

MCS 358

Addressing Unit Challenges Through Roundtable



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

Resources

Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MCS 358 – Assistant District Commissioner for Roundtable, job description – 1 per person ● MCS 358 – Roundtable Commissioner, job description – 1 per person ● MCS 358 – Assistant Roundtable Commissioner, job description – 1 per person
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MCS 358 – Addressing Unit Challenges Through Roundtable course plan ● MCS 358 – Addressing Unit Challenges Through Roundtable PowerPoint presentation ● MCS 358 – Unit Service Challenge Cards – 1 set ● 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/

Course Connections

Connections to other CCS courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MCS 350 – Unit & Roundtable Commissioners Working Together ● MCS 351 – Conducting the Roundtable Planning Session ● MCS 352 – Roundtable is Over – Now What ● MCS 353 – The Cub Scout Roundtable Breakout ● MCS 354 – The Scouts BSA Roundtable Breakout ● MCS 357 – Managing Long Distance Roundtables
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Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 3 minutes

Instructor's note: Introduce yourself and the topic. Also, try to get a sense of each participant's role. Unit commissioners, roundtable commissioners, and administrative commissioners may have varying perspectives on unit service.

Stress that the monthly roundtable plays a key role in unit service and in helping unit leaders address their challenges and roadblocks. A great roundtable team will deliver a quality event that encourages leaders to return each month.

This course is the culmination of the College of Commissioner Science material directly related to the monthly roundtable.

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

- **Recognize** when units may need additional resources.
- **Discuss** resources that are available to support unit service.
- **Understand** how to help units resolve their challenges and roadblocks.

The Big Picture – 5 minutes (slides 3

Roundtable is the one place, virtual or in person, where every unit leader and volunteer should be each month. It is an event where many district and council resources will be accessible, and as a commissioner, you know your district's operating committees and are well-positioned to provide much-needed linkages.

The "big picture" is that effective roundtables help units become more successful and efficient. Participation in roundtable never makes a unit worse. On the contrary, regular attendance at roundtable promises to improve the performance of even the best-functioning units. High-performing units are in a good position to share their best practices with other unit leaders who might be struggling.

In essence, the roundtable team should ensure the best possible experience each month for the district's unit leaders so that everyone returns home with both the **Skill to Do**—techniques, methods, ideas— and the **Will to Do**—passion, morale, and Scouting spirit. **After all, roundtable IS unit service.**

Commissioner Objectives – 10 minutes including 5-minute brainstorming activity (slide 4)

Let's take a moment to review the five objectives of unit service.

Most commissioner science courses, including those for roundtable commissioners and roundtable-serving commissioners, cover these objectives in detail—and for good reason! Unit service focuses on these five areas:

- Supporting unit growth
- Contacting units
- Linking unit needs
- Supporting timely charter renewal
- Supporting unit leaders

Instructor's note: Ask the participants how the monthly roundtable can address each of the five objectives. This is a brainstorming session and you may write the answers on a whiteboard or flipchart so everyone can see the answers and use them in the upcoming activity. Remember to be open-minded and accept all suggestions as possible ways roundtable commissioners are on the front line of unit service.

For a virtual presentation, some platforms have a whiteboard feature specifically for this purpose. The chat line also works well. Alternatively, taking notes a blank slide in PowerPoint editor mode can also be effective.

The Components of Roundtable – 5 Minutes (slide 5)

The 50- 60- and 75-minute roundtable formats offer the roundtable team several components designed to give unit leaders and volunteers the ***Skill to Do*** and the ***Will to Do***:

- Networking Time
- Opening
- Hot Topic
- Safety Moment
- Membership Moment
- Program-Specific Breakouts
- Closing

With consistent use of these components, the monthly roundtable becomes a well-functioning machine of unit service. It is important to remember, however, that the roundtable commissioner is not on their own. Each month the Roundtable Support webpage <https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/>

offers suggested programmatic and reference materials designed to give the roundtable team the tools it needs to provide an effective roundtable.

As discussed in previous roundtable-specific courses, the objectives of roundtable are:

- The give and take of information - collaboration
- Informal training, and
- Networking with other Scouters and subject matter experts

When unit leaders and volunteers attend regularly, they pick up best practices and ideas to bring home to their respective units.

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

Roundtable is Unit Service – 20 minutes including 15-minute activity (slides 6-7)

As a roundtable commissioner, you have a responsibility to participate actively in unit service. Likewise, if you are a unit commissioner you should encourage your assigned units' leaders to attend the monthly event. If you are a district commissioner or assistant district commissioner, you should provide consistent support to the roundtable team and ensure that roundtable is a key component of your district's unit service initiatives.

Instructor's note: You may distribute paper copies of the position descriptions for the roundtable team.)

For virtual presentation, consider whether to distribute this handout (a) prior to class, (b) during class via the chat line, if available, or email, (c) after class, or (d) a combination.

The monthly roundtable is, in effect, the front line of unit service where the roundtable team has the opportunity to discuss unit challenges in a group setting. However the unit service aspect does not end when the last chair is put away. Do you remember the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of the monthly roundtable in MCS 352 (Roundtable is over—Now what?)? Are you, as a team, meeting the needs of your district's units?

After the event, roundtable commissioners should feel confident to log simple assessments in Commissioner Tools. If you address unit challenges during the program-specific breakout or in the hallway after roundtable, you should then enter those contact details in Commissioner Tools so there is a record of your contribution to unit service. This benefits the unit commissioner assigned to the unit(s), the district commissioner, and—especially—the unit(s) in question.

Roundtable commissioners can schedule upcoming roundtables in commissioner tools on the district dashboard. Scheduled roundtables can include, dates, times, locations and/or meeting links and instructions.

Additionally, the roundtable commissioner should assign a member of the team the task of taking attendance and recording it in Commissioner Tools each month. This gives the unit service team an idea of who is and who is not attending roundtable regularly.

Likewise, the roundtable team has a responsibility to report back to the unit service team all issues, challenges, and roadblocks units are experiencing in the district. This can best be done at the monthly district commissioner meeting.

Remember, it is always preferred to also share potential solutions.

Putting it into Practice Activity using Unit Service Challenge Cards (substitute scenarios may be used)

Instructor-led activity – 15 minutes: And Here's How It Works...

Brainstorming instructions –

- If the class is small, divide the participants into two groups.
- Use **Handout MCS 358 – Unit Service Challenge Cards** or feel free to create your own scenarios and/or challenges. List each topic on a 3x5 card to give the different groups
- Assign each group one of the questions included in the Challenge Cards. Remind them that there are five things that any commissioner should be doing or using to help a unit succeed.
- Give each group five minutes to complete their assignment by first brainstorming their topic, making a poster listing their ideas, and placing the poster on the wall. (Self-stick poster paper works best, but masking tape will work as a substitute if self-stick poster paper is not available.)
- Give the participant groups time to present their answers and suggestions.
- Smaller groups may allow time to do more than one question and discussion.

Buzz groups instructions if the class is large enough

- If the class is large enough, divide the participants into four groups with 3-4 participants in each group.
- Use **Handout MCS 358 – Unit Service Challenge Cards** or feel free to create your own scenarios and/or challenges. List each topic on a 3x5 card to give the different groups.
- Assign each group one of the questions included in the Challenge Cards. Allow them to spend three or four minutes to provide an answer. Remind them there are five things that any commissioner should be doing or using to help a unit succeed.
- Give each group five minutes to complete their buzz group assignment by first brainstorming their topic, making a poster listing their ideas, and placing the poster on the wall. (Self-stick poster paper works best, but masking tape will work as a substitute if self-stick poster paper is not available.)

For virtual presentation, consider the following:

Handouts: Distribute this handout (a) prior to class, (b) during class via the chat line, if available, or email, (c) after class, or (d) a combination.

Buzz groups: Use breakout rooms. The note-taker can email results to the facilitator who can paste them into the chat line once the class gets back together.

Summary/Conclusion – 2 minutes

As a result of this training, you should now be able to...

- Recognize when units may need additional resources.
- Discuss resources that are available to support Unit Service.
- Understand how to help units resolve their challenges and roadblocks.

Questions? – 5 minutes

What are your questions concerning this presentation today?

Thank you for your participation.