



# Effective Service Unit Meetings

# Robert's Rules for Team Meetings

When conducting service unit business, teams should use a modified version of Robert's Rules. In some cases, the rules may need to be amended to suit the needs of the service unit; such amendments should be discussed with and approved by your council staff member.

## Establishing a Quorum

A quorum of voting members needs to be present before votes can be passed. The size of your quorum will depend on the specifics of your service unit team and should be established annually, during your planning meeting. If a situation should arise during the year which necessitates a change to your quorum size, this should be discussed with your council staff member.

## Conducting Business

- Send out agendas one week in advance of the meeting. Invite questions and feedback, and gather necessary information, then amend the agenda as needed.
- Ensure that team members are given the opportunity to report to the team on the status of ongoing and upcoming action items.
- Record attendance and establish at the beginning of the meeting whether or not a voting quorum is present. If not, no votes can take place. If needed, voting can occur via email in order to ensure that all team members have the opportunity to weigh in.
- Review, amend, and approve minutes of previous meetings.
- Revisit your Plan for Success at each meeting and make changes as necessary.
- Record new business, action items (with responsible parties), tabled discussions, motion proposers and seconders, and the outcome of votes in the meeting minutes.
- Publish the meeting minutes to the service unit members within one week of the meeting for their review.

### Voting Procedures

1. Establish that a quorum is present, whether in person or via email.
2. One team member proposes a motion.
3. Another team member seconds the motion. If there is no seconder, the motion fails.
4. Discussion is opened. All team members have the opportunity to present their opinions. Remain professional and courteous, and respectful of others' time.
5. Once the discussion is concluded, the motion is either voted on or tabled for further discussion. A motion to table must be proposed and seconded.
6. Vote by show of hands/voice, or adopt the motion without a vote if there is no opposition.

# Service Unit Meetings

Regular and engaging meetings can help to build the Girl Scout community in your service unit as well as provide timely support to troop volunteers throughout the year. Whatever the purpose (team or volunteer support), meetings should always create a welcoming atmosphere, engage the audience, and ensure that the time spent together is productive. Planning effective meetings is an important team responsibility.

## Best Practices



For team meetings, send out an agenda well ahead of time and invite attendees to provide feedback on agenda items, generate questions, and gather information as appropriate.

Consider who the content contributors are for each meeting depending on the theme, and ask other team members to assist in other ways - e.g. logistics, meeting set-up, minutes, check-in.

Incorporate a range of voices to report out or lead an activity.

Ensure meetings are interactive and engaging.

Keep meetings on time and on topic.

### Team Meetings

- Review of minutes from prior meeting
- Committee updates
- Treasurer's report
- Council updates
- Plan for Success - updates and changes
- Volunteer meetings - themes, activities, roles
- Upcoming events - review/approve budgets, identify support needs
- Membership goals
- Successes and challenges
- Problem solving

### Volunteer Meetings

- Initial activity - icebreaker
- Opening - e.g. flag ceremony
- Business - announcements, council news
- Activities - short & snappy, training, workshop
- Clean-up
- Closing - e.g. friendship circle

### Post-Meeting

Send out meeting minutes, thank attendees, ensure follow-up takes place (e.g. support needs are met, questions are answered).

# Effective Volunteer Support Meetings

## Welcoming Atmosphere

- Assign a team member to welcome people as they enter.
- Use small groups where possible and appropriate.
- Be sure to include an ice breaker and/or introductions.
- Provide childcare if possible.
- Use name tags.
- Provide beverages and snacks if appropriate.
- Thank and acknowledge troop and team volunteers.

## Engaging the Audience

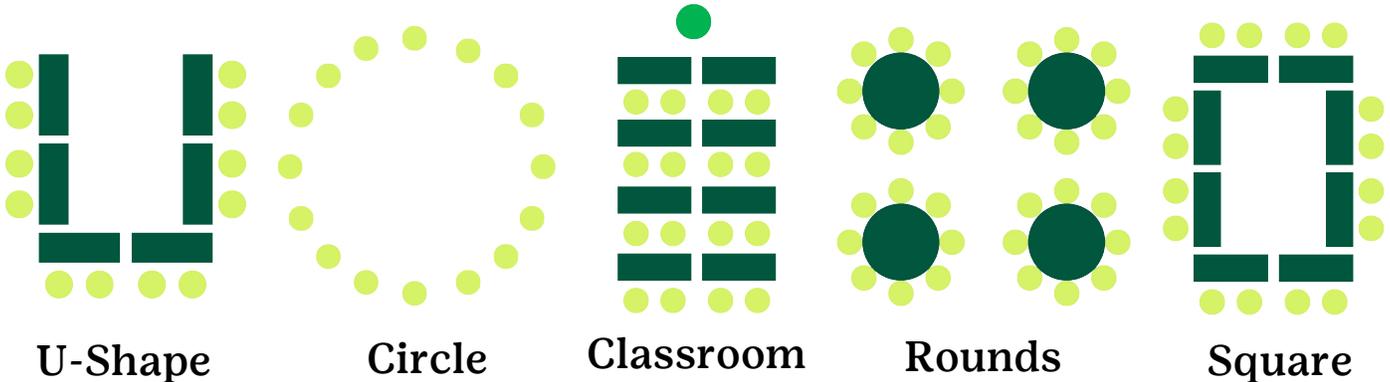
- Use timely themes to ensure meeting content is relevant.
- Make sure the meeting is interactive and not just an info dump!
- Identify and address learning needs.
- Consider table set-up and volunteer grouping.
- Use round-table topics to facilitate discussion.
- Give them "tools for their tool belt" - ideas they can use with their troops.
- Invite guest speakers.
- Keep news and updates brief.

## Productive Meetings

- Send out reminders.
- Provide printed information in place of long-winded verbal updates.
- Provide contact information for follow-up questions.
- Publish important and time-sensitive information publicly for anyone who was unable to attend.
- Allow time for Q&A.
- Keep to designated times.
- Facilitate discussion with group breakouts by level.

# Tips for Great Meetings

## Table Layout Options



Select a table layout that works for your intended activity. Facilitated large group discussion is best in circle and u-shaped layouts, whereas rounds can be used for small group breakouts and classroom is best for guest speakers.

## Preparing for Your Meeting

1. Identify your meeting's purpose and ensure your location and table availability and layout will suit your needs.
2. A catchy title and theme will help increase attendance!
3. Include short trainings and something volunteers can share with their troops.
4. Schedule and plan:
  - a. Notify your attendees.
  - b. Recruit team members to help.
  - c. Gather materials.
5. Create an agenda.
6. On the day:
  - a. Arrive early.
  - b. Be organized.
  - c. Manage the atmosphere - steer away from negativity and follow-up for more in depth answers rather than allowing the agenda and timeline to be hijacked.
  - d. Create a welcoming environment including name tags and icebreakers.
  - e. Recognize and thank those who attended.

# Boosting Meeting Attendance

## Plan

Be sure that meeting dates, locations, and content overviews are planned well in advance. Ideally, have a full annual meeting schedule ready to publish at the beginning of the year so that volunteers can also plan ahead.

## Program

Your program needs to be relevant to the needs of your audience - what are their training or support gaps and how can the service unit fill them? Consider using surveys to get an idea of where your volunteers are at and where they want to be, and using Short & Snappies to provide curriculum to fill their needs. If new volunteers arrive at your meeting, you want them to leave feeling that it was worth their while and they gained new skills or information. Above all, remember that information that can be emailed should be emailed, so don't waste in-person meeting time on it!

## Promote

Send out reminders one week in advance of the meeting and be sure to highlight the benefits of attendance - key learning outcomes, support available, social opportunities etc. Send another reminder two days prior to the meeting. Consider creating eye-catching flyers or graphics to post to your service unit's social media pages. During the meeting, take pictures of the activities and post them to social media afterwards so volunteers can see what they missed!

## Personal

The more personal connections people build, the more likely they are to return. Identify regular attendees and/or team members who are approachable and friendly and assign them to "door duty" to greet people as they arrive. When new volunteers attend, pair them up with an experienced volunteer to sit with them, introduce them to others, and translate 'Girl Scout Speak' for them if needed. Before SU events, prepare and print small cards with details of upcoming meetings to hand out to attending adults.

Plan your meeting agenda to incorporate opportunities for networking such as round table discussions, ice breakers, and pair or group hands-on activities.

## Praise

Reward volunteers' attendance with e.g. door prizes, childcare (provided by older Girl Scouts) and refreshments - maybe even a service unit award!

*Start with a bang, and then keep it fun and fast-moving to engage your audience!*

# Sample Agenda - Team Meeting

**girl scouts**   
of northern california

## Service Unit XXX Team Meeting Agenda

**Date:**

**Time:**

In attendance:

### **New Business**

Upcoming events:

Committee Support  
Needs:

Action Items and  
Person Responsible:

### **Agenda**

1. Call to order and attendance.
2. Review and approval of last meeting's minutes (5 minutes)
3. Committee reports (15 minutes)
  - a. Membership
  - b. Program
  - c. Adult Engagement
4. Treasurer's report (5 minutes)
5. Council updates and news (5 minutes)
6. Annual Planning: recap of progress and outstanding business (5 minutes)
7. Updates on action items from last meeting (10 minutes)
8. New business - committee support needs, upcoming events and volunteer support meetings, new action items (15 minutes)
9. Meeting close

# Sample Agenda - Volunteer Meeting

**girl scouts**   
of northern california

## Service Unit XXX Volunteer Meeting Agenda

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>
<b>Theme:</b>	

**Important Dates:**

**Contact Information:**

**Our next meeting:**

- ### Agenda
1. Icebreaker (5 minutes)
  2. Flag Ceremony (5 minutes)
  3. Welcome and introductions (5 minutes)
  4. Business and news (10 minutes)
  5. Main activity - THEME (30 minutes)
  6. Program level breakout session - discussion topic (15 minutes)
  7. Q&A (10 minutes)
  8. Clean Up (5 minutes)
  9. Closing ceremony (5 minutes)