

CM 006

Unit Connections: How to Visit a Unit



Time allotted	15 minutes
Teaching format	Instructor-led discussions with PowerPoint support

Resources

Handouts	
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CM 006—Unit Connections: How to Visit a Unit Discussion Guide• CM 006--Unit Connections: How to Visit a Unit PowerPoint presentation• Computer and projector
Resources for additional participant learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Commissioner Website (https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/)

Course Connections

Connections to other courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BCS 104 – Connecting with Units
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Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 1 minutes

Slide 2—Session Objectives

At the end of this training a commissioner will be able to:

- Explain why commissioners make unit connections and the different types of connections
- Understand how to make a visit to a unit
- Be familiar with Annual Unit Service Cycle

Benefits of Unit Connections – (slide 3)

Unit Connections is a Tool for commissioners to assist in meaningful conversations with the unit.

- **Building Relationships:** Connections facilitate establishing strong relationships based on trust, respect, and shared goals. These relationships form the backbone of successful teamwork and collaboration.
- **Enhancing Conversations:** Strong connections begin with knowledge to enable open communication channels. When individuals feel connected, they are more likely to express their thoughts, concerns, and ideas freely, leading to better understanding and problem-solving.
- **Driving Collaboration:** Connected individuals and groups are more inclined to collaborate effectively towards common objectives. They leverage each other's strengths, resources, and expertise to achieve shared outcomes that benefit everyone involved.
- **Fostering Support:** Connections create a support network where individuals can seek help, guidance, and encouragement from one another.
- **Create & Grow Partnerships:** Connections lay the groundwork for establishing and nurturing partnerships. These partnerships, built on mutual trust and shared interests, can lead to new opportunities, innovative solutions, and long-term success.
- **Change Lives:** Connections can transform lives by providing access to new resources, perspectives, and opportunities. Through meaningful interactions and relationships, individuals can achieve personal growth, overcome challenges, and reach their full potential.

Different Types of Connections – (slide 4)

- Connections are not limited to visits. They can include individual conversations in person or on the phone. A worthwhile e-mail or text exchange is a connection.
- In person visits help build trust with unit leaders and can occur during unit meetings, committee meetings or unit activities.

How to Make Unit Visits (slides 5-9)

The First Unit Visit

- Make an appointment to visit the assigned unit. Note that your first interaction isn't a visit, but is a *request* to visit.
 - Don't show up unannounced, unless you already have a close relationship with unit leadership.
 - Initiate contact, don't wait for them to contact you.
 - If possible, go with your ADC or onboarding coach.
- Observe for the entire meeting (Limit your participation to introductions.)
- Wear your complete uniform as an example
- Give your contact information to unit leaders

After the First Visit

- Send a “Thank You” note or email to the unit leader. It doesn’t have to be eloquent. “Thanks for letting me visit. I look forward to seeing you again soon.” is perfectly adequate.
- Discuss what you observed with your ADC/Coach, especially areas of concern. Work with your ADC/Coach to enter the visit in Commissioner Tools. Commissioner Tools helps all levels of leadership know how a given unit is doing. Your reports make a difference.

Second Visit

- Go by yourself
- Stay only 15 minutes (drop-in)
- Wear your complete uniform as an example
- Enter your observations in Commissioner Tools

The second visit can be another meeting, an activity or a committee meeting. Don’t stay long. Let them know that you are available if they need you. Availability is the key to developing friendship and trust.

Don’t forget to record your visit in Commissioner Tools.

Continued Visits

- Go to unit meeting once a month if possible.
- Try to attend a unit committee meeting once every quarter.
- Encourage unit adults to go to roundtable and to take advantage of district events
- Keep your eyes and ears open for potential problems (Observe, don’t inspect)
- Be discreet, low-key, and diplomatic. You are there to assist, not take over.
- Enter observations in Commissioner Tools after each visit

Suggestions

- Try to always bring something to the unit visit, like a presentation, recognition, announcement, or reminder of an upcoming district event
- Get to know the Chartering Organization Representative (COR)
- Invite the Key 3 (Scoutmaster, committee chair, COR) to a summer cookout or dessert to discuss how the unit is doing
- If you are supporting a troop, consider offering merit badge instruction. It’s a great way to interact with the youth.
- Follow the Unit Service Cycle.

Annual Unit Service Cycle

Certain events regularly recur on a monthly or annual basis in the life of a unit. There is a cyclical nature to the scouting year.

Once we, as unit serving commissioners realize this, then we are in a position to be prepared for what is coming up next, and to remind unit leaders to do the same.

For instance, a unit commissioner should:

- Make connections throughout the year.
 - Do a physical visit at least once every two months, but preferably more often.
 - Record your observations in Commissioner Tools.
 - Try to visit during special events, such as courts of honor, blue and gold banquets, camping trips, and pinewood derbies as well as unit and committee meetings.

The actual dates for unit renewal will vary based on what the local council schedules. There are many unit commissioner related activities that should occur in support of unit renewal. These include:

- Have a mid-year meeting with unit leaders to conduct a unit leadership inventory to ensure that the unit will begin the new scouting year with the trained leaders that it needs.
- Conduct membership inventory at unit level (*with unit key 3*) two to three months before the renewal effort starts.
- Encourage the unit leadership to promptly submit all youth membership applications from Join Scouting Night activities.
- Support and guide units through the charter renewal process.
- Conduct charter presentation ceremonies with the chartered organization representative within one to two months following charter renewal.

Summary/Conclusion – 1 minute

Every unit leader should have the support and friendship of a dedicated unit commissioner. Trust and friendship require time, energy and effort from the unit commissioner.

During this training we have discussed how to develop that trust by using unit visits and connections and how to follow the annual unit service cycle.

Questions? – 5 minutes