

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 - 75-minute roundtable format (1 per person)-Handout before slide 6 ● BCS 154 - Planning a Roundtable activity – Instructions/activity list/cards (1 set per group) - Handout with slide 11
Equipment and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BCS 154 Roundtable Fundamentals course plan ● BCS 154 Roundtable Fundamentals PowerPoint presentation ● 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 Basic Training ● MCS 353 - Cub Scout Roundtable Breakouts ● MCS 354 - Scouts BSA Roundtable Breakouts
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Presentation Outline

Introduction and Course Objectives – 5 minutes

Roundtable is normally the first district event that a new leader attends. It is focused on FUN and giving new and seasoned leaders “the will to do, and the skill 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 Basic Training.

To learn more about the nuances of the Cub Scout roundtable breakouts and Scouts BSA roundtable breakouts make sure to 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 elements of a roundtable
- **Discuss** how to utilize the program information in the Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage
- **Demonstrate** how to use virtual formats to plan roundtables
- **Understand** how to provide scout leaders with the *Skill* to do and the *Will* to Do

Elements of a roundtable – 20 minutes

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 programs
 - Example: the recent updates to the Cub Scout program, the introduction to the new Lion rank from the pilot program, family Scouting, and new adventures just to name a few
- 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:

- The following events would fall under this category: 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 about First Aid, the district training chair to talk adult trainings

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

- Learn activities for den meetings or pack meetings

- This could be a craft, a game, a skit, or planning a den event that corresponds to an adventure.
- Network with other Scout 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 across all program areas. A topic discussed by 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, disabilities awareness, advancement are just a few.

Note new formats on slide 6

New formats - The National Service Center Team has created “virtual formats” based on feedback from Scouting surveys. It was found that many in-person roundtables do not have the reach that a virtual roundtable can create.

- New formats: The new formats contain the same topics just based on two different time frames.
 - The 50-minute format has an opening, hot topic, safety moment, breakout, and closing
 - The 75-minute format has an opening, hot topic, safety moment, breakout, and closing
- Flexible: The new format is created to support a virtual roundtable or an in-person roundtable. The resources offered on the Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage - which we will discuss in a bit; are great tools to be used by both virtual and in-person 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 to not use the resources offered and bring in people or units to teach topics.
 - The possibilities are endless

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:** For the 50-minute version, the Opening would last 8 minutes and for the 75-minute version, the Opening would last 10 minutes.

- **Content:** The Opening gives the roundtable commissioner several opportunities to tailor the Opening 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 is for the roundtable commissioner to become a "champion" for the program. This is a great time to highlight significant accomplishments that have been seen in the council, district, or unit level.
- Networking is another great opportunity in the Opening time. If you're a small group let everyone introduce themselves, if you're a larger group maybe an introduction from new people 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.
- **Examples:**
 - Flag ceremony
 - Prayer
 - Recognitions

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 5 to 20 minutes depending on the topic and the length of the roundtable program (50 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 either 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:**
 - Hot topic for 2020 might be restarting Scouting activities with your units in person and how to do so as safely as possible. A very important topic and of keen interest to all Scouting families at all levels in the BSA. It will be up to the roundtable commissioner with the support of their local district and council Professionals to ensure these hot topics are clearly presented.

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 roundtable.
- **Duration:** The Safety moment should take 5 minutes in the 50-minute roundtable format and no more than 10 minutes in a 75-minute roundtable.
- **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 to the audience and can be delivered using slides, videos, checklists, or a demonstration. Demonstrations and discussion help to reinforce and expand upon the content. Youth and adults can present the safety moment information and lead the discussion about the topic. Questions and discussion regarding the topic should be encouraged. These safety moments will be supported either by videos from the National Service Center or other National Service Center Resources announced during roundtables and later distributed via handouts, website posting, emails, etc.

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

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 with them to their home units, ultimately to bring a better program to the youth they serve.
- **Duration:** For the 50-minute version, program-specific breakouts will be allotted ~25 minutes. For the 75-minute version, the breakout portion would last ~30 minutes.
- **Content:** The roundtable commissioner will play an important role in these program-specific breakouts—a guide or facilitator of discussion. After the short introductory video by a subject matter expert, the roundtable commissioner will then lead the breakout session and drive home 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, as well. When Scouters share information, they will likely meet new people with whom they share commonalities.
- **Examples:**
 - Adventures
 - Discipline issues and how to handle them
 - Disabilities 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 around the country who are doing just 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 made sure to give them the skill to do; the Closing provides a final reflection that reinforces their will to do.
- **Duration:** Both the 50- and 75-minute Virtual Roundtable formats allot 5 minutes for this final, brief, motivating thought.
- **Content:** You can find suggested Closings on the Roundtable Support Webpage. It brings 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 both the skill and the

will to deliver a great program.

- **Examples:**

- Video from Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage about leadership
- Talk from an adult whose life was changed by Scouting
- A Commissioner's Minute

OPTIONAL PARTS OF A DISTRICT ROUNDTABLE

- Linking needs: This is one job of the roundtable commissioner. The idea is to help facilitate a unit in finding solutions to problems or questions they may have. This is done through networking.
- Networking is one of the key functions of roundtable. Networking is easy in Person, but did you know that there are ways to network in a virtual environment? Actually, 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 who is in the meeting during those times can talk to all of the other participants. You should mention that the meeting will be opened early (and how early) for networking so that scouts who plan to attend can take advantage of this opportunity. You should also announce whether or not you will keep the meeting open after the close for a 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. Using this feature enables a side conversation on a topic such as where is a good place to take second year Webelos Scouts camping while the meeting is underway. Participants can respond using chat.
 - Meeting Rooms are a great option for private conversations. You should create additional breakout rooms for private discussions.

Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage Resources– 20 minutes (including 10-minute activity)

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

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

What is the Roundtable Support Webpage?

- A central location for all resources that BSA 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 will continue to be added to support planning and delivery of virtual roundtables
- Virtual Roundtable Resources page provides links to BSA 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 BSA volunteers)

- Easy to send questions, comments and suggestions directly to the service team from any page

How to use the Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage

- Roundtable commissioners have the flexibility in how a roundtable is run. The Webpage offers two flexible formats with similar looks and identical topics.
- The Commissioner Roundtable Support Webpage also provides virtual resources to plug into the new formats. There will be content added as more becomes available. The roundtable commissioner is encouraged to use the virtual content in a way that meets the needs of the district or council roundtable.
- A favorite example would be winter camping. Some councils may not conduct winter camping activities - the roundtable commissioner can look through other content and find a topic/s that meet the needs of their roundtable.

So, what is on the Commissioner Roundtable Support webpage?

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

Planning a roundtable using 50-minute format - 10 minutes

Instructions/Activity List

Notes: Break the groups into Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA, if you have a large group you can also break them into 4 groups- Cub Scout virtual roundtable, Cub Scout in-person roundtable, Scouts BSA virtual roundtable, Scouts BSA in-person roundtable.

Note: *Pass out parts of a roundtable list/cards slide 11*

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 and some items are for Cub Scouts and some are 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 send the list to someone in the group to use as reference. Allow 10 minutes for group to prepare. Again, there are more items than they will need for a roundtable and they can also use their own ideas as well.

Discussion: Let each group discuss their program and why they chose 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 provide each council or district the ability to personalize the roundtable to fit their needs. There may be similarities and some of the same information may be used if two groups are using the resources provided that month on the Roundtable Resource Webpage. A district/council may have a unit that specializes in a topic who is willing to present at roundtable and the roundtable commissioners take advantage of the resource.

The goal is to provide a great roundtable that provides 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.

The Will to Do and the Skill to Do – 7 minutes

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

- Wait for people to answer. Uncomfortable silences are ok, give the participants a minute or two to think about this.
- If you have a class that has taken Wood Badge, you may have an instant answer

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.

Let us focus on the first 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 BSA information

How does one guide leaders to BSA information?

- Using Bryan 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 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.

And now the second part. The Skill to Do!

How does roundtable provide the “Skill to Do”?

- Provides opportunities to practice hands-on activities with other rank specific leaders
- What does “Provides opportunities to learn hands-on activities with other rank specific leaders” look like?
 - Giving the opportunity for the den leaders to learn about a craft, a game, or even brainstorm ideas to where to take their den for an outing is important. In a breakout session your group could have both seasoned Scouters and newer Scouters.
 - This gives them the opportunity to spread information or learn a skill they can then take back 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 Roundtable. It enforces the idea that we do these things in den and pack meetings. That this isn’t just an only at camp activity.
 - Not every leader attends camp or can take weekend trainings. It also helps leaders that 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 leaders in specific positions
 - Breakout sessions give the opportunity for networking with other leaders in the district
 - Supporting leaders in the position they hold is crucial. Giving leaders the opportunity to network with other leaders in their same position helps everyone.

- It gives the insight to the bigger picture of Scouting and also brings continuity with personality to each position.

Summary/Conclusion – 3 minutes

You should now be able to:

- Explain the elements of a roundtable
- Discuss how to utilize the program information in the Roundtable Planning Guide
- Demonstrate how to use virtual formats to plan roundtables
- Understand 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? – 5 minutes