



Promoting Roundtable

Course Outline

Introduction and Learning Objectives

It does not matter how great of a Roundtable team you put together or how well prepared you are if no one shows up. Unlike in the movies just because you built it does not mean they will come. With out proper and consistent promotion you may find yourself frustrated at the lack of participation in your District and Council. A quality and consistent roundtable and a strong marketing campaign will attract and retain participants over time and impact their overall ability to lead their Scouting units. Sometimes this means that a district and/or council has to overcome internal concerns and some longstanding “you don’t need to go” types of sentiments that may have developed from a weak or ill marketed roundtable.

Participants of this course will:

- Review the current Roundtable attendance and think about how to improve it with good promotion.
- Note that Roundtable attendance is now tracked in Commissioner Tools.
- Understand why they should be promoting roundtable to communicate it’s purpose and how it supports quality leadership and a strong program.
- Understand what they are promoting about roundtable to attract and retain participants.
- Identify where they should be promoting roundtable and what methods could potentially be used.
- Describe how they can be promoting roundtable including the most common methods.

Required Course Materials

Whiteboard or flipchart pads and appropriate markers to record participant responses

Poster board (or paper) markers, pens for maker sample poster or flyer.

Method of holding questions to be answered such as “parking lot” or “questions dock”

PowerPoint notes pages, if PowerPoint is used; Handouts format may be provided to participants if presenter desires

Computer and Projector if BCS 153 - PowerPoint Presentation is used

Handouts:

PowerPoint Slides Handout if used by presenter

Slide 1. (Promoting Roundtable (a discussion))

Welcome everyone.

Introduce the instructor(s).

Have participants briefly introduce themselves, Name, Council, District and their role in Roundtable.

Pass around breakout attendance sheet.

“We will spend the next 30 minutes together exploring the successes and challenges of promoting our roundtables.”

Slide 2. (References)

The material we will discuss is drawn from the materials you see here:

Cub Scout and Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide 2015 – 2016, No. 510-714WEB

And

Venturing Monthly Program FORUM, No. 34342

Both publications are available as a downloadable PDF from Scouting.org under Commissioner Tab, Roundtable Support.

<http://www.scouting.org/Home/Commissioners/roundtable.aspx>

Slide 3. (Consider the following Points for Discussion)

Consider the following points for attendance:

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

The Roundtable Team should consider these points and determine a goal for Roundtable attendance.

NOTE: Attendance is now tracked in Commissioner Tools.

Slide 4. (Roundtable Event in Commissioner's Tools)

You can see that, in this instance, we are showing the Cub Scout Roundtable Form where we record Program attendance headcount on Leaders who attended the Cub Scout Breakout: Unit Leadership, Commissioners, District Committee Members, Other Guests.

It is important to mention that you must be certain to record "Unit Leaders" attendance in the boxes next to each individual unit with number of attendees. This will allow the "Unit Attendance Percent" from above to be **automatically** completed. This also allows the unit to receive individual credit on the "Unit Health" report.

Slide 5. (Why do we need to promote Roundtables?)

Promotion is a major key to increasing roundtable attendance. If a roundtable is fun and exciting and meets the needs of the unit leaders, the current participants will keep coming back.

But it all begins with getting the leaders there for that very first meeting.

Promotion is more than just letting leaders know when and where the roundtable is happening. Your goal is to make them want to come because of the contacts they can make, the help they will receive in planning and running a meeting, and the fun they will have.

Slide 6. (Roundtable Promotional Materials)

Make sure all promoting needs to include:

Who? Which leaders would you like to see at roundtables? Be specific with job titles.

What? Roundtable is an interactive, hands-on meeting in which leaders are actively involved.

When and where? Give the date, day of week, time and place.

Why? Explain the purpose—Let leaders know how the roundtable will help them in their leadership positions. Provide specific topics for the night:

Big Rocks, Special Guest Speakers, Cub Scout Theme, Cub Scout Breakouts, Boy Scout Theme / Special Interest Topic

Contact person - Include the name and/or phone number of a contact person to answer leaders' questions about roundtables

Slide 7. (Tools that can help with Promotion)

- Fliers—Informational fliers that detail what roundtable is about should be distributed to new leaders and at basic leader training courses. Continue the distribution throughout the year at summer camps, camporees, or anywhere else Boy Scout leaders are present.
- Invitations—Computer-generated invitations are easily created and are impressive to the new leader. Have a roundtable team member attend training events to hand deliver invitations and invite new leaders to roundtable. This could be done at the closing of the training.
- Mailed Announcements—This method can be expensive and time-consuming, but it might be worth the effort and expense for special events.
- Chartered Organizations—If chartered organizations have printed communications, place stories in them. These can include church bulletins, monthly reports, and company newsletters. This method can be especially helpful for geographically large areas.
- District or Council Newsletters—Be sure all roundtable dates and meeting places are listed on the district and council calendars. Include relevant information in each month's newsletter detailing the agenda for that month.

Slide 8. (Tools that can help with Promotion) (continued)

- District or Council Websites—Many districts and councils maintain websites. Keep up-to-date information on these sites about plans for upcoming roundtable events. Highlight last month's meeting to get people excited about future roundtables. We are in the age of instant information and digital presence; make sure the roundtable is part of this. Be sure the location information, start time, and contact information are current and accurate.
- Local News Media—Submit brief announcements to the local news section of your community newspaper, or create public service radio announcements. Local cable television stations may have a community bulletin board that allows posting information about the monthly roundtable.
- Telephone Trees—Telephone campaigns can take time, but the entire roundtable team can cover a phone list in one evening. Try to keep the conversation to roundtable matters, and set a time limit for each call. Be sure to place calls at a time that is convenient for the recipient. Messages on voicemail can also be effective.

Slide 9. (Tools that can help with Promotion) (continued)

- Email/Social Media Messages—Establish a roundtable email directory of district Boy Scout leaders. Reminders of meetings and special events can be sent efficiently to many people through this avenue of communication. One best practice is to send notes about a completed roundtable to participants halfway between the completed roundtable and the upcoming roundtable.

This serves to remind them of the information they gathered and the fun they had as well as to invite them to the upcoming roundtable with highlights of the planned topics. Plus, it is a golden opportunity to invite them to bring a friend. Another suggestion is to send materials about the roundtable to those leaders who did not attend. This shows that they were missed and provides them with needed information despite their absence.

- Road Shows—Develop a slide show or video presentation about roundtable. Make arrangements for roundtable team members (or the unit commissioner) to visit troop committee meetings around the district to show leaders what they are missing.

Slide 10. (Who Should Promote Roundtables?)

“Who SHOULD promote Roundtables?”

(NOTE: The question will be answered on the next slide. It is an automated slide.) Ask the question and give some time for thought and answers. (Record answers on butcher paper on an easel.)

(Pause)

Then go to the next slide and continue the discussion.

Slide 11. (automated list of leaders at unit and district level)

(It is an automated slide.)

“The short answer is ... Everyone !”

Slide 12. (Attendance Awards)

- Name tags and beads are popular attendance awards. They provide immediate recognition to all those attending. As an example, string a bead on a vinyl lace to hand out at the roundtable. Pass out a different color of bead at registration each month. After the leader has attended a set number of roundtables, present a leather name tag. Scouters can wear this name tag with their uniform when attending the roundtable each month. These awards are not official insignia and should not be permanently attached to the uniform or worn outside your council.
- Slide of the Month—Make simple, easy-to-duplicate neckerchief slides that are presented to all leaders attending.
- Certificate—Award a thank-you certificate to packs and leaders who help with the program.
- First-nighter—Present a first-nighter award to new attendees to make them feel welcome and important.

Slide 13. (Attendance Awards) (continued)

- Pins—Give special pins or insignia for a year’s perfect attendance.
- Traveling Totem—A totem may be an unfinished ceremonial prop that is awarded to the troop with the highest percentage of attendance. The winning troop brings the prop back the next month with something new done or added to it. At the end of the year, the troop with the greatest average attendance receives the prop as an award.
- Door Prizes or Special Drawings—These awards should be useful to Boy Scout leaders. Use program-oriented handicraft items or kits. If you have built a special piece of equipment to demonstrate a game or ceremony, give it away as a prize. The lucky recipients can use it in their troop activities.

You may want to choose your winners in different ways each month—draw names of those attending, mark name tags in a special way, or randomly place a tag under the participants’ chairs.

Don’t forget to add the announcement of the winning item to your Web page as promotion for others to see.

Slide 14. (Questions)

(Allow time for Questions as the schedule allows)

Slide 15. (Thank you)

(Thank Participants for their attendance and active involvement. Dismiss to next scheduled event.)