

Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

A. Recruitment, Retention and Adult Support

Module Overview

As a District Leader, you are well placed to *support* the recruitment and retention of adults in Scouting. Along with the Group Leader and your District Commissioner, ensuring there are enough adults for each Section is a key to successful Scouting at a local level. In this module, we explore your role in this process.

Expected Outcomes

In this module, it is expected that you will:

- Play an active part in a District plan to aid recruitment, retention and support of adults;
- Build confidence in suggesting and supporting methods of recruitment and retention;
- Implement succession planning across all Sections in your District; and
- Understand and promote the adult training process.

Practical Outcomes

This module will lead you to creating a strategy and plan to ensure all of your Sections are adequately staffed to deliver active Scouting. With solid leadership in place, you will have space to focus on program delivery and development.

Amount of Work

This is an extensive module. It is expected that this module will take between 3 and 6 months to complete depending on the current level of leadership in the District and the frequency with that you meet with your leaders. This will include 3 face-to-face meetings with your Regional Commissioner (Scouts) (RC (S)) to setup, support and review your progress. You will be expected to participate as a trainer on a training course. It will also include discussions with your District Commissioner, Section Leaders and possibly Group Leaders to put the plan in place.

In This Pack

To support the implementation and running of the module, the following resources are provided:

- Regional Commissioner (Scouts)'s Briefing
- Participant Briefing
- Module Resources
- Module Completion and Feedback

Other Modules in the Scheme

Following this module, you might like to consider one of the other modules in the scheme:

- District Communications
- Running effective Mindaris
- District Events and Activities
- Scout Leadership Courses
- Actively Supporting Troops
- Accessing the award scheme
- Training others



About the Tools for Effective District Scout Leading Scheme

This scheme was introduced in 2008 to support the work of new and existing District Scout Leaders. There are several modules in the scheme focusing on different areas of the role. District Leaders should negotiate with their Regional Commissioner (Scouts) to decide which modules are most relevant to your situation. The modules are designed to be practical in nature and completed in any order. For more information, visit www.nsw.scouts.com/scouts/districtleaders.htm.

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Region Commissioner (Scouts)'s Briefing

This module can be run with an individual or with a number of District Leaders. The outcomes for each participant are the same. Your set up and review of progress may be structured differently if working with a number of District Leaders.

Your Role in this Module

After the initial input and set-up of the module, your role in this module is to provide support, advice and example resources from your own operations or those you have seen in use. You may find it useful to collect these into a resource folder before starting the module and adding to the resource over time. Mid way through the module, you must meet with the participant to review progress to date and offer further support. At the end of the module, you must complete a review and submit the review form to the State Commissioner (Scouts).



Setting Up the Module

The module should be set up during a single set-up session with the participant(s). This should preferably be done face-to-face where practical, but can be achieved over email or telephone. The session would cover:

- Understanding and acceptance of the module outcomes
- Review of current skills, knowledge and experience
- Review of the resources available in this pack and elsewhere, written and human
- Outline plan for development, including milestones and timescales
- Identification of support required and a plan to provide it
- Expectations of completion and review – how do we know we have finished?

This session may or may not form part of your regular Region Mindari.

Support to the Region Commissioner (Scouts)

Support is available to you in facilitating this module from your State Commissioner's Team. This could include telephone support or further working examples of recruitment and retention strategies. You should also look to the District Commissioner and other members of your Region Team (particularly the Adult Training & Development team) for ideas and advice on this topic. Where a District has a good strategy for recruitment and retention, you could use them as a model and encourage your District Leaders to visit.

Measuring Success

Scouting has always been based on doing your best. With this in mind, measuring success can be a very subjective task. Emphasising the positive achievements of the participant(s) will further build confidence. Remember the expected outcomes of the module and measure against those – Did the participant(s):

- Play an active part in a District plan to aid recruitment, retention and support of adults?
- Build confidence in suggesting and support methods of recruitment and retention?
- Implement succession planning across all Sections in their District?
- Understand and promote the adult training process?

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Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

Recruitment, Retention and Adult Support



Participating District Leader's Briefing

Welcome to the Recruitment, Retention and Adult Support module of the Tools for Effective District Scout Leading scheme. This is not a formal training scheme, but a practical, project driven support scheme designed specifically to support and develop you in your Scouting role.

Your Role in this Module

You will meet with your Regional Commissioner (Scouts) (RC (S)) to discuss the expected outcomes of this module and to set a plan. Part of that plan will involve you working alone and with others to develop a strategy for your District. Although there is room to experiment and trial different approaches, ultimately, the module will lead you to a working model that will help you with recruitment, retention and adult support.

Setting Up the Module

The first step is to meet with your RC (S). There may be other participants completing the same module, so it would be helpful to meet together and share ideas. In your meeting, you should cover:

- Your understanding and acceptance of the module outcomes
- Review of current skills, knowledge and experience
- Review of the resources available in this pack and elsewhere, written and human
- Outline plan for development, including milestones and timescales
- Identification of support required and a plan to provide it
- Expectations of completion and review – how do we know we have finished?

This session may or may not form part of your regular Region Mindari.

Support Available

Your RC (S) is probably the central support to you in this module, but you should also talk with your District Commissioner, other members of your District Team (especially the District Leader Adult Training & Development) and the Section Leaders you are supporting to seek their views and strategies as well.

Module Layout

There are five elements to this module:

- Methods of Recruitment and Retention
- District Strategy on Recruitment, Retention and Adult Support
- Succession Planning
- The Adult Training Program
- Module Review

You will find information on each over the next few pages.

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Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

Recruitment, Retention and Adult Support

Element A: Methods of Recruitment and Retention

Before you can get out there and advise people on how to recruit and retain their adult leaders, it would probably be a good start to have some ideas of your own! This element works through some methods that have been successfully employed in the recruitment and retention of adults. None of this is new – it is just a case of gathering together the information.

The Task

- Build an ideas bank of proven methods of adult recruitment and retention that you can use to advise others. This can be in any format, including a published work on the subject that you have read.
- You should include at least ten recruitment ideas and five retention ideas.

You will present your resource at your interim review meeting.

Where to get ideas from

There are many State, National and outside agency resources that could help you. Try the Personnel Committee Handbook for a start, but there are others around. Avoid re-inventing the wheel as the information is already out there. To help sort the information into what is useful and what isn't, talk to people! In particular, talk to the successful Sections and Groups in your District about how they recruited adults. Talk to the long serving and new leaders about why they joined and why they are still leading. Try to identify common themes or one off events that could be used by others. (Note, we will come to succession planning later in the module). The next step is to talk to your Region Team about their thoughts, ideas and past successes.

Presenting your ideas

The secret to success in this module is being passionate about the subject. Make sure you have a real belief in the ideas you are presenting and know answers to all of the counter-arguments you will receive. However you choose to present your ideas, it should be something that can be used in a practical way by the target audience. Decide whether you are writing for a District Team, a Group Committee/Group Leader or for your Section Leaders. Remember to concentrate on ideas that are practical for your Section. You might consider presenting as:

- A set of factsheets
- A powerpoint presentation
- A website
- A verbal presentation
- Flow charts
- Advertising posters
- Comic strips
- Testimonials



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Element B: District Strategy on Recruitment, Retention & Adult Support

It is essential to recognise from the outset that no single person can effectively address the issues of recruitment, retention and adult support. Many will argue that these are the roles of a Group Leader or District Leader Adult Training & Development, but the truth is, a team approach is always required. A Section District Leader without any Section Leaders to support does not have much of a role at all. This element aims to unite the people involved in the process to focus their efforts in the same direction. You have a role to play in this process.

The Task

- Play an active role in creating (or, where one exists, reviewing your role in) a strategy to support the recruitment, retention and support of adults in the District.
- The plan should include the roles of the District Commissioner, District Leaders, Group Leaders, Group Committees and Section Leaders.
- Indicate on the plan where your role fits and the direct effect on your Sections.

You will produce notes on your role in this plan at your interim review meeting. Note: You are not necessarily being asked to create or manage this strategy, merely to play your part in it. Every District Council should be constantly working on this area, so there will always be something to do.

Getting the Team Together

It may be that one of the toughest challenges of this element is getting your team to embrace the need for a strategy. Alternatively, your District may already have a sound strategy in place and you need to play your part in it. You will only be completing this module if there is a need in your area for such a strategy. You may need to take the initiative and lead this project if you meet with disinterest or lack of time from your District Team. Remember that the Group Leader is primarily responsible for this area within their Group, but you have a large role to play as the age range expert.

Contents of the Strategy

This is very much open to debate and discussion. However, as a basic guide, the strategy should include:

- A mission statement on what you hope you achieve
- Who is responsible for which Section
- A regular review of progress and success
- Support – including ideas and resources
- A timescale for each part (remembering that some are on-going)



Implementing the model

Once you are over the first hurdle of getting agreement to devise the strategy, then the second hurdle of actually writing it, you still have the issue of implementing it. Of course, if the strategy is properly devised, this will be a shared responsibility and you will just need to play your part. However, ensuring the strategy stays fresh and in progress will require constant review and revision. Make sure you are well placed to be part of this.

Resources to Support This Element

We have created some resources for you to support this Element:

- A sample District recruitment and retention plan

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Element C: Succession Planning

It's too easy to leave the successful Sections to get on with the job of Scouting whilst you support those in need of extra help. However, an effective plan for recruiting, developing and replacing leaders is an important part of giving a Section longevity. It doesn't take much to do but ensures that a Section can cope with the expected or unexpected.

The Task

- In consultation with the Section Leader and Group Leader, devise and record a succession plan for each Section in your District.

You will present this plan at your final review meeting. The plan should be written, but only needs to be brief for each Section.



What is Succession Planning

Succession Planning is the use of a deliberate process to ensure that staff are developed who are able to replace other staff as required. A Section Leader will have responsibility for a wide range of functions in the Section and most Assistant Section Leaders will also carry some of the burden. The Section needs to have an understanding of the functions and tasks that each adult carries out so that a back-up is in place for each. This will allow a Section to continue functioning effectively in the event of an unexpected absence. In addition to this preparation for the unexpected, and more importantly, a key part of supporting adults is appreciating their commitment to the role. Many adults in Scouting have a set plan of how long they desire performing their role. An effective District Leader will know this plan or be able to recognise the signs that a leader needs to move forward. By identifying the time scales involved and actively working towards providing a successor, a seamless hand-over process can occur and disruption to the Section can be avoided.

Encouraging Succession Planning

District Leaders and Group Leaders are best placed to review the need for succession planning. In successful Sections with strong leadership, adding to the leader team or developing the skills of those in place is a valid plan – they won't all last forever and maybe their skills can be used outside of the Section? All too often, a District Leader will recognise where a particular adult has been in a role for too long. This might show in their lack of commitment, or in a clear desire to do something else or something more. By identifying a successor, an adult can move guilt-free to a new role or retire gracefully. The District Leader plays a key role in this plan. You may wish to complete the "Training Others" Module of this scheme which will help you use the training needs of leaders in the District as a tool to identify possible succession solutions.

Implementing the model

As always, just writing it down means nothing if you don't do something with it. This is where the adult support role comes in. You will need your skills of diplomacy, counselling, strategic planning and communication to ensure all the player accept and adopt the plan.

Resources to Support This Element

We have created some resources for you to support this Element:

- Succession planning overview

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Element D: The Adult Training Program

There is a whole team of people in Adult Training and Development who have a specific Scouting role to train and develop our Section Leaders. However, they are not as close to the Section Leaders as you are and need your help to link adults to the support programs on offer. A District Leader has an obligation to ensure leaders in their Section are aware of the support available and can access the Adult Training Scheme.

The Task

- Through discussion with either your District Leader AT&D or your Regional Commissioner AT&D, gain an understanding of the Basic, Advance and Supplementary Training Schemes as relevant to your Section.
- On at least one occasion, spend a day at a Section specific training course (Basic Leadership 3 or Advance Leadership 3) as either a participant or a presenter **OR** attend an Introductory Night for leaders in your Region as a support person.

Understanding the scheme

The District Leader is the first line of support for new and existing leaders on the ground. Each adult in Scouting makes a commitment to undertake formal training relevant to their role. It is essential that District Leaders understand what this training is and how it can be accessed. In particular, a District Leader will play an active role in recommending and setting up In-Service Training for new leaders in an appropriate neighbouring Section. If you are unfamiliar with the training program structure and requirements for adults in your Section, you must ask for details from your District Leader AT&D (or equivalent). You will also need to understand the reasons for, and benefits of offering accredited training to our adult members.



Advising and Encouraging Leaders

Our Adult Support strategy is a constantly developing program. The courses offered are constantly reviewed and scrutinised for relevance and value to the participants. A District Leader must always promote the scheme in a positive light. The benefits of formal adult training have been noted since Scouting began and are still relevant today. If you are not confident that training has value, then you must spend time at a formal training course talking to the trainers and participants about their experiences.

Your Own Training

Although holding a Wood Badge in your Section is considered essential for a District Leader, we recognise that you may be working towards this aim. By attending the required courses for your Wood Badge, you will cover off the requirements of this element.

Resources to Support This Element

We have created some resources for you to support this Element:

- State Training Handbook (available for download at www.nsw.scouts.com)

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Review and Feedback

Now you have completed this module, it is time to review your experiences. The review has three purposes:

- To ensure you have developed in your role as a District Leader in this area
- To ensure the contents of the module are relevant, appropriate and support the outcomes
- To identify the next steps for your development

You will complete this review in consultation with your RC (S). The RC (S) will submit a copy of the review to the State Commissioner within 4 weeks of your meeting. If you would like to attach examples of your work, the State Team would be grateful to receive them.

DL's Name: _____ Date of review: _____
District: _____ Region: _____
Reviewer: _____

About Your Experiences

Did the module lead you to:

	Achieved	Close to	Started	Did not
Devise/Play a part in the District Adult Support Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Build ideas and confidence in recruiting & retaining	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implement succession planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understand and promote the adult training scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes:

About the Module and Resources provided

Please rate the resources in this module:

	Excellent	Suitable	Weak	Poor
D1: Sample District Recruitment & Retention plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D2: Succession Planning overview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D3: State Training Handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes:

The Next Steps

There are more Modules available in the scheme. You should now discuss with your RC (S) which would be the most appropriate for you.

- I will be taking a break from Effective Tool Modules for a while
- I would like to do another one, but I am still choosing which
- I am going to try _____ next

Instructions to RC (S) on completion of this form

The completed form should be forwarded to the State Commissioner for your Section within four weeks of the review meeting. You may wish to take a copy of the form for your own records and/or share the information with your Region Commissioner or the participants District Commissioner. The contents of the form will be used to monitor overall region progress on developing District Leaders and for ongoing review of the resources and support materials available.

Resource D.1: Sample District Recruitment and Retention Strategy

This resource is in development.

