

# DEALING WITH DIFFICULT REVIEWS.



[scouts.org.uk/review](https://scouts.org.uk/review)

## Difficult reviews

At some point during your time as a Volunteer Manager, it is inevitable that you will have to give a difficult review. Someone may be doing a bad job, or may not have completed the necessary training. They may not be following through with things they have agreed to do, or they may just be the wrong person for the role.

## Some questions to help with the review

To make a start with the review, firstly, you need to ask yourself the following questions.

### What does the other person expect?

The review meeting should not be the first time that you are discussing problems, unless there are unusual circumstances (that is, you may be new to the role, or there could be specific problem areas that have only just arisen). Make sure that you have carried out previous reviews and that they are documented. If you have already developed a relationship with the person through regular reviews, then it will be easier to have a more structured discussion.

Often people are unaware that they are doing anything wrong, and they can't be expected to change or improve things if they don't know there's a problem.

### What are my options?

Your choices may be to:

- provide the person with a clear action plan or development plan for a short period
- ask them to leave Scouting
- suggest they change to a different role
- suggest they share the role with someone else.

Think about how you would deal with each of these possible outcomes in the short-and long-term. For example, if the person leaves or moves to a new role, how will you fill the gap? Think about the outcomes, but don't let this put you off carrying out the review.

## Preparation

Preparation is key to an effective and clear conversation.

- **Take time to prepare.** Look at previous reviews so you have all the background information.
- **Ensure you have all the facts to hand.** Consider the objectives that were agreed at the last review, and in what way they are not being met.
- **Prepare examples of what you want to discuss.** There may be a particular behaviour that you need to discuss, or more general issues, for example, around attitude.
- **Prepare your questions.** Make sure they are open and clear (that is, questions that cannot be answered with 'yes' or 'no' only).

- **Have a discussion with your line manager.** Share your concerns and discuss your approach, making your line manager fully aware of the situation and possible outcomes
- **Select your time and place.** Make sure you have sufficient time to discuss any issues and choose somewhere quiet and private to meet.

## How to approach the discussion

**Before you carry out the review, ask yourself:**

- Am I clear on why I am having this review?
- What do I hope to accomplish?
- What would be the ideal outcome?
- How can I be supportive?
- What may the other person's point of view be?
- Is the other person aware of the problem (have I discussed it with them previously and been clear with them about why I want a conversation)?
- Have I kept my views and thoughts confidential?

If you have concerns or worries about your approach, discuss this with your line manager.

## During the meeting

- **Set out the agenda.** Be clear about what it is you want to discuss. If possible, send details before you meet.
- **Review the action plan.** Where there are shortcomings, discuss these in detail providing relevant feedback.
- **Give examples.** If the issue is around behaviour or attitude, then give clear examples of what you have seen, heard or observed. Focus on behaviour that can change rather than on personality traits.
- **Be open to their views.** Approach the conversation with an attitude of curiosity. Ask open questions to find out their point of view. You may discover that they are bored, feel underused or unsupported.
- **Actively listen.** Make eye contact and summarise what they are telling you – their views may help you to settle on a way forward.
- **Agree the next steps.** If possible, agree a common understanding and write down what has been agreed, along with any timescales.

## What happens next?

After your conversation, you may decide that you need some time to consider what happens next. This is not a problem – don't feel pressured into making a quick decision on the spot. If you need more time, then say so, and let them know when you will get back to them (and make sure you follow through).

### However, you may decide on one of the following outcomes:

- **They want to change role.** If they are bored or unmotivated, you may agree that it is best for them to change roles. Think of some alternatives that would better suit their skills and abilities.
- **You want them to change role.** If they are not performing and you want them to leave, explain clearly that you are making a decision to move them to a role which better suits their skills and abilities. Be clear, and give reasons why this is happening.
- **They want to leave Scouting.** If they no longer wish to volunteer, then don't force them to stay. Thank them for the time they have given and, if appropriate, let them know that the door is always open if their circumstances change.
- **You want them to leave Scouting.** You can cancel someone's appointment in Scouting for a variety of reasons (see Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR): The Appointment Process, Rule 7a). If this is the outcome, be clear, giving the reasons why this is happening, and thank them for the time they have given to Scouting.

Whatever the outcome, the necessary paperwork (Cancellation/Suspension (CS) or Change of Role (CR) Forms) will need to be completed.

## Further information

You can find out more about the review process and how to give effective feedback in the Finding Out How Volunteers Are Getting On review booklet. This resource, along with templates to help you record reviews can be found online at [www.scouts.org.uk/review](http://www.scouts.org.uk/review)

# CHECKLIST FOR MANAGERS CARRYING OUT DIFFICULT REVIEWS.

AREA TO CONSIDER	SUPPORTING INFORMATION OR ACTION
<p>Am I clear about why I am having the conversation?</p> <p>Am I clear about what I wish the outcome to be?</p>	
<p>Have I informed my line manager that I am carrying out the review and the possible outcomes?</p> <p>Do I want to discuss any concerns about how I might approach the review with my line manager?</p>	
<p>Have I invited the person concerned, set a time, date and chosen a suitable location?</p> <p>Have I specified the reason for the review?</p>	
<p>Have I gathered any evidence required? Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of objectives not met</li> <li>• evidence of unsatisfactory/unhelpful behaviour or attitude</li> <li>• other supporting documentation.</li> </ul>	
<p>Have I considered how I will approach this review? Do I own the feedback?</p> <p>Am I clear about what I will discuss, particularly about what my expectations are and where these expectations are not being met?</p>	
<p>Do I have an agenda and clear, open questions that I will ask?</p>	
<p>Have I considered the possible outcomes?</p> <p>Have I considered what I will do if the person leaves or moves to a new role?</p>	



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Further information 

Further Guidance can be found online at  
[www.scouts.org.uk/managers](http://www.scouts.org.uk/managers)  
[www.scouts.org.uk/por](http://www.scouts.org.uk/por)  
[www.scouts.org.uk/review](http://www.scouts.org.uk/review)