

Roundtable Commissioner Position-Specific Training



Time allotted	180 minutes
Teaching format	Instructor-led discussion with PowerPoint

Resources

Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit Metrics – 1 per person• Roundtable-Asst Roundtable Commissioner Onboarding Orientation Guide 2025• Trained cards verifying attendance
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roundtable Commissioner Position Specific Training course plan• Roundtable Commissioner Position Specific Training PowerPoint presentation• Computer and projector• Whiteboard or flipchart
Resources for additional participant learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Commissioner Website: https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/

Note to instructors: Upon completing the classroom portion, please provide each participant with a **training card** so that onboarding coaches can verify their attendance.

Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 5 minutes (slides 1-7)

Roundtable Commissioner Position-Specific Training

Welcome to training for the Roundtable Commissioner.

During this training, you will learn the foundations of commissioner service and examine where unit service fits within the district's functioning. We will pay particular attention to the role of the roundtable commissioner and emphasize how roundtables strengthen units through collaboration (the give-and-take of information), networking, and informal training.

Objectives

- Understand the role roundtable plays in unit service
- Identify the elements of a successful roundtable
- Recognize the roundtable support structure

As commissioners, we share Scouting America's Mission, Vision, and Goal.

Mission: To prepare youth to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetime by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Vision: Prepare every eligible youth in America to become a responsible, participating citizen and leader, guided by the Scout Oath and Law.

Goal: Prepare America's youth for lives of impact and purpose.

Our Objectives

- **Membership retention**
- **Membership growth**

While many commissioners may not be **directly** involved in recruiting and retaining youth and adult members, all commissioners **contribute to membership growth by working closely with units to ensure their** success. Growing Scouting requires commissioners to partner with volunteers throughout Scouting America, and if we do that well, Scouting's growth will be significant **and** sustainable.

Commissioner Culture

- **Be the Heart:** Scouting's units are its heart; its success depends on them; they deliver its programs to youth. Commissioners support unit leaders in developing a safe, welcoming environment and delivering Scouting's programs effectively. We exist to support Scouting's heart.
- **Build Relationships:** Commissioners must develop relationships with unit leaders we serve based on mutual respect, candor, and trust. Without that, the communication and collaboration required to support units effectively are impossible.
- **Change Lives:** Scouting changes lives – of the youth it serves and the adults who support it (both volunteers **and** professionals). As they adopt Scouting's values, they become engaged citizens who strengthen our communities, nation, and world.

Our Purpose

Being the Single Best Resource

Unit leaders need to know that they have someone to go to who can either give them an answer or find an answer. While commissioners won't have the answer to every question, they should be the single best resource for unit leaders who need answers or support.

Our Methods

- Objective Metrics
- Unit Connections
- The Key 3
- Impact, Not Activity
- Grow Partnerships
- Change the Way We Work Together

Commissioners review objective metrics and have meaningful conversations with unit leaders, listening carefully to the needs and concerns of unit leaders. Commissioners are not there to grade or score or tell unit leaders what to do. Instead, they collaborate with the unit Key 3 to ensure the unit's success. Because we often lack a sufficient number of commissioners, commissioners should partner with units that have the greatest need for support. Helping unit leaders achieve their vision will grow meaningful partnerships between commissioners and unit leaders.

It is an honor to serve as a commissioner.

Concepts of Unit Service – 20 minutes (Slides 8-15)

Components of Unit Service

The first is **Unit Metrics**. Unit Metrics introduce objective data about units. They can serve as a starting point for conversations and may suggest areas for discussion to help understand how the unit operates and how commissioners can engage to support it. They are NOT measures of success or failure.

The second is **Unit Connections**, a method and tool that will help commissioners develop partnerships with unit volunteers and guide conversations toward areas where we can have a positive impact on units.

The third component is **Commissioner Tools**, which involves integrating Unit Connections and key metrics into our Commissioner Tools information system. We will dive into Commissioner Tools in My.Scouting later.

Unit Conversations

Conversations are the focal point of our operations. While we may not have the opportunity to engage in in-depth discussions at every interaction, commissioners should be prepared to discuss objective unit information, such as activities, membership, and training.

We need to build relationships through focused conversations to better understand unit dynamics and operations, enabling commissioners to serve and support the unit more effectively by meeting their needs and offering assistance.

Unit Metrics

The first thing a unit commissioner must do is get to know the unit and its people. This may take several visits. Unit metrics are an objective starting point for discussions after a relationship is established.

These provide insight into a unit's overall status, enabling you and the unit's Scouters to collaborate and improve the unit's ability to deliver the promise of Scouting. They are not intended to compare one unit to another or to provide a "score".

The unit metrics chosen provide an objective and valuable means of identifying how a unit is performing, enabling commissioners a convenient method to provide focused help where it is needed.

This information is available on the unit's dashboard. We will talk about access to that shortly.

Unit Metrics

These objective metrics are determined using thresholds established for average expectations. Variation from these thresholds is not necessarily 'good' or 'bad.' Metrics are not scores. They identify opportunities to provide helpful guidance where needed. Discussing only one or two metrics with a unit leader to explore where help might be required could be very beneficial.

However, discussing those where they're going well is also essential. Everyone needs to know that you also notice the positive things.

This chart displays five metrics, covering each of the five Scouting America programs, and describes thresholds based on average expectations. Each metric and threshold was established based on a relationship with unit renewal. The sixth metric of retention is part of the unit's dashboard information.

Note, for example, Key Leaders Trained. As commissioners, we are typically in contact with the unit Key 3. When we visit with the Key 3, we should also discuss the direct contact leaders (Cub Den Leaders, Webelos Den Leaders, and their assistants), who are not yet trained, and offer them available training resources. We know trained leaders provide a better program for the youth.

Also, note the unit size for Cub Scouts. The threshold is set at 20, which is actually below the national average of pack sizes. It has been found that units that fall below this threshold are less likely to complete a unit renewal. This size threshold helps to establish a typical den unit for each grade level with at least 3-4 youth in each den. Similarly, for Troops, a threshold of 12 accommodates two patrols of 5 youth. Still, it enables the opportunity for the senior patrol leader of the youth leadership and an assistant, which is fundamental in the Scouts BSA Program.

Data is populated through Scoutbook Plus and other Scouting America systems. The **shaded metrics**, Leadership for Crews and Posts, and Outdoor Activity for all programs, are dependent on what is entered at the unit level. Our technology systems make it easy for unit leaders to enter only a date for when the activity occurred via My.Scouting or Scoutbook Plus.

However, it is up to the unit whether or not to enter that information. What might seem to be a lack of advancement/leadership and outdoor/superactivity **only means no one entered the information, not that those things did not occur.**

Connection Guides

To aid commissioners in facilitating a conversation with unit leaders, a set of Connection Guides is available. There are guides for discussing each of the six metrics. All guides are accessible from the unit and district dashboards, and each follows a similar pattern of offering several leading questions to help guide a unit-level conversation.

Scanning this QR code will also enable direct access to the library of connection guides.

Unit Goals

Conversations with unit leaders may lead to opportunities for formulating unit goals. This entails recognizing what is going well, aiding the unit in pinpointing areas for program improvement, engaging with the unit to establish their vision for success, and providing support for that vision.

Establishing goals can be pivotal in the development of thriving units. Commissioners might collaborate closely with units to develop goals and address challenges.

The unit maintains complete autonomy in determining their goals, whether they choose to have them detailed, simple, or none at all, with the commissioner available to assist them throughout the process.

Unit Support

Finally, commissioners provide unit support by following up regularly, being available to answer questions, and ensuring the unit has the resources to achieve their goals.

Just remember, there are various types of units out there, and each one requires different types of support.

Record what you do to support the units you serve in Commissioner Tools. The information you record is valuable for tracking unit opportunities and successes over time. This is also useful to district leadership if you are no longer able to serve that unit; they won't have to start all over to gather information.

District Unit Service – 30 minutes

Link Between District and Units

A district's corps of commissioners serves as the link between the district and its local units. It's essential to understand how commissioners are organized so that optimal unit service can be provided. The district commissioners' organization is at the discretion of the district commissioner, who is free to modify the organization as needed to meet the changing needs of the district.

Types of Commissioners

Commissioners come in all shapes, sizes, and experiences, and they can be organized in many different ways, but there are just three types of commissioners:

- Administrative
- Roundtable
- Unit commissioners

Those who are not unit commissioners or roundtable commissioners are *administrative* commissioners.

Unit Commissioner

The role of a unit commissioner is to be **THE SINGLE BEST RESOURCE** a unit leader has for assistance. Being the single best resource doesn't mean that you know the answer to every question a unit leader asks, but it does mean you should be the first person a unit leaders turn to when they have a question they can't answer, and you find the answer and deliver it as soon as you can.

Council Commissioner

The council commissioner leads all commissioner personnel in the council. Their duties are outlined in the local council's bylaws.

The council commissioner is selected by the council nominating committee, elected at the annual meeting of the local council, and serves as a member of the Council Key 3.

The council commissioner also serves as an officer of the local council, a member of the executive board, a member of the council's executive committee, and a representative of the National Council.

Administrative Commissioners

Successful council commissioners recognize that they cannot accomplish their tasks alone. They appoint the number of assistant council commissioners they deem necessary, and these commissioners can play various roles.

Administrative Commissioners

Coordination of all roundtables held in the council is under the guidance of the **assistant council commissioner for roundtable**.

This person reports to the council commissioner and conducts an annual council-wide roundtable planning meeting followed by a midyear review.

This process standardizes content for district roundtables by promoting the use of Roundtable Support Pages on the Scouting.org website and other resources while allowing districts to maintain local flexibility.

Depending on the local needs, there may be multiple assistant council commissioners for roundtable in some larger councils.

District Commissioner

The district nominating committee recommends that the council executive board, with the concurrence of the Scout executive, approve and appoint the district commissioner.

The district commissioner works directly with the district chair and the district professional as part of the district Key 3. District commissioners take ownership of the district team of Commissioners to ensure that all units are well cared for throughout the year. They pay special attention to new units, as these units are the most vulnerable to not renewing their charters.

The district commissioner guides and monitors the district's unit service function.

Administrative Commissioners

Assistant district commissioners, or ADCs, can make or break a district's ability to ensure that every unit receives competent unit service.

Even the best district commissioner in the council cannot personally train and guide all unit commissioners in the district. So, ADCs are assigned specific units in the district and supervise the unit commissioners who serve those units. ADCs are appointed by the district commissioners.

ADCs work closely with the district commissioner and district executive. This team must have a vision of effective Scouting and communicate that vision—through unit commissioners—to every unit leader in the district.

When a unit commissioner resigns or cannot adequately fulfill the position's responsibilities, the assistant district commissioner *temporarily* assumes the vacant position. However, immediate action must be taken to provide a replacement.

Administrative Commissioners are *not* Unit Commissioners. Their responsibility is to *find* Unit Commissioners.

Roundtable Commissioners

District commissioners and ADCs for roundtable provide direct support for the roundtable program within their district.

The district commissioner is responsible for all district roundtables. If they expect their roundtable commissioners to be successful, they must be involved in supporting them.

The assistant district commissioner for roundtable reports to the district commissioner and ensures that high-quality roundtables are conducted within the district for all programs.

In this position, they work with the program-specific roundtable commissioners (Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing) recruited by the district commissioner or ADC for roundtables. Promoting roundtables at district events is an essential aspect of this position.

Collaboration is key for the assistant district commissioner. Working in tandem with the assistant council commissioner for roundtable, they ensure that the district's program-specific unit roundtable commissioners attend the annual planning and midyear review programs well.

The assistant district commissioner must ensure the effective use of Roundtable Support resources. This guarantees that the units receive the necessary program materials for a successful roundtable.

District Roundtable

The roundtable commissioners for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Older Youth Programs (Venturing, Exploring and Sea Scouts) implement roundtable programs.

These individuals are responsible for coordinating and conducting the various parts of the roundtable meetings. They make their contributions with guidance and help from the assistant council and district commissioners.

Assistant roundtable commissioners conduct tasks that directly benefit the program-specific roundtable commissioners, assisting in the development and delivery of monthly meeting agendas and program items.

Each roundtable commissioner may have as many assistants as needed. For example, Cub Scout roundtables may require several assistants for their program breakouts, whereas Scouts BSA roundtables may need fewer.

District Commissioner Staff Organization

This is a typical organizational structure for a district commissioner's staff.

- Administrative commissioners are represented in yellow
- Unit service commissioners are displayed in green
- Roundtable commissioners are displayed in orange

Even though the ADC for roundtable is displayed in orange, they are also an administrative commissioner.

Remember, this is one possible way a district commissioner can organize their staff. A district commissioner has the latitude to organize unit service to meet the needs of their district.

District Purpose

A Scouting district is a geographical area of the Scouting America local council, determined by the council executive board. District leaders mobilize resources to ensure the growth and success of Scouting units within the district's territory.

The district's purpose is to work through chartered organizations and community groups to organize and support successful units. Effective district support results in more youth members receiving a better program.

District Leadership

Another key element is coordinating and mobilizing resources to support the unit, which ensures the growth and success of units within the district's territory.

These resources include volunteers, who are our greatest asset. All the positions shown are volunteer positions, except for the district executive. Chartered organization representatives are voting members of the district because of their position. Council fiscal resources provide facilities and materials to units, as well as program knowledge, which our volunteers often provide.

Four Functions of the District

All districts are responsible for carrying out four standard functions, the pieces of the puzzle that make up your district.

These four functions are the pieces to the puzzle that make up your District:

- Membership
- Fund Development
- Program
- Unit Service

Membership

The first function of the district committee is membership growth.

The five sources of membership growth are

- The establishment of new units
- Recruitment of new youth

- Retention of members
- Arrow of Light to Scouts BSA, and Scouts BSA to Venturing transition
- Retention of units

Fund Development

The second function of the district committee is Fund Development. The objective is to see that the district provides its share of funds to the total council operating budget.

As part of fund development, funds are raised from a diverse range of sources, including Friends of Scouting, product sales like popcorn, special events, and district activity budgets. This variety of sources showcases your resourcefulness and capability in managing the district's finances.

Special events include fundraising activities such as golf tournaments, sporting clays, and silent auctions. They are usually held at the council level, and districts are encouraged to support them.

District activities include program opportunities for youth and volunteers, such as camporees, pinewood derbies, and district recognition banquets. Specific budgets are developed for these activities to cover the cost of conducting them. If there are excess funds, they go to the council, responsible for covering any shortfall.

Program

The third function of the district committee is the program.

The committee assists Scouting units with camp promotions, activities, and civic service, training adult volunteers, youth advancement, and recognition.

Unit Service

The fourth function of the district committee is unit service. That's us! Commissioners!

The unit service team provides coaching and consultation to unit adults, helping ensure the success of every scouting unit.

Four Functions of the District (Interrelationships)

The order in which the functions are listed is not meant to suggest the order of their importance, but the natural interrelationship and flow of the functions:

- The Scouting movement can only achieve its purpose by organizing units and enrolling members.
- The district can only support its units with the funds to do so.
- The district supports unit programs through its program functions and unit service.

All four functions are equally important and necessary. Each function is a pillar of the Scouting movement, and if one function lacks attention, all of the district's work suffers.

As you progress through training, you will notice that course content commonly follows these four functional areas, with an ever-present emphasis on volunteers.

Outstanding Scouting programs will result when all four functions work together in your district.

- The order in which the functions are listed is not meant to suggest the order of their importance, but the natural interrelationship and flow of the functions:
- The Scouting movement cannot achieve its purpose without first organizing units and enrolling members.
- The district cannot support its units without the funds.
- The district supports unit programs through its program functions and unit service.

Standard District Organization

Regardless of size, each district has a committee to coordinate its work. A typical district usually has an operating committee for each function, including a commissioner staff for the unit service function. This examines how the four functions can be integrated into the district's organizational chart.

The exact method of organizing a district is flexible and should be tailored to the needs and characteristics of the communities within your district.

Notice that the program function has several subcommittees: Training, Camping, Activities, and Advancement.

10 – MINUTE BREAK

Roundtable Fundamentals – 15 minutes (slides 38-48)

Roundtable Objectives

The objectives of roundtable are to support unit leaders by:

- Collecting and distributing information
- Enabling program training,
- Providing networking opportunities.

Roundtable Purpose

In addition, there are two primary purposes of roundtable:

First. To provide the *skill to do*—skills, techniques, information, program ideas—the know-how that makes for successful unit operation.

Second. To provide unit leadership with the *will to do*—the morale, enthusiasm, inspiration, and vision that periodically renew the desire to serve youth.

The “Six W’s”

Let’s look at the “Six W’s” of roundtables.

They are:

- What
- Why
- Who
- When
- Where and
- Wise

The First “W”

What is a roundtable?

- The roundtable is an important function of the district that provides essential supplemental training to leaders.
- It is the upcoming monthly program theme in action.
- The purpose of the roundtable is to help units succeed by providing useful program ideas, information on policy, and current information on council and district events and training opportunities.
- It is the most effective medium for getting the Scouting program to the units.

The Second “W”

Why do we have roundtables?

- To provide unit leaders with the skills, techniques, district/council information, usable program ideas, and the know-how to make the unit operation successful.
- To provide unit leaders with the morale, enthusiasm, inspiration, and motivation that renews their desire to continue serving youth through Scouting.
- To keep leaders up to date on the program of Scouting America.
- To network with other leaders.

The Third “W”

Who is the assistant district commissioner for roundtable?

This person is the program team leader selected by and accountable to the district commissioner. The ADC for roundtable must be capable of and responsible for recruiting, training, and guiding program-specific roundtable commissioners and assistants as they plan and conduct monthly roundtables that achieve the roundtable objectives.

Who is the roundtable team?

The assistant district commissioner for roundtables is responsible for recruiting, training, and motivating volunteers with special abilities and knowledge of the Scouting America programs to help conduct monthly roundtables that achieve the roundtable objectives. The number of volunteers serving as roundtable commissioners will vary depending on the district's needs. The roundtable commissioner is responsible for the roundtable commissioner team.

The Fourth “W”

When are roundtables held?

Identify a day and time when the fewest number of units in a district meet. This is likely the best time for roundtable to be held. The roundtable should be held on the same day every month.

Scouters appreciate a regular meeting pattern and expect the meeting to start and end on time. The roundtable dates need to be established early enough to be included in the calendars of the units, districts, and councils.

The Fifth “W”

Where are roundtables held? Are you hosting in-person roundtables or virtual roundtables? Maybe a hybrid approach?

For in-person roundtables, a regular meeting place at a central location for all units is usually the most effective. In areas where distance can be a factor, some districts use a “floating” roundtable that meets in a different community each month. Likewise, a virtual roundtable might be a better fit for geographically challenged districts and/or councils. Weather conditions could also be a factor in promoting the use of virtual roundtables to accommodate the safety of roundtable attendees.

It will be essential to ensure a stable platform (such as Zoom or Teams) and reliable internet connection for the host and co-host(s) for virtual roundtables.

Consider the following when selecting an in-person roundtable location:

- Year-round availability of the facility
- Access for those with disabilities
- Restrooms, drinking fountains
- Parking space
- Heating, lighting, ventilation
- Chalkboards or whiteboards
- Space for activities, including rooms for split sessions
- Opening and closing the facility

The Sixth “W”

Like everything in Scouting, we must make **Wise** use of funds.

Some of the expenses in conducting a roundtable include name tags, handouts, rental fees, craft materials, and refreshments.

Large budgets are optional for successful roundtables and should not become a stumbling block.

Important points:

- Funds may be available through the council’s operating budget. NOTE: Districts are a part of the council and do not maintain bank accounts.
- Packs or outside sources may donate refreshments (and materials).
- A significant expense can be avoided if the meeting place is free.

Who attends Roundtable?

So, who attends roundtables? Who do you know that SHOULD be attending roundtable?

Roundtables are designed for all unit leaders and committee members.

- Cub Scout leader roundtables are for Cubmasters, den leaders, Webelos den leaders, all assistants, and pack committee members.
- Scouts BSA leader roundtables are for Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, and troop committee members.
- Venturing forums are for adult crew leaders. When appropriate, youth officers can also attend.

- All Commissioners can also benefit from attending roundtable. Attending the program area for which they are responsible is especially beneficial.

In today's busy world, with everyone's packed schedules, it is understood that not all unit leaders may be able to attend every monthly roundtable. But it is almost ALWAYS possible that at least one leader from each unit can attend the monthly roundtable. Some units' schedules include rotations for which leaders attend the roundtable to ensure there is always someone present each month. Unit representation is vital to ensure that none of the valuable information passed at roundtable is missed.

Roundtable is Unit Service

Roundtable has also been called "group unit service" because roundtable commissioners may consult individually with unit leaders before and after the formal meetings. This is unit service.

Roundtable commissioners also provide unit service...They are a:

- Friend of every unit
- Partner
- Representative of Scouting America
- Unit "doctor"
- Teacher
- Counselor

So, let's discuss the roundtable's role in unit service. The roundtable is critical to success in our districts. It serves as the front line of unit service. Roundtable commissioners learn about problems that arise in both group and individual discussions at the roundtable.

They know who is attending, who isn't..., or who isn't anymore.

Units, especially newer units, and newer leaders emulate what they get from being at roundtable.

Roundtable commissioners are also active participants in the monthly district commissioner staff meetings. Here, you can learn more about common issues that units in the district are struggling with and design roundtable programs to assist units in resolving their issues.

Roundtables are full of energy and information that will help units put on a successful program back at home.

The district commissioner should fully utilize and document all the unit service opportunities the roundtable team provides.

Monthly Commissioner Staff Meeting

These meetings are extremely important for motivating commissioners to do their jobs, supporting them, providing feedback, holding commissioners accountable for a high level of quality service, and planning, training, and reporting on the status of units. It helps us to work toward the vision of success!

This meeting sets the stage for how unit commissioners and assistant district commissioners perform their duties in service to their units.

As a roundtable commissioner, you should come prepared to discuss with your assistant district commissioner the observations you have made from recent roundtables and your plans for future roundtables. Come prepared with a current roundtable attendance report to share with unit commissioners. Let them know which of their units are or are not attending roundtable. Share a copy of your district's roundtable analysis report with unit commissioners and assistant district commissioners.

Listen to ADC reports concerning unit service plans. Determine if there are common issues that units are experiencing so that a roundtable can be planned to help address those issues. It would be helpful to run a copy of the units with the service plans report to identify any issues.

This meeting sets the stage for your interactions with unit commissioners, enabling them to perform their duties in service to the units.

Roundtable Administration – 10 minutes (slides 49-56)

Position Elements

In addition to the regular responsibilities of the ADC and ACC, each position has six position elements.

Recruiting

A roundtable program is only successful with enough trained commissioners to staff all the roundtable team positions.

It is never too early to cross-train one or more volunteers for roundtable staff positions. It would be best to always plan for a replacement roundtable staff member.

One of the most important roles of an ADC is to assist the district commissioner with identifying and recruiting roundtable commissioners and assistant roundtable commissioners.

Having multiple people recruit roundtable and assistant roundtable commissioners in your district makes it easier to achieve an adequate number of trained roundtable staff.

- The ADC should also ensure the new commissioners are correctly registered with Scouting America and complete the required training.
- The ACC should assist the council commissioner in recruiting additional ACCs for roundtable as required by the council structure.
- The ACC should also assist the district commissioners in recruiting the necessary roundtable commissioners, as their district structure requires.

ACCs should always encourage and assist district roundtable commissioners in recruiting as many assistant roundtable commissioners as necessary to accomplish roundtable functions effectively.

Talent Management

A roundtable program is only successful when enough trained commissioners are retained to fill the required positions on the roundtable team.

Everyone likes recognition, and no one is more deserving than a volunteer Scouter. Use every possible moment to acknowledge the efforts of the roundtable staff. This recognition boosts their morale and is a powerful motivator for them to continue their dedicated service.

The ADC for the roundtable must become personally acquainted with and maintain regular contact with district and assistant roundtable commissioners, including the locations, dates, and times of roundtable meetings.

The ADC should make occasional in-person visits and evaluations of the programs presented. Make sure the roundtable staff receives both informal and formal recognition. They do not have an easy job, and they deserve recognition.

The ADC should also provide updated district roundtable information to the district commissioner and assistant council commissioner as appropriate.

Like the district ADCs, the ACC for roundtable must become personally acquainted with and maintain regular contact with other ACCs, the district roundtable commissioners, and the assistant roundtable commissioners, including the locations, dates, and times of roundtable meetings.

The ACC should occasionally visit and evaluate all their district programs.

Equally important is the ACC's role in providing updated roundtable information to the council commissioner. This facilitates informed decision-making and ensures the smooth functioning of the roundtable program.

Training Support

Training is essential for program-specific roundtable commissioners and their assistant roundtable commissioners.

To provide appropriate training to local units, the roundtable staff must be current with their own training and have a working knowledge of new information relevant to their program area as it becomes available.

The ADC is responsible for ensuring that district roundtable commissioners and their assistant commissioners receive training for their positions and encourages them to participate in other training opportunities as recommended by the district or council.

The monthly commissioner meeting is an excellent opportunity to provide new program updates to the roundtable staff.

The ACC should regularly provide and promote training using national materials for all roundtable-related commissioners at the council and district levels.

Program Planning and Content

The Roundtable program content should be planned and executed using the Scouting.org Roundtable Support pages, which are tailored to meet the needs of local districts and councils. The ADC should collaborate with the district commissioner and other key volunteers to design a district roundtable that addresses the unique needs of the council and district, leveraging national support materials and programs of emphasis.

Another key responsibility of the ADC is to ensure the active participation of district roundtable commissioners and assistant roundtable commissioners in the council's annual planning, follow-up, and training functions. Their involvement is crucial for the roundtable's success.

The ACC is responsible for collaborating with the council commissioner and other key volunteers to design a council roundtable that meets the council's unique needs while leveraging national support materials and programs of emphasis.

It is also vital for the ACC to conduct an annual planning/training gathering for all roundtable-related commissioners and conduct quarterly or semi-annual follow-up meetings to assess progress and make necessary adjustments.

Technology Utilization

As technology continues to improve, there are increasing opportunities to leverage it to support the roundtable program.

Technology-supported roundtable information is vital for use in remote districts and for Scout Leaders who need to access roundtable information when they cannot participate in a traditional roundtable event.

The ADC should promote the use of technology to ensure that roundtable meetings are adequately promoted and that the volunteers are engaged and empowered. The ADC should also explore using technology to support those who cannot attend meetings in person, as well as to distribute materials and resources to assist the volunteers.

Just like the district ADCs, the council ACC should promote the use of technology to ensure that roundtable meetings are adequately promoted and that the volunteers are engaged and empowered.

Additionally, the ACC should explore using technology to support those who cannot attend meetings in person, as well as to distribute materials and resources to assist volunteers. This could include hosting important roundtable materials on the local council website.

Information Dissemination & Promotion

If you do not promote the roundtable, you will likely see less participation. If your roundtable does not provide valuable information for the Scouters attending, they are less likely to return next month.

There are several opportunities within the components of a roundtable where effective information sharing can be achieved, including pre-meeting networking, hot topics, safety moments, program-specific breakouts, and post-meeting networking.

The ADC is responsible for disseminating current Scouting America news and points of interest, including new merit badges, program changes, and upcoming literature, so the district roundtable provides valuable and timely information for local volunteers.

The ADC should assist the program-specific roundtable commissioners in creating a presence at district events by promoting the Scout Leaders' Roundtable as ***the place to go for leaders who want to stay informed, share Scouting fellowship, and have fun!***

The Council ACC should support the District ADCs in information dissemination and promoting roundtable.

Council-level resources may be greater than those of a district and can be an excellent asset for promoting roundtables for all districts within the council.

10 – MINUTE BREAK

Roundtable Organization – 15 minutes (slides 57-63)

The District Roundtable Organization

The district commissioner is responsible for overseeing the district roundtable program. However, most of the responsibility for the roundtable rests with the individual roundtable commissioners.

The district commissioner usually has several service areas and specialized functions for which they are responsible.

So, to break up the “span of control,” or the number of people directly supervised, the district commissioner usually appoints several assistant district commissioners (ADCs) to oversee each assigned area of responsibility directly.

It is recommended that each district appoint an ADC to oversee roundtable and share the administrative responsibilities of coordinating the program-specific roundtables.

Each program-specific roundtable commissioner would report to the district commissioner through their ADC for roundtable and appoint as many assistants as needed to perform their duties.

The exact structure of the district commissioner's team varies from district to district based on their individual circumstances.

Program-Specific

It is certainly understandable why there are roundtable commissioners for each program level; however, sometimes a roundtable is held where one roundtable commissioner works with Scout leaders of all program levels. For this reason, the roundtable commissioner patch has been updated to reflect the diverse types of roundtables and their respective commissioners, ensuring that all are represented and unified by a single patch.

Program-specific roundtable commissioners, such as those for Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA, are typically responsible for their entire roundtable program, from planning and executing to evaluating effectiveness, implementing positive changes, and initiating the process.

General roundtable commissioners may lead an entire meeting focused on a safety moment, a membership moment, and a hot topic applicable to all programs, followed by a meaningful question-and-answer session.

To be successful, it is highly recommended that roundtable commissioners have a planning session. These can be held quarterly or semiannually, as well as monthly staff meetings. This helps to develop a coordinated effort with other program-specific roundtable commissioners within their district and other districts within the council to share resources when possible.

There are usually too many moving parts for one person to handle reasonably, so recruiting a great team of assistant roundtable commissioners is essential.

The roundtable support structure was created to support our unit leaders. But the most important function of roundtable is providing the framework for a great program for our youth!

Assistant Roundtable Commissioners

Every roundtable commissioner should have a team of support staff to help them provide the best roundtable possible. assistant roundtable commissioners are your support team!

The roundtable commissioner is responsible for recruiting enough individuals to meet the specific needs of their roundtable's size and program type. The number of assistant roundtable commissioners on your team is unlimited. However, there should never be fewer than one assistant roundtable commissioner for each program to serve as a backup for each of the program-specific roundtable commissioners.

The unit leaders expect roundtable to happen as scheduled. The show must go on every month, even if the roundtable commissioner has a conflict and is unable to attend.

So now, let's discuss each of the specific program roundtables.

Cub Scout Roundtable Program

Now, let's discuss each of the specific program roundtables.

These breakout sessions allow sharing ideas with pack-level volunteers, including den leaders, cubmasters, and committee members.

If Scouting America's nationally produced video content is used, the roundtable commissioner will act as a facilitator or guide for discussion related to the topic. On the other hand, if the roundtable commissioner wishes to provide some other content related to Cub Scouting, s/he should feel free to do so. The idea is to be flexible and work with the roundtable's ADC to provide the best possible content to district Cub Scouters.

Scouts BSA Roundtable Program

The Scouts BSA Roundtable Program helps troop leaders prepare to teach a skill or present a program feature material at a youth level by presenting it in a youth-friendly manner at the roundtable. Please consider using the Scouts BSA program resources webpage:

<https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/resources/>

While fun is an important ingredient, a roundtable is more effective when conducted as a workshop rather than an evening of entertainment. (For example, don't just show a movie.)

- Always involve the group actively in the presentation. Showing someone how to do something is not enough.
- Lord Baden-Powell said teaching mainly involves games, practices, and competitions.
- Prepare, practice, and personalize your presentation.
- Illustrate by using visual aids.

Ensure that the roundtable plan provides both the will-to-do and skill-to-do for troop leaders.

It is always an excellent opportunity for a troop to help teach a skill at a roundtable. Include the troop's leaders and their Scouts in the teaching process. Have the youth show the adult leaders how they do something special in their troop.

Venturing Forum Program

Venturing forums should be conducted as part of the district roundtables. They are designed for all adult crew leaders and crew committee members, and youth officers should occasionally attend.

Promote youth officer leadership by having them give skill presentations.

Sea Scouts Roundtable Program

Sea Scout roundtables should be conducted as part of the district roundtables if there are enough ships. Otherwise, a council or territory-level Sea Scout roundtable might be a better way of providing roundtable support to ships in the council.

Sea Scout roundtables are designed for all skippers and mates.

Roundtable Preparation – 15 minutes (slides 64-82)

Preparing a Monthly Roundtable

The roundtable commissioner is responsible for planning a quality roundtable program. This is best accomplished by having several meetings, starting with a planning meeting to discuss your long-range plans for the Scouting year.

Next, a semiannual or quarterly planning meeting will be held, focusing on the team's activities for the upcoming months.

Finally, monthly roundtable staff meetings allow you to make final preparations for the next month's roundtable. This meeting could be held at the monthly district commissioner staff meeting during the ADC breakout session.

Topics should include all aspects of roundtable, including validation of individual assignments and confirmation that all planned logistical needs will be met.

Elements of a Successful Roundtable

People will want to come when:

- They get specific help they can use during the coming month.
- There is a separate, helpful session for each program level. Cub Scout leaders are not very interested in discussing Scouts BSA, and Venturing leaders do not want to spend the evening watching Cub Scout demonstrations.
- There is a genuine sense of fellowship. They need to feel that they are wanted, that they are important, that they belong.
- Learning is largely by doing or watching instead of just listening. The idea is to let the individual watch and then practice. In a virtual roundtable setting, you will want to give attendees time to practice their new skills at home and perhaps share their progress with the group.
- A dependable schedule is maintained. This means both a regular night and a regular hour for opening and closing.

Roundtables held early in the month allow for other steps in unit program planning to be completed before the end of the month.

Making Roundtable Fun

In addition to providing great ideas and information, every roundtable should dedicate some time to having fun! How to have fun with each program will differ based on the youth's capacity and maturity.

It may seem that the youth's ages are close, but even within the Cub Scout program, the age differences vary as the Scouts progress from den to den within the pack.

Venturing Crews have different areas of focus, so you must consider all aspects when planning fun activities. Every youth enjoys having fun, and every leader needs to learn to have fun themselves.

Lord Baden-Powell once said,

"The spirit is in every boy; it has to be discovered and brought to light."

One of the easiest ways to see the spirit in every Scout is to have fun with them. Roundtables should be a model for a unit and include teaching adult leaders how to have fun!

Roundtable Promotion

Promotion is a key ingredient to increasing your roundtable attendance. You can promote your roundtable via:

- Council and district newsletter or website
- Social media
- Group messaging apps
- News releases and local media
- Monthly fliers
- Telephone or personal contact plan
- Inventives
- Trading post or service center posters
- Presentation of recognitions—national and local
- “Unit spotlight”—a different unit is featured each month
- Phone chains
- Agendas—the best way to get them back
- Mail announcements
- Email messages
- Personal invitations!

The important thing to remember is that you are competing for the valuable and limited time of the Scouters. The more ways you promote roundtable, the greater your success. The more leaders attend roundtables, the greater the benefit to the youth programs.

More about Roundtable Promotion

Roundtable promotion is more than just informing leaders of the roundtable's schedule and location.

You should include the following information in any of your roundtable promotional materials:

- Who? Which leaders would you like to see at roundtables? Be specific with job titles.
- What? An in-person roundtable is an interactive, hands-on meeting in which leaders are actively involved. A virtual roundtable adds complexity to a hands-on approach, but with creativity, a roundtable commissioner can keep attendees engaged from home.
- When and where? Give the date, day of the week, time, and location (virtual or in-person).
- Why? Explain the purpose—Let leaders know how the roundtable will help them in their leadership positions.
- Contact person - Include the name and/or phone number of a contact person to answer leaders' questions about roundtables.

Attendance/Retaining Attendance

Consider the following points for attendance:

- What is your current attendance—units and leaders?
- What is the potential in your district, units, and leaders?
- What percentage of units and leaders are attending?
- What is your goal as roundtable commissioner?

A well-planned roundtable program will inspire leaders to try the program ideas they see, and they will want to return for more ideas, fun, and fellowship.

Try the following ideas to help retain attendance:

- Attendance reminders
- Attendance awards
- Bring a friend incentives
- Traveling attendance trophy
- Door prizes or special drawings
- Refreshments

The secret to better attendance is not getting people to attend your roundtable meetings but making them want to! Tracking attendance provides one metric for measuring the benefits of roundtable meetings.

Roundtable Features in Commissioner Tools

Roundtables are a key part of Scouting's ongoing training opportunities, and we've long seen the need to track what is offered and what units attend them.

The roundtable features in Commissioner Tools have been updated and brought to the focus of the roundtable commissioner positions. So, "Why should we record our roundtables in Commissioner Tools?" The biggest reason for entering roundtables in Commissioner Tools is to provide historical continuity. As roundtable commissioners change, paper documentation of past roundtables may not always get passed on to the new assistant district commissioner for roundtables or to each program roundtable commissioner.

Using Commissioner Tools to record and schedule roundtables enables other commissioners to view your planned future meetings, allowing them to help promote your roundtable events to the district's units.

- Roundtable commissioners should record meaningful contacts in Commissioner Tools.
- Roundtable meetings and meeting locations can also be scheduled in Commissioner Tools.

Roundtable commissioners are key members of the district unit service team. By bringing the information you record in Commissioner Tools to the monthly district commissioner meetings, you inform the rest of the unit service team about what you are doing to enhance their efforts in unit service.

Please review the Commissioner Tools training module on roundtable entries for more information.

Reflection

Take time for a reflection period after each monthly roundtable.

The roundtable commissioner is responsible for reflecting on each roundtable's success and continually improving its program.

An effective tool is the Start, Stop, and Continue method:

Start (What should we start doing that will make things better?)

Stop (What should we stop doing because it is not helping?)

Continue (What is our strength, and what is working well that we want to continue doing?)

After using the Start, Stop, and Continue method, try to implement your improvements for future roundtables.

Using the Roundtable Support Webpage

Planning ahead is the easiest road to a successful roundtable!

There is almost no limit to the number of printed and electronic books and manuals available to support your roundtable planning. There are also many internet resources available, such as the frequently updated Roundtable Support Webpage:

<https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/>

Instructor Note: Have the class scan the QR code on the slide

Quality Roundtables

To achieve success, quality roundtables require meticulous planning. Roundtables should be planned on both a long-range and a short-range basis.

Planning for the next year starts at the end of the Scouting year by evaluating the program success and needs of the units in the district at a pre-planning conference.

Regular planning updates, conducted on a semi-annual or quarterly basis, are also recommended to discuss any major program updates to the roundtable plan, such as a new advancement policy that has recently been released.

Short-term planning is essential to confirm all roundtable assignments and logistical issues. The monthly planning meeting is extremely important for roundtables to be effective. This meeting is held during the monthly district commissioner staff meeting to verify that everything is ready for the next roundtable.

Who Plans Roundtable?

The roundtable commissioner and roundtable team plan and conduct regular quality roundtables that meet the objectives of Scouting. The roundtable commissioner is responsible for scheduling and presiding over the district's annual roundtable planning conference, which the roundtable team attends.

The district commissioner and executive are invited to participate in the long-term planning process.

The 5-Step Planning Process

Accomplishing anything requires planning. Before we delve into the specifics of planning a roundtable, it's essential to understand planning in general terms.

The roundtable planning process is done in five steps:

- Understand what you want to accomplish by setting goals or learning objectives.
- Think of ways to achieve these goals.
- Write them down in a step-by-step process.
- Do it!
- Evaluate it.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? Unfortunately, many people skip directly to step 2, omitting steps 3 and 5 altogether.

Roundtables will be successful only if you plan in advance and follow through by using all five of these important steps.

Roundtable Advance Planning

Some of the things to include in your roundtable advance planning conference are:

- What are your main program features going to be?
- Are roundtables coordinated with your council and district calendars?
- Are you going to have indoor roundtables or outdoor roundtables, or both?
- Will there be any special events?

Complete the roundtable advance planning worksheets—either the 3-month or 6-month model.

Planning Considerations

Discuss the physical arrangements for your roundtable, whether virtual or in-person events:

- Time
- Location
- Parking
- Restrooms
- Meeting rooms for breakouts
- Tables/chairs
- Electrical outlets

In the case of a virtual roundtable format, you might consider opening up to 15 minutes early to encourage networking and closing the platform 15 minutes after the meeting to allow for “parking lot” conversations. Additionally, it would be beneficial to consider having a co-host to assist with the technical aspects of hosting a virtual meeting.

How will you build?

A worthwhile program

- Enthusiasm
- Unity
- **Keep it Simple-Make it Fun – (KISMIF)!**

What kind of displays do you need?

- District banner—this could list all of the district units by number or name
- Posters (*Scouts' Life*, program themes, events/activities, etc.)

Planning Updates

Meetings to discuss updates can be done on an as-needed basis during the monthly district commissioner staff meeting as part of the assistant district commissioner breakout session. Since the district executive and the district commissioner are present at this meeting, they can keep you apprised of unit feedback and provide information on upcoming district and council activities.

Monthly Roundtable Planning

Planning for next month's roundtable begins this month. Monthly planning also includes reminding units of assignments for the following month at the roundtable.

- At a monthly roundtable planning session, you should review and evaluate three- and six-month program plans.
- Review current unit, district, and council needs that will be addressed at the next roundtable.
- Review the ingredients of a roundtable program: (Note that most of the ingredients are used each time; however, at certain times of the year, the roundtable commissioner may conduct a special program, such as a roundtable cookout, and decide not to use all the ingredients.)

If you utilize a roundtable team, team planning meetings should be held on the same night and at the same place each month.

Items to Accomplish

The following should be done at these team meetings:

- Evaluate the last roundtable. Use the Start, Stop, Continue method mentioned earlier.
- Review the Roundtable Support webpage (<https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/>)
- For in-person roundtables, you should account for any pre-meeting activities or networking opportunities.
- Make assignments to the team for all units contacted.
- If you have one, discuss newsletter or promotion topics.
- Prepare roundtable agenda.

Planning Resources

Roundtable commissioners should be aware of the resources available to you as you plan your monthly program.

Such as:

- Roundtable Support webpage
- Scouting America literature
- Material available locally from the council/district, and/or community.

The Roundtable Support webpage is designed to help you plan successful roundtable programs for your district. This website is updated frequently and includes the key elements for the roundtable, as well as recommended times for each activity, to help you maintain a reliable schedule.

Also included are Hot Topic plans that can be used flexibly to meet the needs of combined roundtable groups.

Additional Resources

Some great resources are available from Scouting America on the Program Support Resources page. It provides information and guidance on the latest changes in specific programs, such as Cub Scouts or Sea Scouts. Change is a constant throughout national-level programs, and disseminating this information is crucial to ensure high-quality programs for all Scouting America youth participants. This is a significant role of roundtable.

The Scouting America commissioner webpage for Roundtable Support is an excellent resource for learning about new developments in the Roundtable world.

Numerous private and public web and social media pages are also associated with all Scouting programs, including those specific to roundtable.

Instructor Note: *Have the class scan the QR code on the slide*

Components of Roundtable – 20 minutes (slides 83-89)

Components of Roundtable

The roundtable planning team needs to understand the major components of a roundtable.

It is helpful to note that there is a high degree of flexibility in managing a roundtable meeting. Today, many councils and districts usually run roundtables in either 50, 60, or 75 minutes if a roundtable team decides not to use one of the topics or to take more time than is suggested for another topic, that is entirely acceptable.

The overall intent of these time formats is to reinforce that roundtables can be tailored to meet the specific needs of local districts and councils. They have also been developed to provide a suggested outline, helping to establish structure and uniformity for your meetings while allowing for as much flexibility as needed, so that each council can meet its local needs. Encourage your roundtable teams to take advantage of how these new formats can be more time-efficient and provide meaningful benefits to your volunteers.

In a recent survey of commissioners, over 90% of respondents agreed that the new formats would work well for distributing and collecting information. Additionally, 75% of the respondents agreed that the new format would be effective for program training and networking.

In another survey of unit leaders, the majority agreed that the new formats will enable roundtables to achieve their four core functions.

WRAP-UP: In summary, the new roundtable approach and virtual meeting tool are flexible and straightforward, utilizing a common approach, and meet all the needs that our volunteers expect from a roundtable. It also saves us all a most valuable resource—time! Given the

experience many of you acquired during our shutdown periods, this new approach will be an easy and welcome transition for us going forward.

Opening

All roundtables should begin with an opening. The opening is flexible and can include elements that the roundtable determines best fit the needs of the units and the district culture. Typical openings include a flag ceremony, the Scout Oath and Law, but can also include a song, prayer, icebreaker, announcements, and more.

A roundtable commissioner can use local units and leaders to complete the program for in-person meetings. As part of the roundtable, roundtable commissioners will have access to video-based openings from the Roundtable Support webpage that they can use to open the meeting. These are especially helpful in virtual roundtables. If the opening does not include those pieces, the roundtable commissioner can add them themselves or use a video from a previous month. The opening videos will be brief, leaving ample time for the roundtable commissioner to incorporate other programs as desired.

The opening gives several opportunities to tailor the opening time to meet the needs of the council and district, such as:

- Setting the stage for that month's roundtable
- Being a "champion" for the program and highlighting council, district, and unit accomplishments
- Networking is another great opportunity in the opening time
- Engaging in in-person or virtual icebreakers

Not all of the examples above are necessary for a good opening. The roundtable commissioner should decide what is best for their roundtable and what aligns with the suggested timeframe. For the 50-minute version, the opening would last 8 minutes, and for the 75-minute version, it would last 10 minutes.

Safety Moments

As part of Scouting America's commitment to safety, all meetings should begin with a safety moment. Introducing a safety moment to scout meetings is timely and relevant, as it helps mitigate risks and hazards and reminds youth and adults about youth protection policies. Roundtable commissioners are encouraged to model and provide a safety moment that can be used by Scout leaders in their units or pertain to adult safety in Scouting.

2-3-minute safety moment videos, or written safety moments, are available on the Roundtable Support webpage and will be provided for monthly roundtables, which you can view and discuss. You can also choose a safety topic appropriate to your activity, such as evacuation routes, hydration, knife safety, the buddy system, and youth protection.

Hold a safety moment at the beginning of all Scouting meetings and activities to educate Scouts and leaders on potential risks and hazards, then engage in a fun and safe activity.

Membership Moments

Membership moments are new to the roundtable schedule and are designed to provide unit leaders with a brief idea for membership, recruiting, or retention that they can implement immediately. They are specifically designed to be easily readable and shareable during the roundtable.

Roundtable commissioners can ask a specific assistant RTC to deliver the membership moment, or they can ask the district membership chair to share the message.

Membership moments are updated regularly at <https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/roundtable-planning-resources/> and include ideas for every program level. Roundtable commissioners can also create their own membership moment based on local events.

Hot Topics

Hot Topics are exactly that. A topic that is important, timely, and relevant in Scouting across all program levels.

These hot topics will run 5-20 minutes, depending on the topic and the length of the roundtable program (50 minutes or 75 minutes)

Hot Topics can be sourced from the roundtable support page or local council information that significantly impacts local Scouting or requires immediate volunteer action (such as program changes, new membership recruitment tools, fee changes, or new opportunities). These hot topics will be supported by videos from the National Service Center or other National Service Center resources announced during roundtables and later distributed via handouts, website postings, emails, and other means.

With the support of their local district and council professionals, the roundtable commissioner will ensure that these hot topics are clearly presented.

The hot topics component of the roundtable provides Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, and Venturing leaders with significant information they will need to lead their units to success and grow and improve their programs.

Program-specific Breakouts

The goal of the program-specific breakout portion of roundtable is to provide Scouters with information they can take back to their home units, ultimately to bring a better program to the youth they serve.

The Roundtable Support webpage will offer suggested program-specific topics, which will be frequently updated to provide roundtable commissioners with fresh, new content.

The roundtable commissioner will play a crucial role in these program-specific breakouts, serving as a guide or facilitator of discussion. Following the brief introductory video by a subject

matter expert, the roundtable commissioner will lead the breakout session, driving home the topic at hand while engaging the attendees.

In essence, the program-specific breakout session provides Cub Scout and Scouts BSA leaders with the information they need to be successful in their units. After all, every Scout deserves a trained leader. Equipped with a new skill, Scouters will be better able to act!

If the meeting is virtual or hybrid, many online virtual meeting platforms, such as Zoom, provide a very convenient function for breakout rooms that will be helpful for both the Cub Scout and Scouts BSA breakout training and discussion portions of the virtual roundtable.

Closing

It's easy to rush through—or even skip—a meeting's closing when you notice the clock. However, there are some compelling reasons to ensure you allocate time for a thoughtful closing before your participants log off or head home.

- The roundtable closing is a time to bring everyone back together
- This is also a time to share an inspirational moment or final reflection that sends your Scouters out on a high note and motivates and inspires them.
 - You can do this with a video from the National Service Center so your Scouters hear reflections from local volunteers nationwide.
 - Suggested closings are on the Roundtable Planning Resources webpage, and more content is being developed constantly.
 - Of course, you can develop your own closing or continue any closing traditions you may have.
 - Finally, a satisfying closing is an important part of motivating Scouters to attend roundtable again next time.

A good closing doesn't have to be extended. The 50-, 60-, and 75-minute roundtable formats allot 5 minutes for this final, brief, and motivating thought.

In short, wrap up your roundtable with a motivating closing and you'll send your volunteers back to their units with both the *skill* and the *will* to deliver a great program.

Roundtable Tools – 20 minutes (slides 90-96)

Networking Time

In many cases, before and after the monthly roundtable, Scouters enjoy sharing information and starting and/or continuing conversations related to Scouting or one of the topics discussed during the roundtable.

With this in mind, it is recommended to open a virtual roundtable room 15 minutes before the scheduled meeting start time and then leave the room open for up to 15 minutes after the scheduled roundtable has ended. This will allow for the back-and-forth discussion many Scouters find useful, AND fulfill one of the four purposes of a roundtable.

In an in-person roundtable, the roundtable team should arrange to open the meeting space 15 minutes early and leave it open after the meeting has ended. This will likely happen organically,

as the setup and takedown of the meeting space will occur in advance and after the meeting has ended.

Audience Characteristics

It is important to know the needs and characteristics of the audience when planning and presenting the program theme.

Some points to consider

You should consider the different personalities of the group. Roundtable program feature presentations should be tailored to the different personalities within the group, such as individuals who are:

- Extrovert
- Perceivers
- Apprehensive
- Inhibited/outgoing
- Self-protective
- Collaborators

You must also consider different ability/skill levels. Roundtable participants will have varying abilities, skills, and experiences related to the program's features. Likewise, within each unit, the youth will have varying maturity levels, skills, abilities, and experiences. Leaders should be shown how to teach the skills at their youth's level.

It is tiring for the roundtable audience and the presenter if the same leader presents the program at every roundtable. Some benefits that can come from sharing leadership in the program feature presentation include:

- It builds participation.
- It increases interest among unit leaders.
- It builds attendance.

Look for Scouters who know how to teach a skill at the youth level and how to organize other leaders as resources.

Ceremonies

Providing information on program-related ceremonies is also valuable at roundtable. Unit ceremonies can reinforce citizenship and character development. Various ceremonies should be included at the roundtable, with an emphasis on using simple props made from readily available materials.

Unit participation in ceremonies can also help increase attendance. The following ceremonies should be included at roundtable:

- Opening and closing ceremonies
- Recognition ceremonies
- Advancement ceremonies
- Graduation ceremonies
- Others

Unlike the other roundtable programs, the Venturing Forum does not usually teach unit ceremonies.

Visual aids

Using visual aids at roundtable is important. Behavioral scientists tell us that we receive 80 percent to 90 percent of all communication through our sense of sight.

It is also estimated that 60 to 80 percent of all human behavior and communication occurs nonverbally. Seeing is believing!

Games

Games should be part of all Scouting programs.

- Demonstrate a theme-related game that might be played at a unit meeting.
- Involve as many participants as possible. The game does not need to be completed, but be sure to have a demonstration followed by practice.

Tricks and puzzles.

A trick or puzzle Scouters can take back to their youth adds to the fun and provides one more program tip for leaders.

Appreciation

It is important to show appreciation to your roundtable staff and to the Scouters who attend roundtable.

Think of ways that you can recognize the hard work of your volunteers, such as thank-yous, rounds of applause, awards, or tokens of appreciation.

Roundtable Promotion

Promotion is a key ingredient to increasing your roundtable attendance. Use multiple methods each month to promote roundtable to reach all target audiences, such as social media, email, group messaging apps, and more. Promotion also means reminding Scouters to come to roundtable in meaningful ways, same-day reminders, and word of mouth.

In summary, the roundtable team is responsible for planning effective roundtables. The goal is for your roundtable to provide such excellent service that it makes the leaders WANT TO BE THERE.

Commissioner Recognition and Resources – 10 minutes (slides 97-100)

Commissioner Recognition Resources

Learning is a lifelong activity. Commissioners must continually adjust skills to provide quality service to units. Therefore, commissioners should view learning as an essential part of their Scouting lives—every month, every year.

Continuous learning and training are essential, but so is recognizing commissioners for their efforts. Review the commissioner recognition sections of the national website and encourage the recognition of all commissioners. Some are earned; others bestow some.

These are the tenure requirements to earn each of these recognitions. See the Commissioner Engagement Section of the Commissioner's Website for the remaining requirements for these awards.

- Arrowhead Honor – 1 year
- Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service – 2 years (consecutive) in the same unit
- Commissioner Key – 3 years (in a 5-year period) as a registered commissioner
- Doctorate of Commissioner Science Knot Award – 5 years of unit service (non-consecutive)

Additional Training

These are training opportunities that you should take advantage of whenever you can.

Scouting America Learn Center offers online orientation modules designed to help new commissioners become familiar with the various Scouting programs. They also familiarize new commissioners with the Scouting America organizational structure and the aims and methods of the Scouting program. **It is recommended that you review the modules related to the types of units you will be serving.**

- Make every effort to attend your district commissioner's monthly meeting. He or she will usually include a short training topic that will help you serve your units better.
- Check to see if your council hosts a College of Commissioner Science. During the College, you will receive advanced commissioner training as you progress from your Bachelor's degree to the Doctorate of Commissioner Science. The courses offered at a College will cover a wide range of topics that will help you with almost any situation you face as you serve your units.
- Commissioners are first and foremost leaders. If you have not already done so, please seek out the highest level of leadership training that Scouting America provides to its leaders- Wood Badge.
- Training at the national level is available at the Philmont Training Center. During Commissioners' Week at PTC, the conferences feature the latest tools and techniques, discussions, and idea sharing led by a faculty of experienced commissioners.
- Impact sessions are weekend training events conducted in person and virtually across the country.

Remember that training is a continuous process, and you can always seek help when needed.

Commissioner Manual and Resources

The previous commissioner manuals have been replaced with a series of PDF documents, outlined on this page. Each manual module has several subtopics within the document. There is no provision for printing the information in book form. This format provides commissioners with the opportunity to create their own hard copy or a document for use on a tablet, phone, or other digital device. At a minimum, a unit commissioner should read the "Providing Unit Service" document, along with the "Linking District Resources" and "Charter Renewal" documents.

The most current edition is always available at www.Scouting.org/commissioners/manuals

Guide to Safe Scouting is available for download from the National website. This is a resource that also should be in a commissioner's library.

Commissioner Website

This is the Commissioner page on the Scouting America website. You can scroll down the left-hand column and view all the topics that are there to help you perform your duties as a unit commissioner.

Some of the topics include the Commissioner Newsletter e-Blast, Commissioner Engagement, Awards and Recognition, Technology for Commissioners, Commissioner Manuals and Resources, among others.

You are encouraged to visit this site frequently and explore all the information available to you.

Summary/Questions/Comments – 10 minutes (slides 101-104)

Wreath of Service

Scouting America commissioners and professional staff members design their badges of office with the wreath of service to signify their shared responsibility for providing unit service. They also share something unique in Scouting: a commission.

The issuance of a commission represents Scouting America's formal empowerment to perform the duties and undertake the responsibilities of a unit commissioner, and your acceptance of that obligation.

Personal Commitment

As a roundtable commissioner, you have made a personal commitment to Scouting.

- It's a commitment of time, effort, and knowledge.
- It's a commitment of patience and understanding.
- It's a commitment to be a living example for unit leaders and to lend a helping hand to fellow Scouters.

Congratulations!

Congratulations on completing the first step in your education as a commissioner.

Ask your council commissioner or assistant council commissioner to pair you with a mentor to guide you through completing your onboarding progress record. It will help you internalize the knowledge you have gained in this course and guide you on your path to earning your Arrowhead Honor as a district commissioner. It will help you internalize the knowledge you have gained in this course and guide you on your path to earning your Arrowhead Honor.

Note to instructors: Upon completing the classroom portion, please provide each participant with a training card so that onboarding coaches can verify their attendance.

Handout: Unit Commissioner Onboarding and Orientation Guide – 1 per person

Printing Instructions: This document is meant to be printed as a booklet.

Printer settings -Landscape, 2-sided, Flip on short edge.

This Onboarding Orientation Guide provides new or newly placed commissioners with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the expectations of their position under the guidance of an experienced commissioner, their coach/mentor. They will be guided through the application of those skills in their new position. In this way, success in the new role is more likely to be achieved, benefiting both Scouts and Scout units.

Questions? Comments?