

An Introduction to Leadership and Management in Scouting



Version 1: May 2011

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 (whether that is someone to talk to, someone to thank them or practical assistance with administration and recruitment of helpers).

The role of Group Scout Leaders and Commissioners is critical in providing the necessary support to these Leaders – and in ensuring that Scouting continues to develop and thrive in its local communities. The role of Group Scout Leaders and Commissioners is, in a nutshell, one of leadership and management within Scouting. 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 “manager” who is there to help our Leaders provide that excellent Scouting experience? Who is there to ensure the practicalities of running a Scout Group are addressed so the Leaders can focus on the programme? Who will thank them for all their hard work to make sure we keep them?

We believe that the time is right to be clear about what we require of our managers and help the current post holders focus on the things that will make a difference. Providing this clarity will also make it easier to recruit people to fill the roles – we all know there are far too many Group Scout Leader vacancies and being clear about the role will help undoubtedly help us to fill them.

With this as background we have been considering how we can best develop the leadership and management skills in Scouting. We have identified an approach to leadership and management in Scouting and we are now developing various tools to help.

We believe that volunteers in line 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 area and provide clear leadership to implement that vision.
Working with people	create a team spirit and work effectively with people in your area 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 Scouting and the local community.

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Skill Area	As an effective manager in Scouting you will
Enabling change	encourage people to think of creative ways to improve Scouting in your area and then implement the appropriate improvements.
Using resources	ensure that sufficient resources and information are available to help people in your area 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.

This is a long-term project, but we should not be embarrassed about discussing leadership and management in Scouting and trying to improve.

Further information

This work is ongoing and will doubtless change over time. For further information please contact Steve Peck (stephen.peck@scouts.org.uk) or Tim Kidd (ccengland@scouts.org.uk).