Leading and Managing People Trainers' Toolkit: Effective Adult Meetings

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Girlguiding

Contents

Introduction

About Leading and Managing People

The Leading and Managing People Trainers' Toolkits have been developed for Trainers to use to support all members who may have to lead and manage other adults within their role, or who wish to develop these skills in the future. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Unit Leaders
- Advisers at any level
- Trainers
- Commissioners at any level.

The training is designed to help give participants the skills and confidence to engage and work with other adult members in order to achieve their shared goals. The experience gained will help the participants both in Girlguiding and beyond.

Trainers delivering sessions using Leading and Managing People toolkits should hold or be working towards Module 2 of the Trainer Qualification.

How to use this toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to support Trainers to deliver training on leading effective adult meetings to adult volunteers in leading and managing people roles, such as Unit Leaders, Advisers and Commissioners.

The toolkit provides sample training plans of differing lengths (see pages 12–17) which could be delivered at a training event such as a County Day, or as a stand-alone session, perhaps in an evening. The sample training plans included will cover all aims and objectives of the toolkit.

The material in the toolkit can be adjusted to suit other session lengths. A number of activities and scenarios are provided, but as a Trainer you may well find your own that are more appropriate to the needs of the group.

Effective adult meetings and the Five Essentials

Girlguiding depends on its adult volunteers to deliver a fun, adventurous and wide-ranging programme of opportunities to young members. Effectively run adult meetings, from Unit Team planning sessions to national committee meetings, can help foster creativity, efficient planning and a sense of community among adult volunteers. They can help Leaders air concerns and ensure that everyone is able to work together to give the best experience possible to Girlguiding's young members.

One of the Five Essentials of Girlguiding's distinctive Method, which applies to all Girlguiding members including adults, is 'sharing a commitment to a common standard'. An effectively run meeting of adult members will reiterate the goals that the team is working towards and help to address any concerns that team members have. Attendees at the meeting will be able to ask any questions and leave feeling invigorated about their work and what the team is achieving together.

The culture of 'self-government and decision-making' that we encourage with young members should be present among adult volunteers. You are the experts in your local area and know what new initiatives will help to encourage participation and grow guiding. An effectively run meeting will allow all adult members to have input into governing and decision-making. This will lead to a greater uptake of ideas at local level and them being carried out with more enthusiasm, as volunteers will feel that they have ownership of the new initiative.

Meetings also provide the opportunity for you to meet team members face to face, providing social opportunities and the chance for you to become closer as a team. For a person in a leading and managing role, this is a time to ensure that all members of the team are happy in their roles and able to carry out their tasks, helping the leader to care for the individuals that make up the team.

Aim and objectives of sessions delivered with this toolkit

Trainers using this toolkit should include the following aim and set some objectives when planning a session or series of sessions.

Aim

For adult members to be able to chair effective meetings.

Objectives

These are examples of objectives that could be included when designing a training about running effective meetings.

By undertaking a session based on this toolkit, the participants will have had the opportunity to:

- identify different forms a meeting can take and discuss when these might be appropriate
- discuss the practicalities of running a meeting, including:
  - writing minutes and agendas
  - chairing a meeting
  - time management
  - evaluating meetings
- consider case studies for more challenging meeting scenarios.

Supporting information

Leadership and management

The team leader has a vital role to play when building and developing a team. This includes day-to-day team management and providing leadership.

It is important that a distinction is made between leadership and management. **Management** involves organising, coordinating and following processes. This includes:

- making sure that agendas are sent to all members before the meeting
- making sure that meetings run to time and cover all of the agenda
- planning for future meetings.

Leadership is about inspiring and motivating. This includes:

- encouraging everyone to participate in meetings
- setting the direction and sharing long-term visions with the team
- caring for the concerns of the individuals in the team.

Why hold meetings?

Meetings are held for the following reasons:

- sharing information
- planning
- problem-solving
- decision-making
- team briefings
- a combination of these.

Many Unit Teams have a planning meeting before the beginning of each term.

District/Division Teams often meet once per term, but this will depend on the local area.

The frequency of regular County meetings will be decided by the County constitution, and additional meetings may be called as needed.

Consider these questions before planning a meeting.

- What is the purpose of having this meeting – what decisions do we need to make?
- Am I passing on all necessary information?
- Am I supporting team members appropriately?
- Has it been a long time since we held a local event/had a discussion about local queries?
- Is a meeting needed at all?

It may be that a formal meeting is not needed, because it is more appropriate and quicker to send a group email or make a phone call. Sometimes having a purely social event to help members of the team get to know each other better and encourage less formal communication is more valuable.

Who should attend my meeting?

Who is invited to attend a meeting will depend on why the meeting is being held – for example, is it a regularly scheduled meeting or a meeting for a specific event? Make a list of all the people from whom input is needed, depending on the decisions to be made.

For Unit Teams this is likely to be the other Leaders and volunteers in the unit.

For District and Division Teams the people invited could include:

- District Commissioners
- Treasurer
- Unit and Assistant Leaders
- Unit Helpers
- Young Leaders

- Advisers, for example the County International Adviser or an Adviser for Members with Additional Needs
- a representative of the local Trefoil Guild.

Attendees at regular County meetings will be decided based on the County Constitution but usually include:

- trustees, which will include the Division Commissioners
- Advisers
- Coordinators
- the Chair of the Trefoil Guild
- the Treasurer
- the County President.

Some meetings may require the attendance of people with specialist knowledge – for example, a meeting about property would benefit from having a person who is able to give expert information on the subject.

Compiling an agenda

An agenda gives shape and order to a formal meeting, whether the numbers attending are small or large. The agenda needs to be compiled and sent out in good time so that people are able to come to the meeting prepared.

Less formal meetings such as unit planning meetings may not need a written agenda in advance, but attendees should start their meeting by agreeing what needs to be achieved.

A suggested timetable for an agenda would be as follows.

1. Set the meeting date and ask those attending to let you have any agenda items up to two weeks before that date.
2. One week before the meeting, send out the agenda and any papers to all participants.

When compiling the agenda, consider these points.

- What is the purpose in bringing these people to the meeting?
- What do you and they hope to achieve during the meeting?
- What are your priorities for decision-making and which decisions could wait?
- How should you order the items? It may be helpful to put the most important items near the top of the agenda, so people are still feeling fresh. If anyone has to leave before the end of the meeting they will still have made their contribution where it matters most.
- Are there any matters arising from the previous meeting?
- Have you included agenda items sent in in advance?

When sending out the agenda, make sure that it includes:

- the date and times of the meeting and the venue
- the headlines of each item on the agenda, numbered from 1 onwards, along with the name of the person who will be leading the discussion and anything that needs to be brought or read in advance for that item
- written notices or summaries for any item that is purely for information and does not need to be discussed at the meeting
- the details (name and phone number) of who to contact if unable to attend.

Most formal agendas include the following.

- Domestic notices (to make sure those new to the venue know where the facilities are and any health and safety information).
- Welcome and introduction.
- Apologies for absence.
- Notes of the last meeting (to check for accuracy and be signed off by the Chair).
- Matters arising from the last meeting.
- The required outcomes from the meeting, eg deciding a date for an event, deciding how money will be spent or appointing someone to a role.

- Financial reports.
- Team updates.
- Information from Division/County/Country/Region.
- Any Other Business.
- Date, time and place of next meeting.

See Handout 1 (page 20) for a template agenda.

The role of the Chair

The Chair of a meeting will facilitate discussion, encourage debate and make sure everyone has the opportunity to contribute, while keeping the meeting on track and on topic.

- Make sure that the meeting starts promptly and runs to time.
- Keep the discussion relevant.
- Facilitate decision-making.

It is important to be clear about your role as Chair during the meeting. Are you there as a neutral facilitator, helping participants to reach agreement when they sometimes have opposing views? Or do you need to set the direction and help participants understand any wider issues or constraints around the decisions they are making?

Sometimes you may have strong opinions on an agenda item and feel that you will not be able to take a neutral position as Chair. In this case, it may be helpful to delegate the chairing for this particular item to another attendee – in advance, so they have a chance to prepare.

Check that anyone who has been assigned tasks in preparation for the meeting is aware of what they have to do and of any deadlines for completion.

During the meeting, it is not appropriate to assign a task to a person who is not present, as they will not be aware of expectations or requirements.

Reaching a decision

It is important that all relevant information is given to attendees before decisions are made.

If this is a more formal meeting, a specific number of people (a quorum) may need to be in attendance for a decision to be reached. If applicable, this will be specified within a constitution.

Decisions may be reached through:

- a show of hands
- a secret ballot
- a general 'aye'
- consensus.

The Chair must remain neutral during the decision-making process. If you do not feel able to do this you should nominate an alternative person to chair during the process. This will allow other attendees to reach their own decisions without being influenced.

Consensus decision-making is the process of working towards a solution that everyone agrees with. This process can take time and patience but will lead to all members being satisfied with the result and feeling that they can fully support the decision.

- Ask each individual how they feel about the issue, and why.
- Encourage explanations that are reasoned and factual, rather than emotional.
- Ask people to clarify their differences of opinions.
- Help to identify any similarities and areas of common ground.
- Ensure that all attendees are given the opportunity to talk and be heard without interruption by other people within the group.
- Reflect back to the meeting the positive and negative aspects of each point of view presented, so participants can be clear about the points being made.
- Summarise regularly, and refine the possible solution as you go, using the evidence you have heard from the participants.

When people are faced with compelling evidence or have reached a better understanding of everyone's point of view, it may be easier for them to change their position and agree to support a different opinion.

Sometimes it may seem that a discussion cannot be concluded within the timeframe of the meeting. Depending on the urgency and importance, it may be appropriate to schedule a separate meeting, defer this discussion to the agenda for a future meeting, or ask for agreement to go with a decision based on a majority vote. It is important to check the constitution, if there is one, before changing the ways that decisions are reached within meetings.

Information in this section comes from the WAGGGS Leadership Development Programme: Management skills, Effective Meeting Skills, p49.

Taking notes

Notes should always be taken as a record for a meeting. How formal these notes are will depend on the type of meeting. For Unit Team meetings, a short email confirming decisions and what is planned for the term would usually be enough. District, Division and County meetings, including any formal meetings of Trustees, might need more formal records showing how decisions were reached, which could range from full minutes to a short 'actions' summary. If you are the Chair it is preferable that someone else takes notes, leaving you free to concentrate on facilitating discussion, keeping to time and making sure everyone is included.

More formal notes or minutes should contain:

- the date and place of the meeting
- who attended the meeting, and their roles, if appropriate
- the names of people who sent apologies for absence
- outcomes of matters arising from the previous meeting
- a summary of the discussion about each agenda item, recorded in the notes in same order as the items were discussed – which ideally was in the same order as the original agenda
- a record of any actions arising from the meeting, and who is responsible for these
- agreed deadlines for actions
- the date, time and location of the next meeting.

A template for meeting notes can be found in Handout 2, page 21.

After the meeting

Ensure that the notes are written up, checked for accuracy and sent out as soon as possible along with a reminder of information, replies or action required with a deadline.

Review how the meeting went by comparing the notes with the agenda.

- Did you cover all the agenda items?
- What decisions were made?
- Was there a lot featured in Any Other Business? Should any of these issues have been agenda items?
- Was the agenda adhered to, or were there times when the meeting moved off topic?
- Did you remember to thank everyone for coming and for their contribution?

Make sure you follow up with people who are completing tasks. Contact them shortly after the meeting to ensure that they are happy and know what is expected from them. Do they need any additional support to help them complete the task? Follow up with them again shortly before the task is due to make sure that everything is running to plan.

Activities

Introductory activities

Positive and negative

Purpose: To discuss what makes a meeting successful or unsuccessful.

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: Positive and negative phrases (Appendix A, page 22), 2 flipcharts

Ask people to think about the last meeting they took part in, recall how they were feeling during the meeting and choose one positive card and one negative card that best describe it. They should then sit down with a neighbour and tell them why they chose those words. Ask all participants to feed back to the group, briefly noting key points on flipcharts – one for positives and one for negatives.

Once participants have given feedback on their meetings, ask them to discuss what a good meeting can achieve. Record this on a flipchart. Points describing a positive meeting can include:

- keeping people informed and up to date
- reaching decisions
- creating involvement with others
- providing a chance to be heard
- offering an opportunity for social gatherings
- allowing contact with people in different areas of the organisation
- providing visibility and an opportunity for personal public relations
- broadening experience and acting as a learning opportunity.

While meetings can be constructive and useful, they may also:

- waste time
- waste money
- slow down progress and delay action
- be divisive.

Discuss with participants positive steps that could be taken to deal with these problems.

Meeting review

Purpose: For participants to review meetings they have run and how effective these have been, and to begin to consider ways to increase this effectiveness.

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: Meeting review sheet (Appendix B, page 23) for each participant, pens

Give each participant a meeting review sheet and ask them to fill it in about a meeting that they have held recently. If they have not run a meeting, ask them to complete it for a meeting that they have attended.

Allow five minutes for them to complete the sheet. Ask for this to be done as honestly as possible.

Note: there may be participants at the training who have attended the same meetings within guiding. In these cases it may be better to ask participants to use examples from outside guiding, if possible.

After all participants have finished, ask them to give feedback, first in pairs and then to the room as a whole.

- Have other participants identified similar areas for improvement?
- Do they think they would get the same feedback from other people who attended the meeting? If it would be different, how so?
- What aspects of their meetings did participants feel went well? What were they proud about?

Why hold meetings?

Is a meeting needed?

Purpose: For participants to consider whether meetings are the most appropriate use of time and the best way to pass on information and make decisions.

Time: 15 minutes

Equipment: Scenarios (Appendix C, page 24), sticky tack, flipchart paper

Write the following three titles at the top of the sheets of flipchart paper.

- Meeting
- Written communication
- Phone call

Divide the scenarios among participants and ask them to place each one underneath the appropriate title. This can be done individually, in pairs or in small groups.

After they have done this, ask them to feed back to the group and discuss these questions.

- Why were the scenarios placed under those titles?
- Do other participants agree?
- Would there be an alternative option? If so, what would this be?
- Are there times when meetings are held because 'That's what has always been done'?

Defining meetings

Purpose: To discuss the different types of meetings and when each might be appropriate. Time should be allowed during or after the activity to discuss why each type of meeting was chosen and when other options might be appropriate.

Time: 15-20 minutes

Equipment: Flipchart paper, scenarios (Appendix D, page 25)

Meetings can be arranged for the following reasons:

- sharing information
- planning
- problem solving
- decision-making
- team briefings
- a combination of these.

Write these reasons as headings on large sheets of paper. Provide the group with scenarios and ask them to place these under the headings that they feel are appropriate. If the group is large you may wish to work in a few smaller groups.

Use the results to facilitate a discussion within the group about where they have chosen to place the meeting and whether a physical meeting is needed. If a scenario is placed under 'a combination', discuss with the group which headings are included in that combination.

Who should attend my meeting?

Who should attend my meeting?

Purpose: To introduce the topic of choosing the appropriate people to attend a meeting.

Time: 30 minutes

Equipment: Scenarios and roles (Appendix E, page 26)

Read out a scenario and give the participants the list of roles. Ask the group to decide who would be the appropriate people to attend the meeting. Afterwards, ask the group to feed back about how they reached this decision.

Note: Appendix E contains a range of scenarios based on different roles. You may give participants a scenario from a role at their level, or extend the activity by asking them to consider scenarios relevant to different levels.

The role of the Chair

Common challenges

Purpose: For participants to discuss common challenges within meetings and potential solutions.

Time: 30 minutes

Equipment: Common challenges (Appendix F, page 27)

Cut up the 'Problems' and 'Potential solutions' from Appendix F into individual cards. Place the problems and solutions around the room. Ask participants, working in pairs or small groups, to match the potential solutions to the problems.

(You may wish to discuss these problems without initially providing potential solutions. This could be done as a round-table discussion or by a group problem-solving method where participants share their experience.)

Bring the group back together to discuss these questions.

- Have they come across these challenges within their meetings?
- Have they developed strategies for coping with some of the challenges?
- Would participants sometimes feel unable to challenge attendees at a meeting? Why would this be?
- How will participants use these potential solutions in future meetings?

Back to the point

Purpose: To practise techniques to use when conversation in a meeting moves away from the topic.

Time: 20 minutes

Ask participants to split into pairs and label themselves A and B. Give each pair a topic that they are going to have a conversation about. This could be:

- a recent change in Girlguiding
- a news item
- a film or television programme
- something that has happened during the day.

Person B's aim is to move the conversation into a different area. They can only do this by making direct links from the current conversation; for example, 'Talking of the weather, I was watching a programme last night...'.

Person A must ensure that the conversation stays on the original topic.

After five minutes, ask the pair to swap. When they have played both roles, bring all the participants back together. Discuss these questions.

- How difficult was it to bring the conversation back to the original topic? Why?
- What techniques did people use? How effective were these and why?
- Are there any ways that you could prevent people going off topic? What are these?

Case studies

Purpose: To investigate techniques to use in difficult meeting situations.

Time: 30 minutes

Equipment: Case studies (Appendix G, page 30)

Divide the participants into smaller groups and give each group a case study. Ask the groups to discuss the following questions.

- Could the situation have been avoided?
- What is the best way to control the situation?
- What learning can you take away from the situation?

Note: Appendix G contains a range of case studies based on different roles. You may give participants a scenario from a role at their level, or extend the activity by asking them to consider scenarios relevant to different levels.

Afterwards, bring the group back together to feed back on their discussion.

Reaching a decision

Reaching a decision

Purpose: For participants to try different ways of reaching a decision.

Time: 30 minutes

Equipment: Scenarios (Appendix H, page 31)

Appoint one of the participants to be Chair. Give the Chair a scenario to read to the group.

Note: Appendix H contains a range of scenarios based on different roles. You may give participants a scenario from a role at their level, or extend the activity by asking them to consider scenarios relevant to different levels.

Ask the participants to debate the scenario and then come to a decision using one of the following techniques:

- a show of hands
- a secret ballot
- a general 'aye'
- consensus.

They can repeat the decision-making process using different Chairs and different techniques.

Afterwards discuss these questions with the group.

- When is each type of decision making most appropriate?
- Are there times when the Chair has to make the overall decision? What are these?
- Which decision-making technique do they favour and why?
- What are the more challenging aspects of each technique? Why?

Sample training plans

Training plan for use with Leaders

Note: This plan includes activities from the sections provided in the toolkit; these are examples only and others from this pack or of the Trainer's choice may be used instead.

County	AnyCounty	Date	10 June	Section	Adults
Can members of The Senior Section (ie Young Leaders) attend?	Yes	Time	10-11:30am (90 minutes)	Expected numbers	20
Copy of information sent to participants seen?	Yes	Break allocated	N/A	Actual numbers	
Title of training session	How to run effective programme planning meetings				
Facilities available	Unit meeting place, Anytown. Has tables and chairs which can be moved into several arrangements. Enough space to hold up to 20 participants. Kitchen facilities and toilets on site and disabled access.				
Additional needs	Wheelchair access.				
Key person to liaise with	Anne Smith	Email/phone	a.smith123@email.com		
Topics that the Training Organiser wants the session to cover	Please highlight ways to make decisions and ways to involve the entire Unit Team.				
Do I need to evaluate the session or is there a form?	Trainer to take feedback so session can be evaluated.				
Budget for session	£1 per participant				

Aim	For Unit Teams to be able to deliver good guiding throughout the year supported by effective programme planning meetings each term.
Objectives	By the end of the session participants will have:
	1. discussed the most appropriate form for a unit programme planning meeting and who should be invited
	2. discussed the practicalities of running a planning meeting, including:
	– decision making
	– evaluating past meetings
	– following up with other Leaders
	3. discussed how to deal with difficult scenarios.

Equipment

Training box	Yes	Mobile phone	Yes	Bin bags	No
Flipchart and pens	Yes	Flipchart stand	Yes	Drink/food	Yes
Section resource box	No	Music	No	Risk assessment	Yes
First aid kit	Yes	Name tags	Yes	Poster displays	No
Laptop and projector	No	USB stick etc	No	Leadership Qualification	No

Plan

Time	Activity	Training method	Resources needed	Objective number	Comments
5 mins	Introduction and domestic arrangements	Introduction			
15 mins	Introductory activity: Is a meeting needed?	Activity and facilitated discussion	Scenarios (Appendix C)	1	Discuss the most appropriate form that a unit meeting should take.
15 mins	Activity: Defining meetings	Activity and facilitated discussion	Flipchart paper, sticky tack, scenarios (Appendix D)	1	Discuss what else a planning meeting can be. This could include the social benefits for Leaders.
30 mins	Activity: Reaching a decision	Simulated meeting and facilitated discussion	Scenarios (Appendix H)	2	Discuss how this would work with a smaller group, such as a Leadership Team.
15 mins	Following up after meetings	Information giving and facilitated discussion	Information from page 7	2	Discuss how to follow up with Leaders on agreed tasks. What makes this difficult and what solutions can be used?
10 mins	Q&A around troubleshooting meetings	Facilitated discussion		3	What worries Leaders about meetings? Do other Leaders have positive solutions?
5 mins	Closing	Closing	Handouts and evaluation form		

Training plan for use with Commissioners

Note: This plan includes activities from the sections provided in the toolkit; these are examples only and others from this pack or of the Trainer's choice may be used instead.

Country/Region	AnyRegion	Date	10 June	Section		Adults
Can members of The Senior Section (ie Young Leaders) attend?	No	Time	7-9pm (2 hours)	Expected numbers		8
Copy of information sent to participants seen?	Yes	Break allocated	10 mins halfway through and refreshments provided	Actual numbers		
Title of training session	How to run effective planning meetings					
Facilities available	County HQ, Anytown. Has tables and chairs which can be moved into several arrangements. Enough space to hold up to 20 participants. Kitchen facilities and toilets on site and disabled access.					
Additional needs	Wheelchair access.					
Key person to liaise with	Anne Smith	Email/phone	a.smith123@email.com			
Topics that the Training Organiser wants the session to cover	Please spend time on reaching decisions and troubleshooting meetings as many have meetings that stray from the agreed topic.					
Do I need to evaluate the session or is there a form?	Trainer to take feedback so session can be evaluated.					
Budget for session	£1 per participant					

Aim	To help members to run effective meetings at District and Division level, enabling them to make decisions and plan strategically.
Objectives	By the end of the session participants will have:
	1. discussed the purpose of meetings and the form these should take
	2. discussed the practicalities of running a meeting, including:
	- decision making
	- evaluating meetings
	- who should attend meetings
	3. begun to develop techniques for keeping meetings on topic.

Equipment

Training box	Yes	Mobile phone	Yes	Bin bags	No
Flipchart and pens	Yes	Flipchart stand	Yes	Drink/food	Yes
Section resource box	No	Music	No	Risk assessment	Yes
First aid kit	Yes	Name tags	Yes	Poster displays	No
Laptop and projector	No	USB stick etc	No	Leadership Qualification	No

Plan

Time	Activity	Training method	Resources needed	Objective number	Comments
5 mins	Introduction and domestic arrangements	Introduction			
15 mins	Introductory activity: Meeting review	Review sheet and facilitated discussion	Meeting review sheet (Appendix B)	1 and 2	All participants should be encouraged to be self-critical to help them fully evaluate their meetings.
30 mins	Activity: Is a meeting needed?	Activity and facilitated discussion	Scenarios (Appendix C), flipchart paper, sticky tack	1 and 2	
15 mins	Activity: Who should attend my meeting?	Activity and facilitated discussion	Scenarios (Appendix E)	2	Participants may have additional roles that they wish to add to the list.
30 mins	Activity: Reaching a decision	Simulated meeting and facilitated discussion	Scenarios (Appendix H)	2	Participants should try more than one technique to make a decision, so that they can see which works best for them.
20 mins	Activity: Back to the point	Activity and facilitated discussion	Prepare some topics for conversation in case participants can't think of any	3	Use facilitated discussion to demonstrate how, as the Trainer, you bring participants back to the right topic.
5 mins	Closing	Closing	Evaluation forms and handouts		

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Participant feedback form

Name of the Trainer...

Title of session...

Date..................... Location...

Please take a few moments to consider the questions and give your views, to help us improve.
Thank you.

Question	Please circle the most applicable answer			
Did you enjoy this session?	No – not at all	Some of it	Yes – most of it	Yes – all of it
Were the aim and objectives of the session met?	No – not at all	Partially	Mostly	Yes – fully
To what extent was the content of the training relevant to your role in guiding?	Not relevant	Partly relevant	Relevant	Very relevant
Do you feel you would be able to apply what you have learned today in your guiding role?	None of it applies to my guiding role	I would be able to apply some of it	I would be able to apply most of it	I would be able to apply all of it
When do you expect to use what you have learned today?	Never	Need more time to think about how and when	Probably in the next few months	As soon as possible
Could the Trainer have done anything further to help your learning today?	Yes Please state how:		No	

Useful resources

The Guiding Manual – for Girlguiding guidance and policies
www.girlguiding.org.uk/guidingmanual

Girlguiding Trainers' resources – search on **www.girlguiding.org.uk** for additional support for Trainers and training

GLOW WAGGGS – an online learning platform in leadership development
http://glow.wagggs.org

Mind-tools – online management training
www.mindtools.com

The American Society for Training and Development, *10 steps To Successful Meetings*, ATSD Press (Danvers, MA) 2009

Lencioni, Patrick, *Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable… about solving the most painful problem in business*, Wiley: Jossey-Bass, (San Francisco, CA) 2004

Handout 1: Agenda template

Meeting agenda:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Venue: _____

Chairing: _____

Note taking: _____

Agenda items

1. Topic group 1 _____

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

c. _____

_____

2. Topic group 2 _____

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

c. _____

_____

3. Any Other Business _____

_____

_____

_____

4. Date of next team meeting _____

Handout 2: Meeting notes

Date: _____

Time: _____

Venue: _____

Present:

Chair: _____

Notes: _____

Apologies:

	Item	Action
1	Topic group 1	
a. b. c.		
2	Topic group 2	
a. b. c.		
3	Any Other Business	
4	Date of next team meeting	

Leading and Managing People Trainers' Toolkit: Effective Adult Meetings

Appendix A: Positive and negative

Positive phrases

Made some good decisions	Everyone was involved
Found it helpful	I learned things
Relaxed format	Felt part of the team
Got to know new people	Business-like
It felt good to belong	Informative
Friendly atmosphere	

Negative phrases

Not sure why I went	People were disruptive
Didn't know who was who	No agenda
Went through things too quickly	Didn't have the chance to speak
Didn't stick to the agenda	Too long
My ideas were not valued	Too repetitive
Negative atmosphere	

Appendix B: Meeting review

Review your meetings (honestly) and give marks out of ten.

1. Are our meetings necessary? _____
2. Do we meet at the right frequency? _____
3. Are our meetings the right length? _____
4. Are our meetings at the right time? _____
5. Do the right people attend? _____
6. Do we discuss the right things? _____
7. Do we have the necessary information? _____
8. Do we have effective decision-making procedures? _____
9. Do we make the right use of external help? _____
10. Is our meeting room adequate? _____
11. Is it laid out in the right way? _____
12. Do we use appropriate aids? _____
13. Do we record appropriately? _____
14. Do we review our performance? _____
15. Do we learn from our mistakes? _____
16. Is our policy on chairing appropriate? _____
17. Is our timekeeping satisfactory? _____
18. Are refreshment arrangements adequate? _____
19. Are potential interruptions handled correctly? _____

What do we need to do to improve our meetings?

a)

b)

c)

Appendix C: Is a meeting needed?

Scenarios

Information on a new qualification has been released. You would like as many Leaders as possible to complete the qualification.	Your local area has been given some funds. You need to decide how these will be spent.	You are organising a large-scale event and need to appoint a planning committee.	You are having a Division meeting in two weeks' time and need to decide what will be on the agenda.
You have just been appointed to a new role and would like to introduce yourself to everyone.	A local Brownie unit is at risk of closing.	You have had an influx of Join Us queries.	It's nearly time to pay subscriptions.
Some Leaders in the local area have fallen out.	You normally hold a meeting at this time of year.	It is stated in your County constitution that a meeting must be held annually.	You need to plan a programme of activities for the new term.
You have noticed that Leaders have not been following the correct process with forms and need to make sure that they all have the same information.	Some Leaders have just taken a large group of girls away and you would like them to share their experience and practices.	The members of your team have not seen each other for a while and need to catch up.	One of your team has won a national award.
You would like to increase the opportunities for girls and young and women in your County and will need a fundraising team and strategy.	A building owned by your Division needs maintenance, some of which is urgent.	You need to create a five-year plan for your County.	You would like to discuss with other Leaders a parent who you are finding difficult.

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Appendix D: Defining meetings

Scenarios

There have been changes to policies that have been cascaded through your Country/Region. You want to discuss these and make sure everyone understands the changes.	Your local area has been given some funds. You need to decide how these will be spent.	You are organising a large-scale event and need to appoint a planning committee.
You are running a large-scale event and need to make sure that your team all know their roles and what they are doing before girls begin to arrive.	A local Brownie unit is at risk of closing.	You have had an influx of Join Us queries.
A large housing development is being built in your Division. You want to discuss with Leaders the impact that this could have on recruitment in the area.	A significant number of your Leaders will be moving out of the area.	You have a number of new Leaders in the area and you would like to organise a warm welcome event.
You have noticed that Leaders have not been following the correct process with forms and need to make sure that they all have the same information.	Some Leaders have just taken a large group of girls away and you would like them to share their experience and practices.	A Leader in your County has won a national award. You would like to organise an event to recognise her success.
You would like to increase the opportunities for girls and young and women in your County and will need a fundraising team and strategy.	A building owned by your Division needs maintenance, some of which is urgent.	You need to create a five-year plan for your County.
You need to plan a programme of activities for the new term.	A unit has had an accident in the meeting place. The correct processes have been followed and this is now resolved. You want to make sure that all units have the correct measures in place so that this will not happen again.	You need to meet your County training team to organise the training plan for the coming year.

Appendix E: Who should attend my meeting?

Scenarios

Unit/District role

You are planning to take your Brownies away on a residential. What meetings are needed and who should attend each meeting? Why?

You are planning a cross-section evening of activities for World Thinking Day. Who should be invited to the planning meetings and why?

District/Division role

The annual Guide activity day is scheduled to take place in six months' time. Who would you ask to join the group to organise the event and why?

You have been asked to plan the Baden-Powell Challenge for your local area. Who do you invite to attend the planning meeting and why?

County role

You are planning international selection for the County. What meetings are needed? Who should attend each meeting? Why?

You are planning a large-scale event to celebrate your County's anniversary. Who should attend the planning meetings and why?

The County executive committee is considering buying some land in order to build a campsite. A small group is needed to attend a kick-off meeting. Who would you ask to attend and why?

Roles

Section Adviser (Guides)	Outdoor Activities Adviser
Division Commissioners	Trefoil Guild representative
A non-member from the local area with experience in PR	Secretary
An experienced Leader who has worked with Guides in the past (not currently) and is usually invited to attend meetings	Young members from local units
A local activity provider	A new Leader to the local area who has expressed an interest in being involved in events
Treasurer	Trainers
Residential Adviser	Parents
A representative of each unit	A representative of each District/Division
A person with professional experience in property management	A person with professional legal experience
A person with professional HR experience	The head of committee for a local guiding property/campsite
Your unit's Leadership Team	International Adviser
PR Adviser	

Appendix F: Common challenges

Problem	Potential solutions
One person dominates the conversation.	• Use phrases such as 'You've raised an interesting issue, can we come back to that in Any Other Business?'. • Set time limits for items on the agenda. This is particularly useful to help move a person on.
One person seems disengaged and unwilling to contribute.	• Ask the person directly what they feel about the subject. This could be done by asking in a less personal way such as 'How would your District feel about this?'. • Make sure that meetings are kept on point.
The same subject keeps being raised without a potential solution being developed.	• Make it very clear when a decision has been reached. Minute this clearly and be willing to point people towards the minutes. • Use the agenda as a guide for the meeting and point people towards the agenda if they stray towards preferred subjects.
The group does not have all the information needed to make an informed decision.	• Suggest that a preliminary decision is made which can be reviewed once more information is given. • Defer the decision until more information is available. Make sure that this is recorded in the minutes with a deadline for the decision.
People disagree on a decision and are unwilling to compromise.	• Find out what is most important to each person and work towards a facilitated discussion. • Be prepared to make a deciding vote on an issue.
The group has difficulty making decisions.	• Discuss with the group the importance of reaching a decision. • Discuss possible outcomes with the group, considering the benefits and downfalls of each. • Be prepared to make a decision by consensus, or to have to make a decision as Chair.
People talk without listening to what other people are saying.	• Summarise what each person has said for the group. • Gently remind the people talking about other points of the current topic. • Do not be afraid to bring the people back to the point with phrases such as 'That's an interesting point but we were more concerned about…'.

The meeting lacks focus and many areas are discussed without any action being taken.	● Make sure that you stick to the agenda. Do not move on from an item until a potential solution is reached. ● Remind attendees of where they are on the agenda.
The meeting and decisions are rushed.	● Consider the structure of the agenda. ● Place time limits next to each item based on their importance and how long they will take to discuss. ● Consider whether meetings are of a suitable length. Are you trying to fit too much into one meeting? ● Does everything need to be discussed within the meeting or could an alternative format be used, such as email?
People do not follow through with actions from previous meetings.	● Make sure that minutes contain any decisions made and name the people responsible for actions. ● When planning actions, give an agreed timeline for the work. Discuss with the person when you will be checking with them about the action.
Too much time is spent discussing smaller agenda items, meaning that there is no remaining time for larger items.	● Place time limits next to each item based on their importance and how long they will take to discuss. ● Refer people to the agenda and be prepared to move people on with phrases such as 'I think we should be able to move on to…'.
People try to manipulate other group members to achieve their desired outcome.	● Remind attendees that they should be talking about the item and not about any personal views. ● Consider having an anonymised system for voting so that people do not feel under any additional pressure.
People are unable to separate the ideas at the meeting from the person who has presented them.	● Ask people to present written arguments before the meeting begins. They can then be given by the Chair. ● Remind attendees that they should be talking about the item and not about any personal views.
People hold informal discussions in smaller groups during the meeting. This is very often while other people are talking.	● Ask group members to explain any discussion that they have had. ● Ask if there is a problem with the item and how it is being raised. ● Ask if they would like to discuss an issue with the Chair privately outside the meeting. (It is acceptable to confront people even if it creates a temporary atmosphere.)

The meeting is used as a forum for local gossip.	• Refer people to the agenda and areas to be discussed. • Use phrases such as: 'It's quite important that we continue discussing…'. • If needed, refer people to the Girlguiding Code of Conduct.
People are low on energy and seem distracted.	• Take a short break. • Consider the length of meetings. • Do meetings always occur in an evening or after an event?
People do not attend.	• Consider where and when meetings are held. Does this clash with other regular commitments? • Make meetings shorter and to the point. • Do all people need to attend? Could you review who is invited to meetings?

Appendix G: Case studies

Unit/District role

Scenario 1

You have organised a meeting with your unit's Leadership Team to plan a residential event for the girls. Some of the people you have asked to attend have not responded to the email invitation. When you have asked them in person, they have been quite vague and will not let you know either way whether they can attend. You are worried that you may not have enough people at the meeting for it to be useful.

Scenario 2

You are holding a planning meeting to discuss new programme and badge ideas for your unit. Your team have been working together in the unit for a long time and have a lot of experience. The difficulty is that they are unresponsive to new ideas, and would prefer to stick to tried and tested methods. This means that they can appear rude to people suggesting new ideas. The negativity is beginning to affect the general mood in the meeting, and may have a long-term impact on the new opportunities available to girls.

District/Division role

Scenario 3

You are holding a meeting to plan a local event. One of the Leaders who will be attending often has unusual and well-thought-out ideas to contribute but is hesitant to speak in meetings.

Scenario 4

You are running a meeting to discuss international opportunities for girls in your area. One of the Leaders attending is extremely experienced, has attended a number of international events and is a Leader for multiple sections. Although a great asset to the meeting she finds it difficult to allow others to contribute.

County role

Scenario 5

You are holding a meeting that requires a representative from every Division in the local area. You have noticed that one of the attendees is not engaging with the conversation. You gather, from overhearing a conversation before the meeting started, that this person is only there because her Commissioner told her she had to attend. She has come straight from work and hasn't had a chance to eat beforehand, let alone read the agenda.

All roles

Scenario 6

During a meeting that you are chairing a small sub-group has formed and is holding separate discussions around the agenda. The sub-group members are enthusiastic about what is being discussed, but are disrupting the meeting.

Scenario 7

You have had what you felt was a successful meeting. However, while clearing away, you overhear a conversation in the corridor complaining about the meeting. One person does not think that certain issues were discussed fully and felt that some things were sidelined. This particular person did not speak during the meeting and reacted positively to all suggestions.

Appendix H: Reaching a decision

Scenarios

Unit/District role
You would like to take the Guides on a special outing. Some of the Leaders would like to go ice skating; some would like to go to the climbing wall; the Guides have asked to go bowling.

District/Division role
Your local area has a small amount of money to spend. Some Leaders would like the money to go towards improvements to a building that is not used a lot. They feel that the improvements would mean that people would use the building more. Other Leaders would like the money to go towards a hardship fund to help with annual subscriptions. A third group have suggested that the money be spent on an all-section activity day to bring the local area together.

County role
Your County has space on the committee for two new Adviser positions. These would be non-voting roles whose holders would attend meetings. The County has been looking at future development and it has been highlighted that there are falling numbers in the Guide age group and a perception that there is not enough adventure. The new Advisers suggested are:

- an external expert in adventurous activities
- a Guide Adviser
- a PR Adviser – this could be an external role and should be someone with experience in the field
- a Systems Adviser to do more analysis of need in the local area.