



# Pre-Application Guidelines for Leaders

## Meet with the prospective Leader Applicant to discuss and explore the following topics. As background for your discussion, use Thinking About LLL Leadership? Overview of Application Work for Leader Accreditation, Concept Explanations and Applying for Leadership in LLLI Policies and Standing Rules, Leader’s Handbook and your experience as an LLL Leader.

This resource lists the section titles in the recommended order of a pre-application dialogue. An asterisk mark (\*) indicates that it is in the *Leader Applicant’s Resource Kit* (LARK).

**1**. **The LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership**

* Read with the prospective Applicant each statement of the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership. See Applying for Leadership, *LLLI Policies and Standing Rules* (PSR)*.*
* Discuss the mother’s experience/attitudes in relation to each of the prerequisites.
* First focus on the Personal Experience Prerequisites because if the mother does not meet the prerequisites, it often concerns them.
* Next make sure about the Organizational Experience and Personal Skills Prerequisites. If there is any requirement which has not been met, explore whether there is a way of achieving it.
* Compare how the two of you understand each prerequisite.
* Use the Guidelines for Leadersfrom Applying for Leadership (PSR) which explain how Leaders can interpret and implement the prerequisites.
* Check with your co-Leaders to see if they agree. If any of you have questions or uncertainties, contact a Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) representative.

**2.** **La Leche League philosophy**

* Share the ten concept statements and refer to sample guiding questions in *Leader’s Handbook*.
* With Concept Explanations (PSR) as a resource, discuss each of the concepts separately and as they relate one to another:
* How they are presented more fully in *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*.
* How they are revealed in a Leader’s experience and in the prospective Applicant’s experience.
* Discuss any questions about the philosophy of “mothering through breastfeeding” or about presenting it at meetings.
* Stress that we present LLL philosophy and respect other philosophies and choices.
* If you have questions about any of this, consult with your LAD representative.

**3.** **The work of a Leader**

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| **Definition of an active Leader**  An active LLL Leader pursues the La Leche League mission through basic Leader responsibilities as defined in the *Policies and Standing Rules Notebook* and/or other service to LLL. An active Leader's fees are current, she keeps up to date with Leader education, and she communicates regularly with the organization. |

* Most Leaders begin with the five basic Leader responsibilities; explain what each entails. Do they describe the work the prospective Applicant would like to do as a Leader? Discuss the definition of an active Leader and explain that:
* Our published resources (books, newsletters, pamphlets, information sheets).
* Our support network (ACL, APL, CLA, etc.) and opportunities for ongoing education.
* A Leader’s accountability to LLLI and what can be expected from the organization; the importance and role of communication and consultation.
* The LLLI policy of not mixing causes; how Leaders limit what they say and refrain from promoting other interests when representing LLL.
* The difference between guiding a discussion and formal “teaching.”
* La Leche League’s approach of mother-to-mother/one-to-one help:
* Respect for the knowledge an individual brings to a situation.
* The effect of long-term support on the continuation of breastfeeding.
* The LLL Leader’s availability and how we fit LLL work into our lives.
* Ask the prospective Applicant about her goals as a Leader; explore how to fulfill the LLL mission. Be sure that the goals are compatible with those of LLL and that she is willing and able to keep her fees current, stay up to date with Leader education, and communicate with the organization.

**4. The application work**

* Explain the parts of the application andtheir purposes so prospective Applicants will know what to expect and what is expected of them.
* Explain what reading is required.
* Look over the *Checklist\** of topics you will discuss together.
* Share the *Breastfeeding Resource Guide\** and the *Preview of Helping Questions and Group Management*. \*
* Explain the application procedures and how the prospective Applicant will work with the LAD representative.
* Talk about the LLLI Criteria for Leader Accreditation, which state that the Applicant will have:
* Met the LLLI Prerequisites to Applying for Leadership.
* Has breastfed a child for 12 months or more.
* Demonstrated understanding of LLLI philosophy.
* Conveyed knowledge of basic breastfeeding management.
* Demonstrated leadership skills andattitudes.
* Completed the LLL Leader accreditation work.
* Signed the *LLL Leader Statement of Commitment*.
* Create a preliminary plan of what you can do to assist the Applicant to attain these goals.

**5. Costs of an application**

* Explain the current fees/costs of application and accreditation, and what they cover. Discuss possible sources of financial help.

**After the Pre-application Dialogue**

If you are co-leading, consult with your co-Leader(s) about your intention to support an application for leadership. When you, your co-Leader(s), and the prospective Applicant are satisfied that an application is appropriate:

* Ask the other Leaders in the Group to complete recommendation forms or to add their observations in a letter to the LAD representative. It is also fine for one Leader to complete a recommendation with everyone’s input.
* Discuss the role each Leader will play in helping the Applicant to prepare for leadership.
* Fill out the Leader Recommendation form. The information you provide is a first guide for the LAD representative who will be working with the Applicant.
* Give the prospective Applicant an Application form.
* Explain the payment of the application fee, if applicable.
* With acceptance of this application, be ready to meet regularly with the Applicant to discuss and practice various aspects of LLL leadership and to communicate frequently with the LAD representative.

**Note:** If a Leader Applicant or mother interested in applying for LLL leadership disagrees with a decision regarding her application made by a local LLL Leader or the LAD representative, LLLI offers an opportunity to appeal the decision to LLLI. Refer to Leader Accreditation Appeals Policies and Process, *LLLI* *Policies and Standing Rules* and consult your LAD representative.