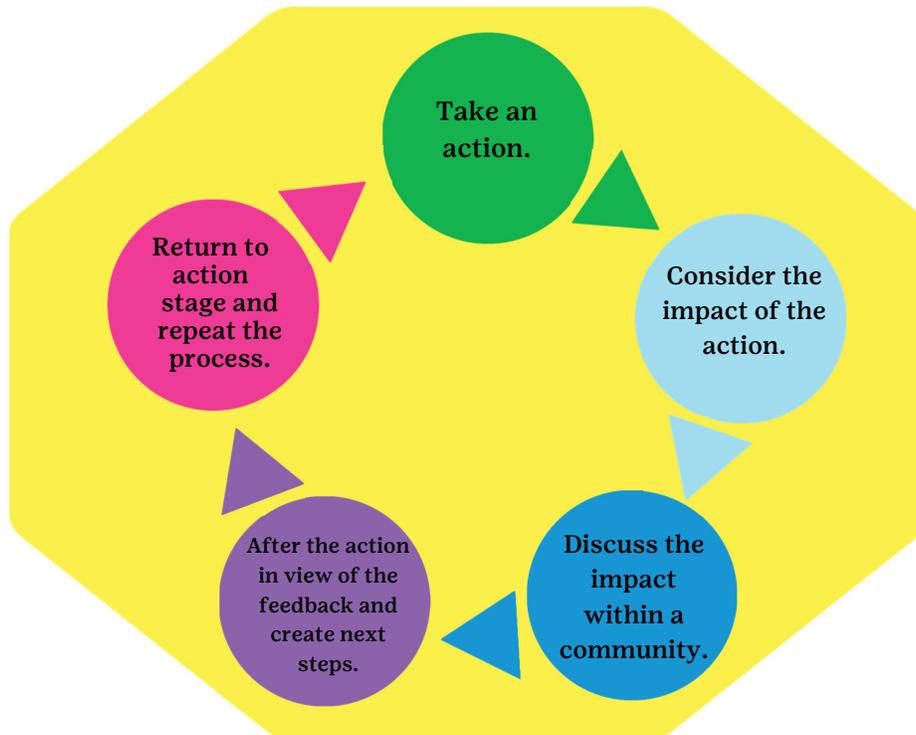
- Appreciate and recognition are expressions or acts of gratitude. Sometimes a thoughtful act of appreciation is the extra incentive volunteers need to do their best.

Fun!

- Make space to smile! Incorporate fun, silly, and warm habits into your meetings. Sometimes fun can be as small as a smile or simply greeting someone by name.

Action/Reflection

Reserve time at each service unit meeting for action/reflection. **Action/Reflection** is an important process because it ensures that the service unit consider its ever-changing community and responds to those changes. It is a key activity in keeping the service unit healthy and sustainable. Check out this image to get an idea of what action/reflection looks like:



The action/reflection activity does not need to be complex. You can simply provide leaders with an opportunity to discuss a topic. Then, ensure that the insights they share are considered in any action the service unit takes. Topics discussed can be service unit processes (such as registering for encampment) or service unit events and activities. You can be creative. Just remember to:

1. Identify an action.
2. Welcome positive and negative feedback.
3. Consider the feedback as you take future actions to benefit your service unit community.

Action/Reflection in a Real World Example

1. **Take an action:** The service unit hosted their first Cookie Kick-Off at a local outdoor park.
2. **Consider the impact of the action:** Girls and adults who attended the Cookie Kick-Off submitted a brief survey at the conclusion of the vent.
3. **Discuss the impact within a community:** The service unit team read the surveys at their team meeting and looked for themes in the feedback. Girls reported that they wanted more time to complete activities. Adults reported that the location did not provide enough parking.
4. **Alter the action in view of community feedback:** The service unit team presented the feedback at the next service unit meeting and said that next year the Cookie Kick-Off can be extended and the team would like suggestions in finding a new location.
5. **Return to the action stage and repeat the process:** In the weeks before the next Cookie Kick-Off, the service unit team sent a survey to all the leaders in the service unit asking for help in finding a new location. The Cookie Kick-Off was also extended from two hours to three hours.

Meeting Roles

Your service unit meetings will run smoothly and be more productive if you request that volunteers in your service unit fill these important roles and carry out their designated task at each meeting.

Facilitator

*The facilitator is the person directing the meeting. This person does not need to lead the meeting by speaking, but this person ensures the meeting moves forward in a time-effective and collaborative manner.

Time Keeper

*The time keeper has their eye on the clock and gently nudges the group or the facilitator when it is time to transition to the next topic or activity.

Note Taker

*The note taker keeps written record of what is discussed and decided at each meeting.

Task Manager

*The task manager keeps record of the tasks that are assigned throughout the meeting. Tasks should be documented on a group and individual basis. All Tasks should be recorded and posted with the notes for transparency and accountability.

Encourager

*The encourager ensures that the meeting is positive and solution-oriented. If the group begins to vent, the encourager will intervene with a positive statement to redirect the discussion.

Group Norms

Have your service unit create a set of group norms. A **group norm** is an agreement that defines how a group will interact in meetings and during activities. Having norms in a place is important for several reasons:

- Norms help your service unit team members carry out their tasks.
- Norms set expectations about how people will be treated and how they may treat others.
- Norms keep confusion and conflict to a minimum when they are shared with a group and enforced.

Once you have your service unit team in place and meeting roles defined, discuss and adopt norms.

Common Norms

Here are some common group norms that you may want to consider:

Norm	Description	Girl Scout Law
Honor the facilitator	Look to the facilitator's lead in directing the meeting.	Friendly and helpful
One mic	Only one person speaks at any given time.	Considerate and caring
Make space, take Space	Share your ideas and ensure that others have their opportunity to share as well. Ensure there is space for everyone to have the chance to speak.	Honest and fair
Stay solution-oriented	Work together to be collaborative problem-solvers. Stay solution-oriented by offering ideas that move the conversation closer to resolution. Avoid venting or complaining.	Friendly and helpful
Speak with intent	Often, you'll need to accomplish a lot in a meeting With limited time. "Speak with intent" ask Participants to make mindful contributions. Some Things to ask yourself be speaking. *Is your comment about the topic at hand? *Does your comment express a new idea? * Will your comment honor the facilitator? * Does your comment move towards a solution? * Is your comment a valuable use of time?	Responsible for what I say and do, Respect myself and others
Assume best intent	To assume best intent simply means that you give people the benefit of the doubt, even when it appears that their ideas are in conflict to your own. Often a problem or issue can be addressed in more than one way. Respond with kindness.	Make the world a Better place
Eye on the mission	Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place! Remember, all meeting participants are working Towards the same goal.	Courageous and strong

What Do I Do if the Group Does Not Practice the Norms?

If a group member doesn't follow norms, it's usually because the expected behaviors aren't everyday behaviors for that member. As a member of the service unit team you can take action by asking these questions:

1 Does a new norm need to be established?

Here's an example of when you might need to establish a new norm. Let's say a person is taking over meeting time by expressing a grievance. Perhaps the service unit needs to create a norm and/or process for expressing grievances. Listen with patience, recognize that the person has a concern to express, and acknowledge that there is no structure for how to do so. Address the person's concern in a way that feels best at the moment. Then propose the creation of a new norm at the next meeting.

2 Does the person know the group norms?

Your service unit team selects and creates your initial group norms. Share the norms with the entire community. Be mindful, too, that the service unit community is always changing. Members will enter and leave the group. It's a good idea to post group norms at each meeting and to remind attendees about group norms before the meeting.

3 Is the person intentionally trying to disrupt or control the meeting?

If the answer is NO: Do not address the behavior during the meeting. Wait until after the meeting and then privately discuss the norms together. Remind the person that group norms ensure that meetings are effective and welcoming spaces. Ask the person if the norms are not meeting his or her needs. Consider if the norms need to be revised.

If the answer is YES: When a person intentionally disrupts a meeting, it can be stressful for all in the service unit. Take a moment to acknowledge your emotional state. You may feel hurt, frustrated, or angry. However, it's important to set your feelings aside and focus on re-establishing norms. You can pause the meeting and bring up the norms. Ask what norm is not being followed. Talk about why the norm was established.

If you're able to re-establish norms, continue the meeting and follow up with the disruptive person in private afterward.

If the group can't re-establish norms, end the meeting. Explain that without group norms, the meeting cannot be effective and that continuing is not a good use of volunteers' time. After the meeting, privately discuss the norms with the disruptive person. Remind the person that group norms ensure that meetings are effective and welcoming spaces. Ask the person if the norms are not meeting his or her needs. Consider if norms need to be revised.

Spice Up Your Service Unit Meetings

Ways to Make Your Service Unit Meetings Informative

- 1) Plan ahead! Use your service team meetings to draft your agenda. Ask your team members:
 - What needs to be accomplished?
 - What decisions need to be made?
 - What ideas need to be generated?
- 2) Develop your agenda:
 - Solicit topics from team members, and others involved in the meeting
 - Determine the best order of topics
 - Decide how much time is needed for discussion on each topic
 - Decide what resources and equipment are needed.
- 3) Have a typed agenda and adhere to the agenda. Include phone numbers of who to call for more information.
- 4) Start and end on time! This is extremely important. Show your volunteers that you value them. Keep meetings to 1.5 hours but reserve your meeting space for 2 hours. If your meeting is only an hour, it probably isn't interactive at all. If it ends on time, then leaders will still have half an hour to ask questions and socialize. Balance business and fun. If the meeting is ALL business, it's boring. Give them something useful to take home and use with their troop.
- 5) Have team members present different parts of the agenda so it's not always the service unit manager who is speaking.
- 6) Do not spend time at the meeting on agenda items that don't involve all the troops such as encampments or grade level events. Have level events discussed in the level breakouts. That way everyone doesn't have to listen to information that is not pertinent to them.
- 7) Insure that fliers have all the information necessary, including someone to call if you have questions. Don't read to the audience! Just give the highlights.
- 8) Publicize events as far in advance as possible. Give out the information flier at least 2-3 months in advance.
- 9) Have a newsletter and use it to inform. List deadlines, hint at information you will be covering at the meeting, have reminders about upcoming events and service projects and remind them of the Service Unit and Team meetings.
- 10) Put events on your agenda only once. Have an event "rep" (committee member or chair) available at the back of the room before and after (but not during) each successive service unit meeting to take registrations and answer questions. This keeps time involved to a minimum and everyone doesn't have to sit through the information several months in a row.
- 11) Have display boards for level and/or council information.

Ways to Make Your Service Unit Meetings Interactive

- 1) Set a fun tone! The Service Unit Manager and team need to be upbeat, fun, and energetic. Your enthusiasm and willingness to help will create a good atmosphere.
- 2) Devote meeting time to hands-on activities rather than lecture or flier reading.
- 3) Have refreshments where they can serve themselves and chat while they eat. Rotate hostess duties by school, troop, or level. Hospitality provides the snacks and supplies and takes care of set-up and clean up.
- 4) Model meetings upon what a Girl Scout meeting for girls might be like. Inform people through activities that teach instead of lectures and reading.
- 5) Have workshops on: ceremonies, songs, games, ideas for thanking parents, service projects, etc.
- 6) Teach techniques like “how to teach games/songs”, “how to get parents to help”, etc. Visit the Service Team Toolkit for prepared workshops that you can use.
- 7) Have an opening and closing that leaders can participate in and then use with their troops.
- 8) Seat people different ways: by school, Girl Scout level, random, separate leaders from co-assistant leaders, etc. This helps people network with each other.
- 9) Use round tables or clusters of chairs instead of classroom/theater style seating.
- 10) Have service unit team members speak to their parts of the agenda from wherever they are in the room instead of always standing up front and center.
- 11) Move people to another table, room, or part of the room for different activities (i.e., move into the hallways and do a ceremony).
- 12) Have icebreaker activities that allow people to meet one another.
- 13) Give out “leader bucks” and then have occasional auctions to spend them. These can be earned for attending, contributing, sending in permission slips, troop newsletters, taking on a team position, helping with a committee, taking additional girls, etc.
- 14) Teach a song or make a craft at every meeting.
- 15) Have “trivia” questions throughout the meeting. Throw prizes to the people with correct answers. This helps get the information out about Volunteer Essentials, Council Policies, Safety Activity Checkpoints, etc.
- 16) Have display boards for leaders to use stickers to record their attendance at meetings, events, training, when they’ve done a service project. This can be very helpful at service unit award time!
- 17) Make name tags to be worn at each meeting. It’s easier to talk to someone new if you at least know her or his name. Collect the name tags after each meeting to hand out again next month.
- 18) Have a troop sharing table — craft, program idea, field trip, etc. Be sure to include instructions or contact information.

Ways to Make Your Service Unit Meetings Well Attended

- 1) Publish a calendar of meeting dates, hand out at new leader orientation and with registration materials for returning leaders. Hand it out again at the first service unit meeting. Put the date of the next meeting on the bottom of your agenda.
- 2) Meet on the same day, at the same time and place every month.
- 3) Send a reminder email, postcard, or newsletter 1-2 weeks prior to each meeting.
- 4) Have event registration deadlines coincide with service unit meetings.
- 5) Have assistants call and remind leaders/assistant leaders to attend or send someone to represent their troop.
- 6) Have a greeter (or consultants or organizers) who say hello to everyone as they arrive and help newcomers find their folders, seats, etc.
- 7) Have an older girl troop offer babysitting in another room as a service to leaders.
- 8) Make the agenda visually exciting. Use graphics and/or colored paper. Be sure to leave some blank space for writing notes.
- 9) Have a theme! Incorporate it into your agendas, recognitions, ceremonies, everything! Use it to tie your year together (i.e., teach a different knot at every meeting, give everyone a new recipe at each meeting).
- 10) Reward people for being on time with candy, an extra handout, a special sticker on their nametag, etc. A little recognition shows your appreciation that they made this meeting a priority.
- 11) Open with a workshop. Leaders will then have hands-on examples of something they can do with their girls (i.e., ceremonies, service project ideas, how to say thank you, etc.).
- 12) Hand out swaps at each meeting. Have a nametag or friendship tie, which they can wear and pin their swaps.
- 13) Have troops make table centerpieces and give them away at the end of each meeting. You must be present to win!
- 14) Have door prizes. Nothing fancy, just fun or thematic. Be sure to have a drawing at the very end of the meeting. Again, you must be present to win!
- 15) Say THANK YOU! Remind leaders that what they are doing is important and how much you appreciate them making the extra effort to provide the best program experience for girls.
- 16) Assign “Girl Scout Sisters” or “Leader Buddies” who call each other to see how things are going, remind one another about the meeting and ride to meetings together.
- 17) Encourage your consultants to be proactive. Ask them to call new leaders and invite them to the meetings. Have them call people who don’t attend and find out why they didn’t show—do they need a ride, babysitter, someone to sit next to?

Delegating Tasks

Delegating is one of the core concepts of management leadership. However, the person who delegated the work remains accountable for the outcome of the delegated work.

As a manager of volunteers, for you, “delegating tasks” means entrusting someone you have appointed to do a specific job—usually on their own without your assistance or interference. If you have the right person in place, your role as a volunteer manager will become much easier, and your team will become more efficient and successful in achieving its goals. It is important to delegate work to allow team members to become comfortable in their position, build skills, execute creative ideas, and demonstrate their leadership abilities in the service unit.

Why delegate?

- Because you can't do it alone.
- Because you build a team of experienced volunteers.
- Because you develop skills and confidence in others.

What happens if you don't delegate?

- You over-extend yourself.
- People stop volunteering to help.
- Resentment and ill-feeling build.
- No new leadership is developed.

The “I'd Rather Do It Myself” problem.

- I can do it better.
- I can do it faster.
- I feel it's my job.
- I don't trust anyone else to do it.

The Do's and Don'ts of Delegating:

DO:

- Be sure the person understands what the job is on the front-end and make sure that you are both “on the same page” about what specifically needs to be done.
- Maintain regular communication and contact with the person to whom you have entrusted the task in order to show encouragement and support.
- Show your appreciation whenever you have the chance.
- Be interested in other ideas and viewpoints.

DON'T:

- Coerce people into jobs they'd rather not do.
- Let someone continue in a job when nothing is getting better.
- Ask the wrong person to do the job or just choose a “warm body”
- Overload people.
- Ask the same people over and over again.

Remember, to engage volunteers. You must support them by allowing them the opportunity to answer questions, to share their talents, and to share their expertise.

Finding Success in Succession

Succession planning helps ensure that you can fill future openings in service unit team positions. When you plan for succession, you identify and develop volunteers so they are prepared to assume open team roles. Service unit teams thrive when candidates for open positions are committed and when the pool of candidates is diverse.

Tips and tricks to succeed:

- Look beyond current troop leaders; consider former troop leaders, lifetime members, parents, and community members.
- Speak with enthusiasm about volunteering with the service unit. Potential volunteers are always listening.
- Always been on the look-out to identify the strengths of the adults in your community. Ask them to join a position that is a natural extension of their skills.
- Prioritize the development of new service unit leadership over service unit traditions. It can be hard to let a new volunteer take on a role or plan an event that has been traditionally carried out in a specific way. Keep in mind that your role is to coach volunteers when they take on new opportunities. Allow them to develop their own style and to try new things.

Habits to avoid:

- Avoid negative talk about Girl Scouts or the service unit. Volunteers are always listening.
- Avoid waiting to ask a volunteer to take on more responsibilities until the last minute.
- Avoid using a narrow vision of what leadership or events look like in your service unit. Encourage a spirit of risk-taking and innovation when asking new volunteers to tackle service unit project.

Strategies for succession:

- Send a survey to leaders asking them to nominate a fellow volunteer for a role.
- Work with your community development manager to identify potential team members.
- Partner with the volunteer stepping down to coach a fellow volunteer toward stepping into the role.
- Encourage volunteers to accept small service unit roles and then coach them toward positions of higher responsibility.
- Have fun! Volunteers will be drawn to a team that is lighthearted.

Appendix

Service Unit Meeting Guide

Date: _____

Group roles	Group norms
Facilitator: _____ Time keeper: _____ Note taker: _____ Task manager: _____ Encourager: _____	⇒ Honor the facilitator ⇒ One mic ⇒ Make space, take space ⇒ Stay solution-oriented ⇒ Speak with intent ⇒ Assume best intent ⇒ Eye on the mission

Agenda		My next steps
Time	Topic	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Meeting notes