

BCS 154

Roundtable Fundamentals



Time allotted	50 minutes
Teaching format	Instructor-led discussion with PowerPoint support, Activity

Resources

Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BCS 154 - 50-minute roundtable format (1 per person)-Handout before slide 6 ● BCS 154 - 60-minute roundtable format (1 per person)-Handout before slide 6 ● BCS 154 - 75-minute roundtable format (1 per person)-Handout before slide 6
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BCS 154 Roundtable Fundamentals course plan ● BCS 154 Roundtable Fundamentals PowerPoint presentation ● BCS 154 - Planning a Roundtable activity – Instructions/activity list/cards (1 set per group) - Handout with slide 11 ● Computer and projector ● Whiteboard or flipchart, appropriate markers and eraser
Resources for additional participant learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/ ● https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/

Course Connections

Connections to other CCS courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Roundtable Commissioner Position-Specific Training ● MCS 353 - Cub Scout Roundtable Breakouts ● MCS 354 - Scouts BSA Roundtable Breakouts
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Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 2 minutes

Roundtable is often the first district event that a new leader attends. It is focused on FUN and giving new and seasoned leaders “the skill to do, and the will to do”. Roundtable is important not only for the leaders but for the youth they bring the information back to. This course extends the learning material from Roundtable Commissioner Position-Specific Training.

To learn more about the nuances of the Cub Scout and Scouts BSA roundtable breakouts, take MCS 353—The Cub Scout Roundtable Breakout and MCS 354—The Scouts BSA Roundtable Breakout.

Introduce the learning objectives, noting that by the end of this session, each participant should...

- **Explain** the purpose of a roundtable
- **Discuss** how to utilize the program information on the Commissioner Roundtable Support webpage to plan and execute a monthly roundtable
- **Demonstrate** how to use different formats to plan roundtables
- **Know** how to provide scout leaders with the *Skill* to do and the *Will* to Do

Purpose of a Roundtable – 10 minutes (slides 3-5)

What is the purpose of roundtable?

Let’s start here: the purpose of roundtable. From its earliest days, it has had four core functions:

- To provide information
- To capture information
- To offer current program training
- To provide networking opportunities

Roundtable should be one of the key tools we use as commissioners to support unit leaders.

It is the monthly district meeting that provides Scout unit leaders a place to:

- Find out about changes and updates in the program:
 - Recent updates to the program such as the introduction of Safeguarding Youth Training and updates to merit badges.
- To provide information about unit events or concerns
 - Example: There will be 12 youth and 4 adults attending summer camp
 - Example: Pack 123 is struggling to complete recharter due to untrained leaders
 - And to learn about events that their unit can participate in, such as district camporees, district pinewood derby, council camp cards, Scout nights for sports teams
- Talk with experts on topics:
 - Bringing in your Outdoor Ethics Champion, an EMT to talk about First Aid, or the district training chair to talk about adult training

It is the monthly district meeting that provides unit leaders a place to:

- Learn activities before meetings
This could be a craft, a game, a skit, ceremonies, or planning an event that corresponds to an advancement.
- Network with other leaders
This time can help leaders find new ways to deal with problems. Other leaders may have already faced a challenge and can provide solutions, they can share an idea for a new event offered locally, and just give support to new leaders
- Discuss topics that apply to all leaders in the program.
Many topics span all program areas. Discussing a topic with all leaders helps each leader in the unit fully understand the concept and see other viewpoints. This allows everyone to have one focus for the unit. Things like training, disability awareness, and advancement are just a few.

Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage Resources– 10 minutes (slides 6-8)

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

If possible, have webpage up for the group to see:

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

What is the Roundtable Support webpage?

This is a central location for all resources that is supplying for roundtables. Let's take a look at the webpage.

- Major sections: Roundtable Planning Resources, Roundtable Formats, Roundtable Training for Commissioners, Other Commissioner Resources, Virtual Roundtable Resources, Other Roundtable Resources
- National Support Center continuing to add video content; as more becomes available, local districts will have more flexibility to match content to local needs
- Other resources are continuously added to support the planning and delivery of virtual roundtables
- Virtual Roundtable Resources page provides links to Scouting America Digital Safety and Online Scouting Activities as well as videos and reference materials on using Zoom (today, by far the most popular virtual meeting tool among Scouting America volunteers)
- It is easy to send questions, comments and suggestions directly to the service team from any page

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

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

How to Use the Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage

Roundtable commissioners have flexibility in how a roundtable is run. The webpage offers three flexible formats with similar looks and identical topics. The Commissioner Roundtable Support webpage also provides virtual resources to plug into the formats. Content will be added as more becomes available.

The roundtable commissioner is encouraged to use the virtual content to meet the needs of the district or council roundtable.

- An example is winter camping. Some councils may not conduct winter camping activities, but the roundtable commissioner can look through other content and find a topic that meets their roundtable's needs.

So, what is on the Commissioner Roundtable Support webpage?

- The goals of roundtable and the functions are the first things you see
- The three formats are on the webpage for you to print out and use as examples
- Roundtable Planning Resources have links to all the virtual content offered to support roundtable, such as opening videos, hot topic videos, safety moment videos and handouts, membership moments, breakout videos, closing videos, and ideas - everything the roundtable commissioner will need to plan a successful roundtable is here.
- There are links to roundtable commissioner training, awards and recognition for commissioners, and virtual tools.

For virtual presentation, consider the following:

To distribute handouts, you can (a) email them in advance, (b) have your facilitator email them during the session so they will arrive on time, (c) post a link in the chat line, or (d) email them after the session is over.

Formats (slide 8)

The National Service Team has created formats based on feedback from Scouting surveys. It was found that many in-person roundtables lack the reach that a virtual roundtable can achieve. The formats can be used for in-person, virtual, and hybrid roundtables.

- There are three formats containing the same topics based on different time frames.
 - The 50-minute format has an opening, safety moment, hot topic, breakout, and closing
 - The 60-minute format has an opening, safety moment, hot topic, breakout, and closing
 - The 75-minute format has an opening, safety moment, hot topic, breakout, and closing
- Flexible: The formats are designed to support both virtual or in-person roundtable. The resources offered on the Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage—which we will discuss shortly—are great tools for both types of roundtables.
- Roundtable commissioners are encouraged to take a format that works for their district or council and tailor it to their needs.
 - A roundtable commissioner could add hands-on type demonstrations during the breakouts to facilitate a conversation.
 - A roundtable commissioner can opt not to use the resources offered and bring in people or units to teach topics.
 - The possibilities are endless

Parts of the Roundtable – 20 minutes including 10-minute activity (slides 9-11)

A district roundtable is also broken up into parts:

OPENING:

- **What is the opening?** It's a time for roundtable commissioners to set the tone for the rest of the meeting.
- **Duration:** The opening would last 8 minutes for the 50-minute version, 8 minutes for the 60-minute version, and 10 minutes for the 75-minute version.
- **Content:** The opening gives the roundtable commissioner several opportunities to tailor this time to meet the needs of the council and district. There are many options for the roundtable commissioner, such as:
 - Setting the stage for what that month's roundtable will be. What topic(s) will be discussed?
 - Another opportunity for the roundtable commissioner is to become a "champion" for the program. This is a great time to highlight significant accomplishments at the council, district, or unit level.
 - Networking is another great opportunity during the opening time. If you're a small group, let everyone introduce themselves. If you're a larger group, maybe new people can introduce themselves to help them feel welcome.
 - If a roundtable commissioner is creative, they can also engage in virtual icebreakers. For the August roundtable, you might ask your group, "What is the one trait you think a great leader should possess?" in a poll question, or ask "would you rather" questions, or a myriad of other options.
- Other examples to consider including:
 - Flag ceremony
 - Prayer
 - Recognitions

SAFETY MOMENT:

- **What is a Safety Moment?** The safety of all Scouting participants is a top priority. A safety moment should be given at the beginning of any meeting, including a roundtable.
- **Duration:** The Safety moment should take 4 minutes in the 50-minute and 60-minute roundtable formats and no more than 5 minutes in a 75-minute roundtable format.
- **Content:** At the beginning of any Scouting meeting a safety moment can be given to discuss a risk or hazard that can be prevented and then educate the audience on safety procedures. A safety moment should be appropriate for the audience and can be delivered using slides, videos, checklists, or demonstrations. Demonstrations and discussions help to reinforce and expand upon the content. Youth and adults can present information about safety moments and lead the discussion. Questions and discussion regarding the topic should be encouraged. These safety moments 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, etc.

- **Examples:**
 - Weather training updates
 - Safety afloat
 - Two-deep leadership

MEMBERSHIP MOMENTS:

- **What are Membership Moments?** Membership moments are one- to two-minute ideas to share with your district or council about a membership recruiting or retention strategy. Ideally, the district membership chair will deliver these.
- **Duration:** For the 50-minute and 60-minute version, program-specific breakouts will be allotted about 4 minutes. For the 75-minute versions, the breakout portion would last about 5 minutes.
- **Content:** Membership is the responsibility of all Scouters, leaders, and councils. The Membership Moment is an opportunity to share ideas on increasing membership and retention across all programs. Videos from the National Service Center or other National Service Center Resources will support the moments. The roundtable commissioner can always invite a unit that is excelling in membership to speak about its success.
- **Examples:**
 - New Member Coordinator and how they increase retention
 - Scouting America Brand Center
 - Membership plans

HOT TOPICS:

- **What are Hot Topics?** Hot topics are akin to the previous roundtable “Big Rock Topics” utilized after the opening and before breakouts.
- **Duration:** These hot topics will run 10 to 15 minutes depending on the topic and the length of the roundtable program (50 minutes, 60-minutes, or 75 minutes).
- **Content:** Going forward, Hot Topics will be National or council information that significantly impacts local Scouting or requires immediate volunteer actions (such as program changes, new membership recruitment tools, fee changes, new opportunities, etc.). 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, etc.
- **Examples:**

A hot topic is a very important topic and of keen interest to all Scouting families at all levels in Scouting America. It will be up to the roundtable commissioner, with the support of their local district and council professionals, to ensure these hot topics are presented.

BREAKOUTS:

- **What are breakouts?** Training. 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 bringing a better program to the youth they serve.
- **Duration:** Program-specific breakouts will be allotted 20 minutes for the 50-minute version and 25 minutes for the 60-minute version. The breakout portion would last

about 35 minutes for the 75-minute version.

- **Content:** The roundtable commissioner will play an essential role in these program-specific breakouts—a guide or facilitator of discussion. After the brief introductory video by a subject matter expert, the roundtable commissioner will lead the breakout session and reinforce the topic at hand while engaging the attendees. While these topics will serve as informal training, there will likely be a dose of networking involved. When Scouters share information, they will likely meet new people with whom they share commonalities.
- **Examples:**
 - Adventures
 - Discipline issues and how to handle them
 - Disability awareness

CLOSING:

- **What is a closing?** First, it's a great way to tie together the themes from your program. Using videos from the National Service Center means your Scouters can hear reflections from local volunteers nationwide doing what they're doing by attending. Second, a good closing—like a good Scoutmaster's Minute—sends your Scouters out on a high note. Your meeting program gave them the skill to do; the closing provides a final reflection that reinforces their will to do.
- **Duration:** The 50-minute, 60-minute, and 75-minute roundtable formats allot 4-5 minutes for this final, brief, motivating thought.
- **Content:** You can find suggested closings on the Roundtable Support webpage. They bring new voices and fresh perspectives that highlight Scouting's values. In short, be sure to reserve time to wrap up an informative roundtable with a motivating closing that sends your volunteers back to their units with the skill and will to deliver a great program.
- **Examples:**
 - Video from the Commissioner Roundtable Support webpage about leadership
 - Talk from an adult whose life was changed by Scouting
 - A Commissioner's Minute

ADDITIONAL ASPECTS OF A DISTRICT ROUNDTABLE

Linking Needs

One important role of the roundtable commissioner is to help units connect with resources and to help them meet their needs. One way this can be accomplished is by providing networking time so leaders can talk to each other and problem solve together.

- Networking is one of the key functions of roundtable. Networking is easy in person, but did you know there are ways to network in a virtual environment? There are several ways to network:
 - You can even have private conversations!
 - You can use GROUP DISCUSSION BEFORE AND AFTER THE MEETING
 - You can start your meeting early and keep the meeting open after the close of

- business. Anyone in the meeting during those times can talk to all the other participants. You should mention that the meeting will be opened early (and how early) for networking so that Scouters who plan to attend can take advantage of this opportunity. You should also announce whether you will keep the meeting open after the close for a specified time during the meeting.
- You can also use the CHAT FEATURE DURING THE MEETING. Meeting participants can message others during the meeting using the chat function. This feature enables a side conversation on a topic, such as where a good place to take Arrow of Light Scouts camping is, while the meeting is underway. Participants can respond using chat.
 - Meeting rooms are an excellent option for private conversations. You should create additional breakout rooms for private discussions.

Planning a Roundtable Activity – 10 minutes (slide 11)

Presenter Notes: Use 50-minute format. Pass out parts of a roundtable list/cards

Break the groups into Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA. For a large group, you can also break them into four groups: Cub Scout Virtual Roundtable, Cub Scout In-Person Roundtable, Scouts BSA Virtual Roundtable, and Scouts BSA In-Person Roundtable.

Instruct groups to take the prepared list/set of cards of items and prepare a roundtable using the 50-minute format provided earlier. **There are more items than they need, some for Cub Scouts and some for Scouts BSA.** Have the groups work together to plan a 50-minute roundtable. If you are conducting a virtual commissioner college, send the groups into breakout rooms and provide the list to someone in each group for reference. Allow 10 minutes for the group to prepare. They can also use their ideas.

Discussion: Let each group discuss their program and explain why they selected the individual pieces they chose. Look at the differences between the two/four roundtables.

Is this an issue? No. The goal of the new formats is to enable each council or district to tailor the roundtable to meet its specific needs.

If two groups are using the resources provided that month on the Roundtable Resource webpage, there may be similarities, and some of the same information may be used. A district/council may have a unit that specializes in a particular topic and is willing to present at the roundtable; the roundtable commissioners can then take advantage of this resource.

The goal is to provide a great roundtable with the skill and will to do.

For virtual presentation, consider the following:

Use breakout rooms or separate rooms, depending on the virtual platform, for the buzz groups.

For virtual presentation, consider the following:

Discussions are possible in the virtual classroom. If the class is small, ask people to either speak up or raise their physical or virtual hands. If you choose the latter, you can call on people, or a chat moderator can let you know who is ready to answer. You will want to pause longer than usual to give people a chance to respond. In a larger class, you can ask people to put their answers in the chat line. You or a moderator can read the answers.

The Skill to Do and the Will to Do – 5 minutes (slides 12-14)

Have you heard this before? What does giving the “Will to Do, and the Skill to Do” mean?

- Wait for people to answer. Uncomfortable silences are ok, give the participants a minute or two to think about this.

Let us focus on the first part. The Skill to Do!

How does Roundtable provide the “Skill to Do”?

It provides opportunities for leaders to learn new skills and activities.

What does providing opportunities to practice hands-on activities with other leaders look like?

- It is important to allow the den leaders to learn about a craft or a game or even brainstorm ideas about where to take their den for an outing. In a breakout session, your group could include both seasoned and newer scouters.
- Scouts BSA allows them to learn new program items. Ceremonies for Courts of Honor, games, or skill-specific topics.
- This allows them to spread information or learn a skill they can then return to their units.

Discusses topics that affect leadership

- Not everyone has been a Scout leader for years; it takes time and practice to guide the youth
- Encouraging fun Scout activities, such as demonstrating skits and songs, is very important in a roundtable. It enforces that we do these things in the den and pack meetings. This isn't just an only at camp.
- Not every leader attends camp or can take weekend trainings. It also helps leaders who move a lot (e.g. military families) learn the tune or words to a song. Believe it or not, from council to council and region to region, song lyrics and tunes can change.

Supports leader networking

- Breakout sessions allow networking with other leaders
- Supporting leaders in the position they hold is crucial. Allowing leaders to network with other leaders helps everyone.
- It gives insight into the bigger picture of Scouting and brings continuity to each position.

Now the second part The Will to Do!

How does roundtable provide the “Will to Do”?

- Cheerleaders for the unit leaders
- Provide ways to help units solve their problems

- Can guide unit leaders to district and council experts
- Guiding unit leaders to appropriate Scouting America information

How does one guide leaders to Scouting America information?

- Using **“Aaron on Scouting”** and the **Scouting Wire** helps roundtable commissioners give the field the official voice of National without a biased view.
- Unfortunately, we can turn the information we have learned into a game of telephone; with these articles, we can hand people the official view of a problem or an update.

Summary/Conclusion – 2 minutes

You should now be able to:

- Explain the purpose of a roundtable
- Discuss how to utilize the program information in the Roundtable Planning Guide
- Demonstrate how to use formats to plan roundtables
- Know how to provide Scout leaders with the Skill to Do and the Will to Do

Close with the following statement –

“As a 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.”

Questions? – 1 minute