



BCS 151

The Roundtable Commissioner Team

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

Resources

Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● BCS 151 – Assistant Council Commissioner for Roundtable job description– 1 per person● BCS 151 – District Commissioner Responsibilities– 1 per person● BCS 151 – Assistant District Commissioner for Roundtable job description – 1 per person● BCS 151 – Roundtable Commissioner job description – 1 per person● BCS 151 – Assistant Roundtable Commissioner job description – 1 per person● BCS 151 – District Commissioner’s Monthly Meeting Agenda – 1 per person
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● BCS 151 – The Roundtable Commissioner Team course plans● BCS 151 – The Roundtable Commissioner Team PowerPoint presentation● Set of BCS 151 – Activity Cards (3x5) – 1 per card per group● Computer and Projector● PowerPoint presentation● Whiteboard or flipchart
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 Basic Training● BCS 150 – Roundtables in Unit Service● BCS 154 – Roundtable Fundamentals● MCS 352 – Roundtable is Over- Now What?
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Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 2 minutes

An effective roundtable commissioner team is vital to the success of all roundtables. The roundtable commissioner team organization is as simple as it needs to be in a small district and can be a more complex organization in a larger district. It is important that all members of the commissioner roundtable team understand the unique position of roundtable in the Scouting in world. Roundtable provides a different method of unit service, but it is just as important. Roundtable also supplements the efforts of unit commissioners by the program support it provides.

Introduce the learning objectives, noting that by the end of this training each participant will be able to:

- **Identify** the purpose of roundtables.
- **Describe** the positions of a roundtable commissioner team and their duties.
- **Understand** the leadership roles of roundtable commissioner team.

10 minutes: Buzz group activity - Use the Activity Cards handout

Divide the participants into five groups (depending on the number of participants attending). Assign each group one of the following topics using the cards. If you do not have enough participants for five groups, you may have to double up on the topics and give the groups a few more minutes to complete this assignment:

Group #1: What are the purposes of roundtable?

Group #2: What are the leader's expectations of round table?

Group #3: What does a successful round table look like?

Group #4: What are the desired qualities for members of the round table team?

Group #5: What does the ideal round table team look like?

Give each group 5 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. Tell the groups that we will come back to these posters as we progress through this session and that each group will be making a report on their assigned topic.

Give the participant groups 5 minutes to rotate between all five of the posters adding additional ideas.

For virtual presentation, consider the following:

Use breakout rooms or separate rooms, depending on the virtual platform, for the buzz groups. Consider using PowerPoint in Editor Mode to record the results of the discussions. To simplify movement between rooms, consider pre-assigning a leader for each topic. The host or facilitator can move the discussion leaders when the time comes. The leaders can show the next group the list and lead the discussion to identify more ideas. The topic leaders can make the report-outs when the group reconvenes.

Roundtable Team – 25 minutes (including 10 minutes for previous activity)

The fundamental purpose and focus of roundtable is unit service. This gives leaders tools to help them run good programs, rather than "training" them in a particular subject area. It is really a distinction without a difference. Rather than thinking of roundtables as training, think about it as the other way around. Scouting is delivered through units; therefore, anything that assists anyone to deliver the scouting program is unit service.

Instructor note: This is a facilitated discussion. If the participants don't come up with all of the expected answers, you will need to make sure all of the points are covered. Keep it moving to stay within time constraints.

Question 1: What are the purposes of roundtable? (2-3 minutes)

Have Group #1 report on this topic. Ask for other comments.

Answers should include the following:

- 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 the BSA.
- To network with other leaders.
- To provide unit leadership with **the will to do**—the morale, enthusiasm, inspiration, and vision that periodically renew the desire to serve youth AND the **skill to do**—skills, techniques, district/council information, usable program ideas, and the know-how to make the unit operation successful.

Discuss with the participants: What happens if the roundtable commissioner team fails to fulfill the purposes of roundtable?

Question 2: What should unit leaders expect from attending roundtable? (2-3 minutes)

Have Group #2 report on this topic. Ask for other comments.

Answers should include:

- We have to be the best show in town on roundtable night
- We must be informative as well as entertaining
- We must model good leader attitudes through uniforming, update information, and communication skills
- We must lead thru uncertain times by modeling perseverance i.e. virtual roundtables, positive attitudes, etc.

Discuss with the participants: What happens if the roundtable commissioner team fails to meet the participant's expectations?

Question: What does a successful roundtable look, feel, smell, taste, sound like? (2-3 minutes):

Have Group #3 report on this topic. Ask for other comments.

Answers should include:

- Make it the place to get program material
- Make it fun
- Plan and assign parts well in advance
- Build the program around next month's theme

- Use competent masters of ceremonies to preside
- Include practical and useful items for unit people
- Use unit people to help with the program
- Use some activities that involve the participation of everyone. (Skill instructions can be done virtually)
- Emphasize action and doing rather than sitting and listening. (If conducting virtual roundtables encourage participation in discussions)
- Include fellowship and morale features and have refreshments at the end of the program. (If conducting virtual roundtables include networking time following the meeting for leaders to discuss issues or questions they have)
- Keep it positive. Feature success
- Be sure the roundtable program is practical and fun
- Involve many people in the production of the roundtable
- Provide good publicity before and after each roundtable
- Recognize attendance and give credit for good attendance—both individual and unit
- When organizing each new unit, explain how roundtables help the unit

Discuss with the participants: If this is what success looks like, then how do roundtable commissioner teams create successful roundtables?

- The following can help roundtables to be more successful:
- Share workload for a more effective program
- Provide a variety of talents
- Increase available resources
- Increase district/council participation
- Create district/council unity
- Build attendance

Question 4: What are the desired qualities for members of the roundtable team?(2-3 minutes)

Have Group #4 report on this topic. Ask for other comments.

Answers should include the qualities of a great commissioner -

- Proven leader
- Capable of enlisting other effective people to serve
- Upbeat
- Personable
- Role Model
- Passionate about a good program for youth
- Wears his/her Scout uniform proudly
- Mentor
- Prepared and Time Sensitive
- Good computer savvy for virtual roundtables (if conducting)

Discuss with the participants: If these are the qualities of roundtable commissioner team members, how do we develop these qualities in our roundtable commissioner team?

Question 5: What does an “ideal” roundtable team look like? (2-3 minutes)

Have Group #5 report on this topic. Ask for other comments.

Answers should include:

- The roundtable team may vary in size, depending on the district’s or council’s needs. Many positions are optional, and may be added, as they are needed
- The size of your roundtable team will depend in large part on the goals and activities you identified in your roundtable annual plan. For more on planning take BCS 152 – Planning, Implementing and Promoting Roundtables
- Cub Scout roundtable may have more team members than Scouts BSA or Venturing
- Venturing roundtable teams also include Venturing officers

Discuss with the participants: If this is the “ideal roundtable team”, what could be keeping many roundtable commissioner teams from meeting this ideal organization?

For virtual presentation:

Be aware that discussions can happen in a virtual setting, just as they do in the in-person setting. Some people will use chat lines. The facilitator should let the instructor know if anyone makes a comment or asks a question.

Pause longer to wait for an answer in the virtual setting.

Roundtable Team Responsibilities– 10 minutes

The responsibilities of all roundtable commissioner team members include:

- Tailor the roundtable program to the needs of the units in your district/council
- Plan and supervise the delivery of program ideas and motivation to scout leaders that will enable units to provide a more effective program to scouts
- Have knowledge of scouting programs and literature and how to help leaders use it in support of their program
- Participate in annual and monthly roundtable planning meeting, set goals, and establish written plans for the roundtable program using the planning resources found on the Commissioners Roundtable Resource webpage at <https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/>
- Work with the district executive and district commissioner to establish an annual operating budget for the roundtables
- Ensure that quality roundtables take place as scheduled. (roundtable commissioners may or may not conduct the roundtable themselves)
- Conduct regular evaluations of the roundtables to determine how they can be improved.
- Take the training necessary to grow in experience and knowledge. This may be done through council-sponsored commissioners’ conferences, roundtable workshops, national or regional conferences, etc.
- For more on training take **BCS 112 – Recruiting Unit Commissioners**

***Instructor Note:* Distribute the job description handouts for slides 10-15. (if running short on class time ask participants to review on their own)**

Assistant Council Commissioner for Roundtable - Go over job description handout with participants

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.

The District Commissioner and Roundtables - Go over job description handout with participants and District Commissioner Responsibilities handout with participants.

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.

Assistant District Commissioner for Roundtable - Go over job description handout with participants

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.

Roundtable Commissioner - Go over job description handout with participants

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.

Without a great roundtable commissioner leading the way the roundtable team will fall short of reaching their potential.

All roundtable commissioners and their respective assistant roundtable commissioners should attend the monthly district commissioner's staff meeting and they should provide appropriate updates related to district roundtables and local unit needs, as appropriate, to the district commissioner either directly or through the assistant district commissioner for roundtable.

The goal of roundtables is to help units solve problems by providing ***the skill to do*** and ***the will to do*** and through discussing unit issues and linking units to district resources.

Assistant Roundtable Commissioners - Go over job description handout with participants

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.

Assistant roundtable commissioners are the support team that helps provide a high-quality roundtable. There are no limits to the number of assistant roundtable commissioners that can be part of the district roundtable team; however, there should also never be less than one assistant roundtable commissioner for each program to serve as a backup for each of the program-specific roundtable commissioner so that, in case of illness or conflicts, roundtable can go on as scheduled.

Assistant roundtable commissioners should be assigned specific duties for roundtables. They should attend the monthly planning meeting and should prepare and present their assigned part of the roundtable in a fun, quality, and consistent manner. They should promote roundtables in order to build attendance.

Model wearing of the uniform by attending roundtables in full field uniform. If meeting in person, those in this role should arrive early to assist with set up and be available after the meeting to answer Scouters' questions. They should contact the roundtable commissioner and their backup team member in a timely manner when unable to follow through with the assignment. They should keep and project a positive attitude towards the scouting program, take training for the position, and continue to increase their knowledge of scouting.

Program-specific assistant roundtable commissioners should be assigned to work with a particular Scouting program (Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing roundtables).

Specific assignment assistant roundtable commissioners can be used to fill any specific position that would help the roundtable commissioner. These include assistants responsible for any specific program elements.

Possible assignments for assistant roundtable commissioners

In larger districts you may want to have specialized assistant roundtable commissioners.

Some specialized positions could include:

- Program-specific/breakout session leader
- Roundtable feature coordinator
- Ceremonies
- Facilities
- Historian
- Photographer/ media specialist

No matter how small or how large your roundtable team becomes, make sure everyone has a purpose and feels they are valuable. Make sure you show appreciation for all they do for the roundtable team.

Please always remember that without a successful roundtable team, the youth programs will not reach their highest potential!

New member coordinator assistant roundtable commissioner is a position that both models the use of a new member coordinator for unit leaders and fulfills similar responsibilities for the roundtable team.

These assistant roundtable commissioners welcome new leaders to roundtable, track attendance, and become a friendly face at roundtable to help build those first relationships with new leaders.

This individual should collect contact information for participants and follow up with them to make sure roundtable is meeting their needs.

This assistant roundtable commissioner may wear a “New Member Coordinator” shirt and/or vest to readily identify them to new participants. New member coordinators help build relationships with new leaders.

Types of Roundtables

There are three types of roundtables (Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, and Venturing roundtables).

In the virtual roundtable program, and in some in-person roundtables, all programs start together and possibly end together after separate program breakout sessions.

Due to space considerations, or in larger districts, they may start and finish all of the programs in separate locations.

A roundtable is more effective when conducted as discussion group rather than an evening of entertainment. (For example, don't just show a movie.) Always involve the group actively in the discussion. Showing someone how to do something is not enough.

The national service center and BSA provide resources for discussion starters in program-specific breakouts and can be found at <https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/roundtable-support/>. These resources will consist of a short video that can be shown at the beginning of the breakout session and followed by a lively discussion of all leaders present. The roundtable commissioner facilitates the discussion ensuring that all those present have an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

Although roundtable program resources are provided by the national service center for each roundtable program area (Cub Scout, Scouts BSA), all roundtables should be adapted to the local needs of each council and district utilizing BSA approved materials.

Cub Scout Roundtable

Cub Scout leader breakout sessions provide the opportunity to discuss specific topics with all Cub Scout leaders in one setting. This discussion allows leaders to network with one another, hear different points of views from different positions, and learn how a unit operates outside their specific position.

Scouts BSA Roundtable

The Scouts BSA roundtable helps Troop leaders prepare to teach a skill or present a program feature material on a *youth level* by presenting it on that level at the roundtable.

Program Features for Troops, Teams, and Crews, Vols. 1, 2, 3 is a great resource for roundtable topics. The three volumes bring together 48 feature topics to help making program planning easier for unit and youth leaders. The mix of topics—outdoor, sports, health and safety, citizenship and personal development, STEM, and arts and hobbies—provides the kind of variety, adventure, challenges, and opportunities for advancement units can use to keep members coming back. These ideas can be used as supplements to the material provided above.

Venturing Roundtable

The Venturing roundtable commissioner should develop a program to facilitate a lively discussion for all those in attendance.

- Venturing roundtables support the Venturing Officer's Association (VOA)
- Adults and youth officers meet together on the same night
- The VOA president or designee runs the opening session
- The Venturing roundtable commissioner runs the adult leader break-out roundtable session concurrently with the main VOA session run by the VOA president
- Everyone returns together for a combined roundtable program closing session
- Under the direction of the VOA president, the vice president of program (assisted by the roundtable commissioner as needed) runs the combined program session
- It is recommended that the monthly district roundtable is integrated with VOAs: district, multi-district or council level
- Venturing roundtables may meet on a different night than Cub Scout and Scouts BSA roundtables
- Venturing roundtables and VOA meetings that are separate will still be an option
- Frequency: Quarterly at a minimum. This allows the VOA to have other VOA meetings and events as needed without having a concurrent roundtable

Venturing roundtable should follow the ALPS Model with separate topics specific for adults and combined topics that relate to both the adults and youth officers.

- A-L-P-S: Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, Service

Roundtable Team Leadership – 10 minutes

Roundtable team leadership includes: Shared leadership, selecting, recruiting, training, and supporting the roundtable commissioner team

We will primarily focus on the benefits of shared leadership and how we can support the roundtable commissioner team. The other three topics are discussed in BCS 112 – Recruiting Unit Commissioners.

Shared Leadership

Question: What does shared leadership mean and what are the benefits of this approach for the roundtable team?

Shared leadership in roundtables is an important aspect of team building.

Responses should include:

- Build participation
- Increase interest among unit leaders
- Build attendance

A team in which the members share in the decision making will have a better chance to understand the group's purposes and goals, to be flexible, and to achieve satisfaction knowing that they have had a part in shaping the team's spirit. They have an investment in its success!

Roundtable Team Support

Question: What kind of support does a roundtable commissioner team need?

Responses should include the following points:

- A supportive climate motivates people to do their best. Create a climate of “good old Scouting spirit”
- When this is a built-in part of the roundtable, it will rub off on the leaders who attend
- Provide information. Open communications are important
- Keep the team updated on material necessary to roundtable. This update may occur at your team meetings
- Make assignments to fit the talents and abilities of the team. Once the assignments are made, check with team members to see how you can help
- Make sure everyone has a meaningful responsibility. This is a very important part of a successful roundtable
- Sharing responsibilities makes everyone's job easier
- Be sure the team knows what is expected
- Give each team member a copy of the monthly agenda and assignments.
- It is helpful to you, the roundtable commissioner, and your team if the team member is recruited to back up one or two basic parts of the roundtable
- A roster of troop/pack/crew assignments could be made at the beginning of the year for the benefit of the team and the units
- Encourage the team to be prepared in the event the assigned unit does not attend
- Use team meetings to good advantage. Don't hold pointless meetings or let the meetings stray too far off the track. Time is valuable to everyone

- Show confidence in individual team members and the team as a whole. Let them know you expect and count on them to do their best
- Provide recognition. Give credit openly for good results. Remember to say a simple “thank you” for a job well done
- Be interested in their personal development by encouraging completion of the Arrowhead Honor and Training Award

Roundtable Team Meetings

The monthly roundtable commissioner team meeting is a critical function after each roundtable. The focus of this meeting is to reflect on what just happened and to make sure the team is ready for the next month’s roundtable. For more info see MCS 352 - Roundtable is Over – Now What?

It is recommended that you use a Start/Stop/Continue discussion to drive the feedback from this meeting. After reflecting on what happened this month, the team needs to shift gears and look ahead.

The “PPPPP” applies to this part of the monthly team meeting. “Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance” We teach our unit leaders to plan short term, midterm, and long term. This concept applies to our roundtable teams as well.

If we always focus only on the next roundtable, we become reactive vs. proactive. A “30/60/90” approach works well for this meeting; when we think in terms of one, two, or three months out we take a more long-term view rather than focusing too heavily on the present.

Sometime during the year, the roundtable team should have an annual planning conference to map out what the goals are for the next scouting year. It is recommended that this meeting be held early in the summer and roundtable teams consider holding a roundtable open house in August and invite unit leaders to join you for a new year program preview.

The most important aspect of this meeting is to use an agenda, developed by the assistant district commissioner for roundtable. Agendas help to make sure that key aspects are addressed.

Finally, don’t let the monthly roundtable team meeting become something the team does only if they have nothing else to do. The adage, “build it and they will come” applies. This meeting is a return and report meeting. Attendance should be an expectation of service. 30 minutes per month is normally plenty of time for this meeting.

District Commissioner Staff Meetings

Distribute the **District Commissioner’s Monthly Staff Meeting Agenda** handout to participants.

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.

Depending on the district organizational structure, either the assistant district commissioner for roundtable or the individual program-specific roundtable commissioners (Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scouts) will provide a roundtable report at the district commissioner's monthly staff meeting.

The assistant district commissioner for roundtable or the roundtable commissioners should provide a report about how the last month's roundtables went, including recognizing any roundtable team members for excellent performance, and discuss any specific unit issues noted.

The assistant district commissioner for roundtable or the roundtable commissioners should also provide an update on the plans for the upcoming roundtables.

Commissioner Tools for Roundtable

Commissioner Tools is an important part of tracking roundtable attendance, but in order to track attendance, you must enter the roundtable attendance numbers on a monthly basis for each unit that has participants.

Commissioner Tools only tracks attendance by the number of unit leaders attending a single session and does not track by individual names.

You should only count participants once. A leader that attends the Scouts BSA roundtable and then comes by the Cub Scout roundtable to pick up any flyers or handouts should only be counted for attending the Scouts BSA roundtable.

Commissioner Tools is constantly being upgraded and additional options are being added on a regular basis.

It is highly recommended that you take the Commissioner Tools online training or ask for someone to provide you one-on-one training from another roundtable commissioner or the assistant district commissioner for roundtable familiar with the roundtable and other modules. You can also attend **BCS 154 – Roundtable Fundamentals** for more on roundtable commissioner tools.

Summary/Conclusion – 1 minute

We have discussed:

- The purpose of roundtables
- The positions of a roundtable commissioner team and their duties
- The leadership roles of roundtable commissioner team

An effective roundtable commissioner team is vital to the success of all roundtables. The roundtable commissioner team organization is as simple as it needs to be in a small district and can be a more

complex organization in a larger district. It is important that all members of the commissioner roundtable team understand the unique position of roundtable in the Scouting in world. Roundtable provides a different method of unit service, but it is just as important. Roundtable also supplements unit commissioner efforts by the program support it provides.

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? – 2 minutes