

Best Practices: Service Unit Meetings

- **Have greeters and help check volunteers in as they arrive.**
This will help people feel welcome right from the start. Keeping a roster of attendees will also help you track regular attendance. Invite volunteers to make nametags as they enter so everyone is given an opportunity to get to know one another better.
- **Provide refreshments if your location, meeting time, and budget allow.**
Keep it simple! Cold water bottles and granola bars go a long way.
- **Provide childcare if you have the resources.**
If older girls in your service unit are willing to baby-sit for an hour during your service unit meeting, provide simple activities and entertainment so adults can meet peacefully.
- **Start and end on time.**
It's a good idea to keep meetings to an hour, unless you have outside presentations or something big to discuss.
- **Follow an agenda.**
Include specific information for events and trainings. Provide a robust agenda that will make the most of everyone's time, but not too structured that you leave out time for discussion and fellowship. Bonus tip: include space to take notes and the service unit team contact information somewhere on the agenda.
- **Create a culture of inclusivity.**
Make sure whole group discussions pertain to all troops. If there is a niche topic (like higher awards, for example), save that for another meeting or a separate roundtable discussion. Also, watch the use of Girl Scout lingo—you know, those words and phrases that only we know. Make sure to define and explain terms to everyone. Assign seats so leaders meet new friends at every meeting.
- **Cater to different learning styles.**
Some adults might learn better if they work with their hands. Arrange a small craft or SWAPS as part of a learning opportunity section or pre-meeting activity.
- **Create a culture of information-sharing and learning.**
Utilize the council's library of Short & Snappy trainings to educate volunteers. Ask trivia questions throughout the meeting and offer prizes. Make sure volunteers are up-to-date on policies and procedures.
- **Show gratitude.**
Say "thank you!" to every volunteer in unique ways for attending the meeting, their contributions, and for providing the best program experience for girls.

"The work of today is the history of tomorrow, and we are its makers."