



# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

A modular training program for District Leaders

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## A. Scheme Overview

### Introduction

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 negotiate with their Regional Commissioner Youth Program to decide which modules are most relevant to their situation. The modules are designed to be practical in nature and completed in any order by individuals or small groups of participants. Each Module is structured in the same way but with different expected outcomes, working methods and support materials as appropriate.

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## Module Structure

Each module in the scheme follows the same basic structure, both in written layout and purpose. Each module is supported by a written document containing:

- A module overview
- Regional Commissioner Youth Program’s Briefing
- Participant Briefing
- Module Resources
- Module Completion and Feedback

Each module also supports learning and development at three levels:

- High order skills, thinking and learning
- Personal development
- Practical activities

The high order skills are implicit in the modules design whereas the personal development and practical activities are more explicit in the resources provided. A summary of these areas is listed in the following Module Summary listing.

## Module Summary

At launch, there are eight modules available. It is anticipated that more will be added as required and the scheme allows for the easy insertion, amendment and removal of modules over a period of time.

### District Communications

This module is about creating an effective communication strategy and putting it to use.

#### High Order skills, thinking and learning

- Written presentation
- Verbal presentation
- Communication skills

#### Personal Development

- Increased confidence in communicating
- Presentation skills
- Event management

#### Practical Activities

- Develop and implement a communications strategy
- Develop a set of communications for activities
- Deliver a verbal presentation

### Running Effective Mindaris

#### High Order skills, thinking and learning

- Verbal presentation
- Listening to others
- Team Leadership

#### Personal Development

- Meeting management
- Reaching decisions
- Presentation skills

#### Practical Activities

- Organising and running Mindaris
- Driving for progression

### Recruitment, retention and supporting adults

#### High Order skills, thinking and learning

- Forward planning
- Training and supporting other people
- Problem Analysis

## **Personal Development**

- Organisational skills
- Convincing and Supporting others
- Conflict resolution

## **Practical Activities**

- Adult support audit
- Adult recruitment campaign
- Adult retention campaign
- Managing training support

## **District Events and Activities**

### **High Order skills, thinking and learning**

- Forward planning
- Effective programming
- Project management

### **Personal Development**

- Organisational skills
- Team Leading
- Programming
- Communications
- Delegating and monitoring progress

### **Practical Activities**

- Design, plan and run a District Activity
- Develop a model for running future events

## **Scout Leadership Courses**

### **High Order skills, thinking and learning**

- Forward planning
- Original approaches
- Training and developing others
- Community support

### **Personal Development**

- Organisational skills
- Youth leadership and skills training development
- Resource development

### **Practical Activities**

- Plan and run a Scout Leadership Course
- Involve others in planning
- Feedback on course successes to aid future courses

## **Actively Supporting Troops**

### **High Order skills, thinking and learning**

- Conflict resolution
- Personal development of others
- Reflective analysis and strategic development

### **Personal Development**

- Time management
- Support others

### **Practical Activities**

- Regular and purposeful Section visits
- Development plans
- Succession planning
- Original programming

## **Accessing the award scheme**

### **High Order skills, thinking and learning**

- Research skills
- Presentation skills
- Training and developing others

### **Personal Development**

- Resource development
- Presentation skills

### **Practical Activities**

- Sound knowledge of the award scheme
- Development of supporting resources and events
- Delivery of skills training

## **Training others**

### **High Order skills, thinking and learning**

- Supporting others
- Presentation skills

### **Personal Development**

- Presentations skills
- Subject knowledge improvement
- Identifying needs and solutions

### **Practical Activities**

- Practical training sessions

# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## B. District Communications

### Module Overview

This module aims to improve your communication skills within the District.

### Expected Outcomes

In this module, it is expected that you will:

- Design and implement an effective communication strategy for your District
- Explore different ways of communicating with members of your District
- Improve participation in your District activities by improving communication
- Gain confidence in communicating for different purposes



### Practical Outcomes

This module will guide the participant to create and distribute written communications to support District events or activities. There will also be support towards two face to face meetings. Both of these areas will support real events in the District.

### Amount of Work

This module could take between three and six months to complete. This would include preparation work resulting in a range of written communications being created and two face to face meetings.

### In This Pack

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

- Regional Commissioner Youth Program'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:

- Running effective Mindaris
- Recruitment, retention and supporting adults
- 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](http://www.nsw.scouts.com/scouts/districtleaders.htm).



# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## District Communications

### Region Commissioner Youth Program'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. At the end of the module, the Region Commissioner Youth Program must review the module's effectiveness and submit the review report to the State Commissioner Youth Program.

### 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 Training Meetings.

### Support to the Region Commissioner Youth Program

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 communication types. You should also look to the District Commissioner and other members of your Region Team for ideas and advise on this topic. Where a District is particularly successful in communicating with Sections, there may be a strategy in place already.

### 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):

- Design and implement an effective communication strategy for their District?
- Explore different ways of communicating with members of their District?
- Improve participation in their District activities by improving communication?
- Gain confidence in communicating for different purposes?

### About the Tools for Effective District Scout Leading Scheme

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# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## District Communications

### Participating District Leader's Briefing

Welcome to the District Communications module of the Tools for Effective District 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 Youth Program (RCYP) 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 communications 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 be the basis of your future communications. As communications is vital to the success of your District support role, the module is simply a tool to help you develop rather than additional workload. If you feel that your communications strategy is already well developed then this module might not be for you. You should discuss this with your RCYP.

### Setting Up the Module

The first step is to meet with your RCYP. 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 Training Meetings.

### Support Available

Your RCYP 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 and the Section Leaders you are supporting to seek their views and strategies on communication as well.

### Module Layout

There are five elements to this module:

- A. Our Communication Strategy
- B. Appropriate Communication Styles
- C. District Activity Communications
- D. Verbal Presentations

Module Review

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

### About the Tools for Effective District Scout Leading Scheme

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# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## District Communications

### Element A: Our Communication Strategy

Most of the time, we communicate as and when we have to. However, developing a communication strategy establishes the method and frequency of your communications to set an expectation. If your team are expecting communications in a set format at a set time, they are more likely to be prepared to deal with the contents. Sending ad hoc communications can sometimes over-burden already busy Section Leaders.

#### The Task

In consultation with your District Team (District Commissioner and other District Leaders) and your District Training Meeting (DTM or Mindari), devise and implement your preferred communication strategy for the coming 12 months. This should be a single page, written document that is available at your module review meeting.

#### What Should Be in a Communications Strategy?

This is largely up to you to decide, but the key elements would need to include:

- Who is the communication between? (Section Leaders and DSL or a wider audience?)
- What information will be communicated? (Note – there may be different types that each require a different strategy)
- What is the best / most efficient / most acceptable method? (Email, post, phone)
- How often should this information be communicated?
- When and how to we review this strategy?

#### Corporate Identity

Scouting is a past-time and you are part of a voluntary organisation. This is not a reason that we can't take pride and show professionalism in what we do and how we do it. Part of your overall communication strategy should consider a corporate identity – a consistent look to your communications. For written communications, this could be as simple as using a consistent headed paper. For electronic communications, layout, fonts, graphics and colours are all part of the final piece. A large amount of communication is handled electronically in Scouting, so why not have a go at setting up a template for your letters and mailings? An attractively presented document is appealing to the eye and more likely to be read.

#### Implementing the Strategy

There is no point spending time thinking and planning if you don't have the discipline to implement your decisions. Spend some time putting together your tools – design your corporate image and ensure you have word processing templates and email templates to support it. Stick to your style and strategy for at least 2 months before making changes – or you will spend all of your time designing and modifying the look instead of communicating the message. Offer opportunities for recipients to give you feedback on your style.

#### Resources to Support This Element

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

- SS1: Creating word processing and email templates
- SS2: Example Communication Strategy

# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## District Communications

### Element B: Appropriate Communication Styles

How you communicate your message directly affects how the recipient will react to it. In this element, we consider the creation of appropriate communications for different purposes. Many times, the message we are communicating is not ours, but has come from other people and we are simply the messenger. This is a crucial role as we have been trusted to deliver a message somebody else considered important enough to ask us. How do we handle these communications when we don't necessarily agree or support the content? The language we use is also very important to avoid misunderstanding and inaccuracy.

#### The Task

Produce three samples of communications to your District Section Leaders that handle:

- Passing on information you received at your Region Meeting
- Seeking a view or opinion from leaders and/or youth members on a current issue
- Outlining a project or scheme you are working on in the near future (note – activity communications are covered in the next element, choose something strategic!)

This communications can be in any format that you consider most appropriate and you should present samples at your module review meeting. Of course, your communication strategy will be used to determine the format and style of the communications.

#### How to communicate somebody else's message

There are some great ideas developed in Scouting at all levels. Often these are shared through the support structures and can become part of a bigger scheme or policy. Many of these ideas are controversial and may not be fully supported by all. As a District Leader, you are central to the ideas sharing and communication structure of the whole organisation. You are the first point of contact for a leader who wants to express an idea for your Section and you have an obligation to listen, discuss and pass the idea on. Even more importantly, you are the last person in the chain of getting new ideas and information to the Leaders on the line. How you present this message to its final destination will determine how it is taken and implemented. Just because you may not see the value, doesn't mean the message doesn't have any. You should always pass messages on with at least as much (if not more) enthusiasm as you received it. If you disagree with the message, you should take this up in the appropriate forum (i.e. With the person who gave it to you) and not decide to change it or dismiss it.

#### Types of communication

There are many ways to communicate, how many do you use?

Telephone call	Email	Newsletter	Call a meeting	Website
Conference call	Pop round	Monthly Meeting	Personal Letter	Noticeboard
Fax	At a Section Meeting	Instant Message	Picture postcard	smoke signals ...!

#### Resources to Support This Element

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

- <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/guides.htm> for a guide on Plain English

# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## District Communications

### Element C: District Activity Communications

One of the roles of a District Leader is to enhance the youth program by providing opportunities to meet other youth members in different contexts. District activities are an ideal way to achieve this, be it a camp, a hike, a leadership course or social event. Although the organisation of major events is covered in other modules, the communications necessary for this event are supported here. In this element, we create the necessary communications for a major event of your choice using our Communication Strategy.

#### The Task

Produce the set of communications to the participants of a forthcoming District activity, including:

- The initial advertising / marketing / notification of the event.
- Planning documents, programs, menus and planning team resources.
- Final information and instructions to participants.

The activity can be anything that is open to youth members. These communications might be your own or created by another planning team member, but will show how the communication strategy has influenced the design and style. These documents will be presented at your module review meeting.

#### Where do we begin?

Begin with a simple set of questions:

- Do I know everything I need to know about the activity? (Cost, location, date, transport)
- Who am I sending the communication to? (Section Leaders, parents, youth members)
- When do I need to send each communication? (When are my planning cut off dates?)
- What do I need to tell them at each stage?
- How can I make it attractive?
- How do I want to receive information back?

#### Making it attractive

Yes, we have a style strategy and we are using appropriate communication methods and great language – is that enough? Well, initially, no! Your first communication is mostly marketing for the activity, so it needs to be engaging, attractive and whet the appetite. A page of text, however simple and well written, will not fulfil this if you are writing direct to youth members. Can you rely on your Section Leaders to create something attractive if you supply them the base information or should you try to give them something they can use? Pictures of previous activities often help. Use sub-headings and bullet points to make it easy to find information. Spice it up! Remember what we learnt about corporate image. Does the activity deserve its own image – a logo and style that can be used throughout the activity?

#### How Much Should I Do?

How much do you need to run the activity successfully. Just because you have done it 50 times before doesn't mean you can get by without communicating. What if you can't do it next year? How will your successor pick up from your good work? Discuss with your RCYP what the expectations will be for this element of the module.

#### Resources to Support This Element

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

# Tools for Effective District Scout Leading

## District Communications

### Element D: Verbal Presentations

Sometimes, there is just no better way to deliver a message than to stand up and talk about it. This element supports verbal presentations of information to different audiences.

#### The Task

Deliver a verbal presentation to a specific audience on one of your current projects. Some suggested presentations are:

- Present the planning for an activity to your District Training Meeting.
- Visit a Section meeting and talk to youth members about an issue or event.
- Speak to a Group of parents about an aspect of Scouting.

You will need to talk about your experiences at your module review meeting but you will not be expected to provide written evidence.

#### Where do we begin?

Begin with a simple set of questions:

- What is the purpose of my presentation?
- Do I know everything I need to know about the topic? If not, I need to research.
- Who am I communicating with? (Section Leaders, parents, youth members)
- Will I support my presentation with any visual aids? (Powerpoint, posters, props)
- How long will I have?
- How can I make it attractive?

#### Making it attractive

Put yourself in the shoes of the audience – what will they be thinking about your presentation? Even a groovy powerpoint presentation can be boring to a young person. How can you do something different in your presentation to gain and maintain their attention? Perhaps it is something you wear or a great prop you have with you? Involve the audience in your topic. Ask questions to ensure there is interest and understanding throughout.

#### Know your topic

It is really important that you can speak with confidence and knowledge of your chosen subject. If you don't know the full picture or don't have the authority to make on the spot decisions, make sure you have the confidence to say so. Research is important, but perhaps you might need to have a subject specialist on hand at the presentation to handle harder questions?

#### Resources to Support This Element

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

- <http://www.jcu.edu.au/studying/services/studyskills/oral/> for some hints.