

Being a manager in scouting

There are two main roles for adults in scouting: working with young people and supporting those who work with young people. As a Group Scout Leader you are a manager, managing a team of leaders that run the sections of your group.

Being a manager in scouting

You might not think of yourself as a 'manager' but, you are. Your role is to support other adult volunteers so they are motivated and inspired to provide first class scouting for young people. Whether it's someone to talk to or thank them, or practical help with recruiting other volunteers, they need you and scouting needs you. Being a GSL is a challenging, important and rewarding role.

Supporting you

Being a manager in scouting is a really important and rewarding role, but sometimes it can be tricky. This handbook gives you easy access to a wide range of resources and tools to help you with the challenging aspects of your vital role, from chairing group leadership team meetings to problem solving.

An Introduction to Leadership and Management in Scouting

We know that inspired and motivated adults provide first class scouting opportunities for young people. We also know that one of the most frequent comments from leaders is that they want better support.

Unfortunately many people in scouting are reluctant to use the word "manager" and to accept that they are managers. Some people argue that we begin to sound more like work than a hobby by using the word manager. But this misses the point that good management in scouting is simply about providing effective support and good leadership to our adults. Without a good "support manager" who is there to help our leaders provide excellent scouting experiences? Who is there to inspire exciting weekly programmes? And, who will thank them for all their hard work to make sure we keep them?

The Scout Association believes that volunteers in management positions should adopt an approach to management that combines the traditional roles of leadership and management, on the basis that managers should also be good leaders and provide direction and motivation to those they lead. To make this easier, we have identified six main skills areas that relate directly to our scouting environment:

Skill Area	As an effective manager in Scouting you will:
Providing direction	create a vision for scouting in your group and provide clear leadership to implement that vision
Working with people	create a team spirit and work effectively with people in your group based on trust and the fundamentals of scouting.
Achieving results	ensure that goals are achieved, plans are seen through to completion and that good relationships are maintained with parents of young people in your group and your local community.
Enabling change	encourage people to think of creative ways to improve scouting in your group and then implement the appropriate improvements.
Using resources	ensure that sufficient resources and information are available to help people in your group to provide excellent scouting.
Managing your time and personal skills	use your time effectively and continue to learn and improve the skills that you bring to your role.



Each of these areas is then further defined for each of the main management roles in scouting. The definition for Group Scout Leaders is as follows:

Area	Function
Providing direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote a cooperative culture of working in the group – leading by example • create a vision for the future development of the group • develop a plan for the group, implement and regularly review it • provide leadership, inspiration and motivation for all adults working in the group • ensure that everyone in the group follows the policies and rules of The Scout Association
Working with people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop good working relationships based on trust and scout values with the adults in the group and with others with whom the GSL works in scouting • ensure that suitable adults are recruited to work in appropriate roles in the group • manage the adults in the group – including allocation of tasks and undertaking appointment reviews • support adults in the group to develop by: completing formal training requirements, learning on the job, trying out new skills and addressing problems affecting performance • build a team spirit in the group and support the development of the team as a whole • address any conflict that may occur within the group and reduce the likelihood of conflict through good communications and other methods • run effective Leaders’ meetings in the group and participate fully in the group executive and district group scout leaders’ meetings • ensure that adults in the group keep to the standards of performance required and that the correct procedures are followed in consultation with the District Commissioner should a serious problem occur • carry out effective appointment reviews and re-assign or retire people if necessary • build and maintain collaborative relationships with other, relevant, organisations in your group’s local area
Achieving results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • satisfactorily complete projects in the group • satisfactorily resolve any problems and issues that may be raised by adults, youth members or parents or carers of youth members in the group
Enabling change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage adults in the group to think of new and creative ways to improve the group • be enthusiastic about new ideas, give constructive feedback and encourage and support further work on good ideas • carry out plans to implement change, working together with all members of the group • recognise the contribution of others towards change and improvement

Area	Function
Using resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as part of the group executive committee ensure the annual and long term budget is managed for the group • as part of the executive committee, ensure that there is an adequate income for the group including the identification of other income sources such as grants and gift aid • work with the group executive committee and leaders to ensure that the groups' meeting place and equipment are safe and that people act in a responsible manner • work with the section leaders and the group executive committee to ensure that the group has sufficient physical resources to support the programme • work with adults and young people to minimise the negative impact and maximise the positive impact that the group has on the environment • make decisions about all matters within the group based on the best available information • ensure that all adults in the group have the right information provided in a timely manner and in the most effective way
Managing your time and personal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree with the District Commissioner realistic goals and targets for the development of the Scout Group that work towards The Scout Association's and South London Scouts strategic objectives • ask for and act on feedback about how you carry out your role; • regularly check how they use their time and identify possible improvements so that they focus on agreed goals and priorities • identify the skills and knowledge that they need to develop or improve and the steps you will follow to do so