Continuing Education for COMMISSIONERS

- DISTRICT COMMISSIONER STAFF MEETINGS
- COUNCIL COMMISSIONER MEETINGS
- THE COMMISSIONER CONFERENCE
- COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE
- TRAINING OUTLINES
CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR COMMISSIONERS

- District Commissioner Staff Meetings
- Council Commissioner Meetings
- The Commissioner Conference
- College of Commissioner Science
- Training Outlines

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One of the principal responsibilities of the council commissioner is to see that a complete program is in place to train every commissioner in the council. District commissioners must see that every member of their staff receives adequate training.

Learning is a lifetime activity. As commissioners, we must continually adjust our skills to provide a more valuable service to our units. Therefore, commissioners should view learning as an important part of their Scouting lives—every month, every year.

Nationally developed courses, resource materials, and training recognition provide the structure for good commissioner training. It is the local council’s mission to provide fun, sparkle, motivation, and frequent training opportunities so that commissioners will learn good unit service skills.

Commissioner training includes the following six elements that should be completed in a timely manner:

1. Orientation video within 48 hours
2. Personal coaching and/or orientation within two weeks
3. Commissioner basic training within two months
4. Arrowhead Honor within one year
5. Commissioner’s Key after three years
6. Continuing education every month/every year

Continuing Education for Commissioners is the council’s resource for continuing education.

See that your council and each of its districts provides all of the basic opportunities for commissioners to learn and to grow in their effectiveness.
Training is a continuing process for all commissioners. Commissioners meet monthly for a district staff meeting. *Part of every meeting should be devoted to a brief training topic.*

The district commissioner and district executive select a topic each month that best matches the current skill needs of their commissioners. Parts of the training outlines in chapter 5 of this book provide ready-to-go training topics for district commissioner staff meetings.

While the district commissioner or district executive might often lead training topics, selected ADCs and unit commissioners also should be assigned to instruct some topics. Serving as an instructor is a great way to learn. At least once a year, invite someone from outside the commissioner staff to conduct a training topic.

Use the meeting to inform everyone of changes in the units, the district, and the community. Make people feel that they will miss out on important information if they skip the meeting.

**Helping units to succeed is at the heart of every meeting, including the training topic.**
2. Council Commissioner Meetings

Training Topics

The council commissioner meets monthly with all district commissioners and assistant council commissioners. *The meeting is the nerve center of the council’s commissioner operation, and a training topic should be part of it.*

*The council commissioner and Scout executive* (or the Scout executive’s representative in large councils) *select a topic each month that best reflects the learning needs of district commissioners.* The feature article of the quarterly commissioner newsletter is usually an appropriate topic. Many parts of the training outlines in chapter 5 of this book provide training topics for these meetings.

Some councils find it effective to appoint an assistant council commissioner for training to coordinate training topics as well as help plan the annual council commissioner conference, and promote commissioner participation at the Philmont Training Center.

Again . . . helping units succeed is at the heart of everything that occurs at the meeting, including the training topic.
What Is a Commissioner Conference?

The annual conference should be the greatest event of the year for the council’s commissioners and professionals—a highly informative, high-morale, total team event.

A commissioner conference does not take the place of basic training in the district. While much learning takes place, the conference includes other objectives and is far more flexible in format than any specific training course.

What Are the Ingredients?

Each council may use a slightly different recipe, but a typical recipe calls for:

- 60 parts of advanced training
- 20 parts of fellowship
- 10 parts of information on the latest Scouting developments
- 5 parts of inspiration
- 5 parts of recognition

Plan early, mix well, but don’t lose the savor of each ingredient.

**Latest information** may include council dates and plans for the year ahead, new national programs, critical concerns and issues, and a colorful display of the latest commissioner resources. Commissioners need a good glimpse of the big picture.

**Fellowship** may involve good meals, a campfire, cracker barrel conversation, boating, swimming, stunts, signs, and gimmicks. Commissioners need to share with others from all across the council who help units succeed.

The **inspiration** part of your conference may involve a youth speaker, a flag ceremony, presentation of the Distinguished Commissioner Award, or a special motivational speaker.

**Recognition** could include the Distinguished Commissioner Award, the district commissioner with the best unit-to-commissioner ratio, the district with the highest percentage of Quality units, highest percentage of on-time unit charter renewals, the best case report of a unit commissioner taking action to prevent a dropped unit, etc.

Conference Options

Approximately half of all councils run a traditional conference similar in format to the sample programs in this guidebook. The other half use a “college of commissioner science” format modeled after college courses and degrees.

This section is for conference planners regardless of the type of conference. Planners of the “college” should also use chapter 4 of this book.

Many councils hold two-day or weekend conferences to provide time to pursue topics in depth and to better develop important commissioner fellowship. Other councils run one-day events to conserve time, simplify arrangements, and reduce costs. A council might set up an optional Friday evening overnight fellowship activity with all day Saturday for training and other program features. Travel distances, geography, and the tradition of successful events will help determine which conference pattern is best for your council.

Some conferences are held on a council cluster basis, with two or more councils planning and running a joint event. The joint event works best when councils are in the same metropolitan area. A conference that covers a wide area is likely to reduce attendance because of distance and travel time. The majority of people in attendance might only be more experienced commissioners. **Councils should place the highest priority on attracting all unit commissioners and new ADCs**—this is usually best accomplished close to home in a single council. A single-council conference also best develops a healthy bond between unit commissioners and their own commissioner leaders and professional advisers.
Early Decisions

Plan ahead. Soon after this year’s conference—no later than 60 days—the council commissioner, Scout executive and/or staff adviser need to make some early decisions. Get ideas and feedback from district commissioners at your next council commissioner meeting. Establish for next year’s conference the

- Date
- Place
- Format (overnight, one-day, “college,” etc.)
- Selection of conference chairman and staff adviser
- Major theme or focus

These early decisions will ensure obtaining the best possible location, getting the date in everybody’s calendar, and securing a planning team to plan a successful event. (The council commissioner may choose to head the conference committee.)

Conference Committee

After the conference chairman and staff adviser have been recruited, they select a conference committee that is representative of the council and includes persons with the talents to carry out the various assignments needed for a successful event. Chairmen and/or subcommittees are selected for the following kinds of responsibilities:

- Promotion/participation
- Registration
- Physical arrangements
- Training sessions/workshops
- Morale and special features
- Program
- Hospitality and recreation

Responsibilities will vary depending on the nature of your conference and the local council. Keep the committee structure simple, but remember that success is often related to how many people get involved in conference preparation.

While volunteers carry much of the load, responsibility for conference success also must lie with the council staff. It’s a team job.
Select the Right Place

The kind of facility affects the success of a conference. In selecting a location, give thought to:

• A convenient, central location with ample parking space.

• A setting away from normal, familiar places—a “change of scenery”; a retreatlike setting.

• A location with intrigue or unusual interest that people have always wanted to visit. This will help draw attendance. It may also provide some special program features. Look for off-season rates.

— A corporate office or training center of special interest might provide a tour or interesting scenery.

— A military base might provide special interest, recreation facilities, and low cost.

— Council camps and training centers can educate commissioners about camp and can offer boating, fishing, or other activities.

— A college or university might offer a variety of resources.

— An athletic facility might be popular.

— Consider a museum, resort, historical site, ship, or fire academy.

• Adequate rooms and room size to meet major program needs.

• Adequate air conditioning and heating.

• Availability of food services and room facilities.

• Lighting, lectern, PA system, tables, and chairs.

• Whether the room or hall is appropriate for the use of audiovisuals.

• How early on the day of the conference the rooms can be set up.

• What time the facility must be restored to its original condition and by whom.

• When the reservation must be made. Whether a deposit is required.

Build a Work Schedule

Deadlines are needed. List all planning tasks. Assign each task to an individual. Reproduce the work schedule and distribute to those involved as a reminder of their obligations.

The work schedule on pages 10–11 suggests tasks necessary for a successful conference. To the right of each task is the approximate time before the conference by which the task should be completed.

Adapt the schedule to your needs. Then the conference chairman and staff adviser can follow up to see that each task is completed on time.

The Conference Program

A top-notch program brings them back the next year.

If a conference theme is desired, plan it early and use it in all promotional materials and calendars. Consider how the theme can be expressed through graphics, gifts, favors, keynoters, signs, program features, and gimmicks.

What special topics need to be included this year? What “bread and butter” topics are needed for optional small-group training sessions and workshops? See page 15 for a list of possible session topics. See chapter 5 for training course outlines.

Use brief recreation and fellowship activities to break up more serious parts of the program. Begin and end the day with brief, motivational full-group sessions—get the whole gang together!

Plan plenty of small-group break-out sessions in which all participants can actively participate.

Keep people moving. No session should go longer than 60 minutes without a break or change of pace.

Use meal times for fellowship as well as very short program features.

Be sure that “after hours” and free-time space is set up for informal discussion with refreshments.

Plan displays in well traveled conference areas and next to meal locations.

Plan a brief time for district commissioners to meet with their staffs.

Develop a program outline early in your planning. Then develop more detail. Share a draft with others and get their feedback. Refine the program. You may need to refine it again. Put the final schedule on a printed program for all participants. Give written credits to everyone who helped.

Council field staff members may serve as advisers and assistant instructors for selected training sessions. Be sure council staff members sit in on all training periods. They too are learners.
Session/“Classroom” Techniques

Obviously, people were endowed with the gift of speech to communicate with each other, but too much talk is deadly. Some brief speakers and lectures are great. Longer speakers are fine if they are “standouts.” Since few of us are, we need to build interesting and lively ideas into all our presentations. A variety of presentation techniques are needed...flip-chart or PowerPoint presentations may be fine, but if everybody uses a flip chart or PowerPoint it gets boring.

If possible, get together in advance with all instructors and/or session leaders. Discuss various presentation techniques and the overall program.

Following are some classroom ideas that often prove successful:

1. Posted session objectives
2. Well-chosen humor
3. Role playing
4. Case studies and other problem-solving activities
5. Audiovisuals (photos, videotapes, slide presentations, audio cassettes, overhead transparencies, PowerPoint, etc.) that make their point quickly and clearly
6. Skits and ice breakers
7. Games and simulations
8. Having trainees list questions and concerns related to the session topic
9. Handouts (distributed only at the beginning or end of the session)
10. Having trainees develop personal action plans related to the session topic
11. Small-group discussion
12. Flip charts, either with prepared sheets or with sheets sketched during the session
13. Hands-on review of resource material
14. Charts, scrolls, posters, models, and samples
15. Show and do: the leader demonstrates and the trainees practice
16. Well-moderated panel of presenters, panel discussion, and total full-group discussion with a panel
17. Props and attention-getters
18. Brainstorming
19. Trainee presentations
20. Contests
21. Concise summary—written or verbal
22. Relating subject matter to learners’ life experiences and actual back-home environment
23. Chalkboards and flannel board presentations
24. Exhibits and bulletin boards
25. Quiz followed by discussion
26. Experiments
27. Lecture
28. PowerPoint presentation

What other ideas do you have?

A summary for session leaders might include the 10 keys to a good presentation:

1. Be prepared.
2. Handle questions properly.
3. Don’t apologize for yourself.
4. Be familiar with your topic.
5. Use audiovisuals professionally.
6. Stick to the schedule.
7. Involve the participants.
8. Establish personal rapport.
10. Start off quickly to establish an image.
The commissioner conference is the biggest commissioner event of the year. It’s a vitally important morale-building event, so make every effort to ensure an excellent attendance. You have worked hard to make the conference a super experience, but **all of your work is wasted and units suffer if people don’t attend.** Promote the conference so all commissioners will benefit from your good planning and preparation. **Make it easy for people to attend. Keep it close to home.**

Check off the following promotion pointers as you plan or accomplish them—

___ 1. Select an interesting or popular location.

___ 2. Many months before the conference, give all commissioners an opportunity to suggest the topics they would like to see covered. Either give them a one-page list of topics such as the one in this guide and have them check off the five or six they want most, or have them submit ideas on cards or brainstorm as a group the topics they want most.

___ 3. Offer a banner, revolving trophy, or individual prizes to the district with the best percentage of registered commissioners in attendance.

___ 4. Create a distinctive conference attendance patch, gift, or other incentive.

___ 5. Set up a telephone team in each district.

___ 6. The more people who are involved in the conference, the better the attendance. People with a task to perform will come and might bring friends. Ask people to be greeters or session assistants, be on ceremony teams or arrangement committees, give awards, give one-minute presentations, etc.

___ 7. The council commissioner commits each district commissioner to bring their entire team.

___ 8. Don’t restrict attendance to only those who have completed basic training or another limiting factor. Make it a gathering of the entire unit service team.

___ 9. Mail tickets for a door prize.

___ 10. Offer the latest Commissioner Fieldbook or other item as an attendance gift.

___11. Establish a fee as low as possible to encourage the largest attendance and still make the conference self-supporting.

___12. Bring new commissioner prospects—hot prospects who are almost ready to say yes.
___13. Place an announcement in the council newsletter several months in advance. Place follow-up details as the event gets closer.

___14. Place a story in newspapers and try to get an interview on a local radio or TV talk show.

___15. Make sure everyone has a ride. Providing transportation shows you care and are willing to go the extra mile to get people there. Car pools are often more fun than riding alone.

___16. In your detailed conference brochure and publicity, add the fun extras that say, “You won’t want to miss this!”

___17. Distribute copies of the advance program and news about interesting speakers and presenters.

___18. **Don’t select a conference site so far from home that it inhibits attendance.**

___19. Lastly, one of your very best promoters is the reputation of previous conferences.
### Work Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Months to Conference</th>
<th>Who’s Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Last year’s conference committee completes evaluation.</td>
<td>–11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Council commissioner cabinet discusses last year’s conference and</td>
<td>–10½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provides ideas for this year’s conference.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish date and reserve location. Announce to all commissioners.</td>
<td>–10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Council commissioner and Scout executive appoint conference chairman.</td>
<td>–10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conference chairman and staff adviser recruit conference committee.</td>
<td>–9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conference committee holds first meeting to brainstorm objectives,</td>
<td>–8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>format, program highlights, and broad conceptual schedule;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confirm location; and make assignments. These plans may necessitate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adding people to the committee.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conference committee meets, preferably at the conference location,</td>
<td>–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to develop final plans for objectives, format, program schedule,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keynote speaker, use of facility, promotion plan, assignments, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have conference committee review promotion ideas on pages 8–9.</td>
<td>–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assign a professional staff adviser to each subcommittee.</td>
<td>–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop budget.</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop detailed work schedule.</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Determine courses/workshops to be presented.</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prepare approved list of course/workshop leaders.</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Obtain a detailed commitment from conference facility on rooms and</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spaces needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit keynote speaker (some popular speakers may have to be</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lined up closer to a year in advance).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit course/workshop leaders.</td>
<td>–4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contract with caterer.</td>
<td>–4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Distribute conference brochures, invitations, registration forms,</td>
<td>–3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and other promotional material.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Plan for recreation and morale features.</td>
<td>–2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arrange for gifts and giveaways.</td>
<td>–2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Obtain commitments for physical arrangements: tables, chairs,</td>
<td>–2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stage, PA system, first aid, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confirm AV requirements and arrange for equipment.</td>
<td>–2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Order special awards, determine recipients, write citations.</td>
<td>–2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Train workshop/course leaders (preferably at the conference</td>
<td>–1½</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>facility).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Put aggressive promotion ideas in action.</td>
<td>–1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>Days to Conference</td>
<td>Who’s Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review final details with on-site location personnel: room setups, room setups, final schedule,</td>
<td>–1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final schedule, equipment use, early arrivals, pager or cell phone numbers of on-site staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete plans for conference check-in: name tags, registrar,</td>
<td>–30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>check-in location, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make room assignments for all events.</td>
<td>–30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Place a follow-up story in the council news bulletin.</td>
<td>–30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct final promotion plans for those not yet signed up.</td>
<td>–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review program agenda details with all key participants.</td>
<td>–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have detailed plans for all ice breakers and morale features.</td>
<td>–14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review a final checklist to be sure nothing has slipped through the cracks.</td>
<td>–10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write a detailed script and review it with the presiding leader or emcee.</td>
<td>–8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have the conference program printed.</td>
<td>–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conference adviser meets with professional staff to confirm all details.</td>
<td>–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confirm attendance figures with caterer.</td>
<td>–1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Preset and test any audiovisual equipment to be used.</td>
<td>–1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Go over your checklist again.</td>
<td>–1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Set up registration.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Test PA system (be sure mikes are live, sound level is adjusted, etc.).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Set up exhibits.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Workshop/course leaders meet on location.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be sure the facility is open, properly arranged, and comfortable.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have all props, equipment, and awards on hand and ready to use.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Put up signs, posters, and decorations.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• General greeters arrive and are in position early.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Speaker’s escort arrives and is in position early.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Double-check traffic and parking arrangements.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mail thank-you letters.</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pay all bills.</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# One-Day Commissioner Conference

## SAMPLE PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8:00 A.M. | Preopening                                                           | • Displays  
• Registration  
• Refreshments  
• Greeters in parking lot  
• Welcoming person near registration area  
• Cub Scout games |
| 9:00 A.M. | Opening general session                                                 | • Opening ceremony  
• Welcome and introductions  
• Morale features  
• Keynote speaker/presentation |
| 10:00 A.M. | Break, coffee, displays                                                 |                                                                  |
| 10:15 A.M. | Period 1—elective workshops/training sessions                         |                                                                  |
| 11:15 A.M. | Break and travel to next session                                       |                                                                  |
| 11:30 A.M. | Period 2—elective workshops/training sessions                         |                                                                  |
| 12:30 P.M. | Lunch with short program feature                                       |                                                                  |
| 1:30 P.M. | Skill demonstrations and involvement                                    | • Scoutcraft skills  
• Venturing specialties |
| 2:15 P.M. | Period 3—elective workshops/training sessions                         |                                                                  |
| 3:15 P.M. | Break                                                                 |                                                                  |
| 3:30 P.M. | Period 4—elective workshops/training sessions                         |                                                                  |
| 4:30 P.M. | Recreation and free time                                               |                                                                  |
| 5:30 P.M. | Dinner with musical and/or inspirational program feature               |                                                                  |
| 6:30 P.M. | Closing general session                                                | • Induction of new commissioners  
• Key council program dates for the year ahead  
• The annual commissioner service plan—key unit service dates for every commissioner  
• Demonstration charter presentation  
• Closing challenge  
• Presentation of participation certificates by district  
• Commissioner awards  
• Closing ceremony |
| 8:00 P.M. | Adjournment                                                            | Fellowship and cracker barrel |

**Note:** The program is subject to change. Please check the official schedule for any updates.
Two-Day Commissioner Conference

SAMPLE PROGRAM

Friday Evening
- Registration—pick up program kits and bunk assignments
- Refreshments
- Displays
- Informal discussions with resource people available at designated spots
- Fellowship activities

Saturday
8:00 A.M.  Breakfast
9:00 A.M.  Opening general session
- Welcome and introduction by districts
- Opening ceremony
- Conference instructions
- Morale features: songs, skits, etc.
- Keynote speaker: “Commissioners and Citizens for the 21st Century”
  OR
  “Commissioners—the District’s Frontline Diplomats”
10:00 A.M.  Break, coffee, displays
10:15 A.M.  Period 1—elective workshops/training sessions
11:15 A.M.  Break and travel to next session
11:30 A.M.  Period 2—elective workshops/training sessions
12:30 P.M.  Lunch with short program feature
1:30 P.M.  Skill demonstrations and involvement
  - Scoutcraft skills
  - Venturing specialties
2:15 P.M.  Period 3—elective workshops/training sessions
3:15 P.M.  Break
3:30 P.M.  Period 4—elective workshops/training sessions
4:30 P.M.  Recreation and free time
  - Boating, swimming
  - Tennis, volleyball
  - Special tour or activity related to meeting facility
4:30 P.M.  Conference staff meeting
6:00 P.M.  Dinner with music and/or fellowship activities
7:00 P.M.  Evening general session
  - Induction of new commissioners
  - Special skit on some aspect of commissioner operation
  - Major presentation on the “life-saving commissioner”
  - Morale feature
  - Session challenge—“Measuring a Commissioner’s Effectiveness”
8:30 P.M.  District commissioner staff meetings
9:30 P.M.  Cracker barrel; fellowship and entertainment

Sunday
7:15 A.M.  Interfaith service
8:00 A.M.  Breakfast
8:45 A.M.  General session
  - Opening big idea
Two-Day Conference continued . . .

• Drama/morale event, “The Art of Human Relations”
• Key council program dates for the year ahead
• The annual commissioner service plan—key unit service dates for commissioners

9:45 A.M. Break; coffee, displays

10:00 A.M. Period 5—elective workshops/training sessions

11:00 A.M. Break and travel to next session

11:15 A.M. Period 6—elective workshops/training sessions

12:15 P.M. Closing luncheon
• Presentation, “What’s New in the BSA”
• Participation certificates presented by district
• Attendance trophy
• Commissioner awards
• Presentation ceremony for Distinguished Commissioner Service Award
• Closing challenge

1:30 P.M. Adjournment
Most conferences include a significant number of concurrent training sessions and workshops. While sessions may be organized by commissioner position and/or experience level, participants should be given a generous choice of topics. Learning occurs best when people choose what they want to learn. Topics might include:

1. Venturing and the Commissioner
2. Thirteen Ways to Improve a Unit’s Relationship with the Chartered Organization
3. Unit Dollars and Cents—Making Sense Out of Unit Finance
4. Achieving 100 Percent Quality Units
5. Unit Civic Service Projects Throughout the District
6. The Art of Good Counseling
7. Helping the Unit with Membership/Leadership Inventories
8. Ethics in Action—How It Works
9. Helping the Seldom-Go-Camping and Never-Go-Camping Troop
10. Understanding the Hispanic Community
11. Understanding the Vietnamese Community
12. Understanding the ______________ Community
14. Cub Scouting and Family Diversity
15. Effective Transition: Tiger Cubs/Cub Scouts/Webelos Scouts/Boy Scouts/Venturers
16. Coaching the New Unit Leader
17. Counseling the Experienced Unit Leader
18. The Unit Committee—Fact or Fantasy
19. Junior Leaders Really Do Run the Troop
20. Elected Officers Make the Crew
21. The Venturing Advancement Program—How It Works
22. Super Service for New Units
23. Three Keys to Venturing Crew Program Planning (program capability inventory, Venturing activity interest survey, and the annual crew officer seminar)
24. The Four Ps of Good Cub Scout Roundtables (promoting, planning, preparing, presenting)
25. The Four Ps of Good Boy Scout Roundtables
26. Commissioner Recruiting—Steps for Success (for administrative commissioners)
27. Unit Service in Remote Rural Areas
28. Helping Low-Income Urban Volunteers Succeed
29. Policy Review Seminar (for administrative commissioners)
30. The Fine Art of Being an Assistant District Commissioner (ADC) Team Leader
31. The Scoutmaster Just Quit! (helping a unit secure a unit leader)
32. The Commissioner Fieldbook and Other Resources for the New Commissioner
33. Becoming a Lifesaving Commissioner
34. Roundtables With Pizzazz
35. Orientating and Training Commissioners (for administrative commissioners)
36. Varsity Scouting—Meeting the Needs of Older Scouts
37. How Scouting Can Strengthen, Not Strain, Your Marriage
38. Effective Commissioner Communication
39. “Super Scouting Expert,” “Smokey the Bear,” “The Collector,” and Other Negative Images
40. The Fine Art of Helping a Cub Pack
41. Dealing with Many Forms of Prejudice
42. Relationship with and Help from the District Committee
The College of Commissioner Science is one optional type of annual commissioner conference. The college is a format modeled after college courses and degrees. This format also uses the conference to encourage a continuing education experience for commissioners. The purpose is to provide ongoing practical training for all commissioners.

Some councils will not choose the college format because they do not find the college theme and degree requirements helpful. These councils will select another theme or format.

Those planning a conference with the college approach should also use chapter 3, which helps with factors common to all types of commissioner conferences: important planning guidelines, promotional ideas, work schedule, sample program outlines, classroom techniques, and suggested session topics. Chapter 4 is a supplemental resource with information unique to the college.

The college borrows terminology from higher education. Session topics become “courses” with course numbers. Courses in the “curriculum” are divided into three program levels:

- bachelor’s program
- master’s program
- doctor’s program

Awards are called degrees:

- bachelor of commissioner science
- master of commissioner science
- doctor of commissioner science (Ph.D.)

A diploma is awarded to each participant who completes the appropriate degree requirements. Those who have received both the bachelor and master degrees at previous conferences may receive a certificate of achievement for “postgraduate” studies after completing additional courses.

The conference chairman is called a “dean” and the conference fee is “tuition.” Develop other college analogies to fit your situation and imagination.

Ingredients for Success

A successful conference includes inspiration, meaningful training, good fellowship, and information on the latest Scouting developments. Achieving this success requires the right faculty, adequate preparation, good program, an attractive facility, and lots of promotion.

Faculty. An adequate number of people must be selected early and trained in their duties. (See pages 17 and 18.)

Preparation. Work schedules and assignments are followed without shortcuts. Plans for next year’s conference are begun shortly after this year’s conference. (See chapter 3 for important planning guidelines and work schedules.)

Program. A dynamic program with carefully prepared courses is the heartbeat of the college. Courses must meet the practical needs of commissioners. (See pages 21–23. Also see chapter 3 for sample one- and two-day program models.)

Facility. The facility should have special interest and provide a proper training environment. (See page 6.)

Promotion. Commissioners will benefit from all your talent and hard work only if they attend. (See pages 8–9 for important promotion information.) Be sure both current and newly recruited commissioners receive a catalog of courses and registration forms.
The college is usually administered by an assistant council commissioner, selected by the council commissioner, to serve as the “college dean.” The dean is responsible for the annual college program during the Scouting year and all of the business and affairs of the college. In this role, the dean is the college administrator or chairman of the “dean’s cabinet” which is responsible for the overall administration, direction, and perpetuation of the college. The college dean selects commissioners as members of this cabinet with the approval of the council commissioner.

The staff for the college dean may consist of

- two assistant college deans
- registrar
- assistant registrar
- dean of bachelor’s program
- dean of master’s program
- dean of doctor’s program

The two “assistant college deans” assist in the administration of the college and perform duties assigned by the college dean (for example, one assistant dean to coordinate support services and one to coordinate instructors and curriculum).

The “registrar” is responsible for the registration of all attendees at the College of Commissioner Science. The registrar, with the assistant registrar and a registration team, is responsible for safeguarding the records of course completion by the attendees, certifying courses completed by attendees to ensure proper awarding of diplomas, preparing and awarding diplomas to attendees, and performing other duties of an administrative nature assigned by the college dean.

The “deans of the bachelor’s program, master’s program, and doctor’s program” are appointed by the college dean with approval of the council commissioner. They are responsible for the selection of instructors (commissioners and Scouters as well as professional staff members, as appropriate) to teach courses in the curricula for the program areas. The deans also assist the dean’s cabinet in the selection of courses for the curriculum and are responsible for the administration of their program area.

In addition, there are chairmen for the following committees that are responsible for administrative tasks and support services required to fulfill the requirements deemed necessary by the dean’s cabinet in order to achieve a successful annual college program:

- physical arrangements (including housing, food, and equipment)
- special programs (including hospitality; entertainment; opening, closing, and flag ceremonies; Scouting skills area; religious services; and campfire program)
- promotion and publicity

The Scout executive appoints a staff adviser who consults with the college dean.
DEAN’S CABINET
- Council commissioner
- Council Scout executive
- College dean
- Staff adviser
- Assistant college deans
- Dean for each degree (program area)
- Others as selected by college dean

*The number of instructors recruited is based on the number of courses offered. (Some instructors can teach two or more courses.)
Bachelor of Commissioner Science Degree (BCS)

Prerequisites
- Current registration as a commissioner, including those recently recruited
- Completion of commissioner orientation *(Commissioner Fieldbook, pages 4–8)*
- Completion of commissioner basic training

Course Requirements
Completion of seven courses of instruction, at least five of the courses at the bachelor’s program level

Performance
- Approval of district commissioner
- Approval of district executive

Doctor of Commissioner Science Degree (DCS)

Prerequisites
- Completion of master’s degree
- Have been awarded the Commissioner’s Key
- Current registration as a commissioner

Course Requirements
Completion of 10 additional courses of instruction not used to qualify for other college awards (total of 24), at least five of the courses at the doctor’s program level

Thesis or Research Project
- Completion of a thesis or research project on any topic of value to Scouting in the local council.
- The topic and final paper or project must be approved by the dean of the doctor’s program and the staff adviser.

Performance
- Serve on the College of Commissioner Science faculty (instructor or support staff) for at least one year.
- Recruit at least three new commissioners.
- Approval of district commissioner.
- Approval of district executive.

Master of Commissioner Science Degree (MCS)

Prerequisites
- Completion of bachelor’s degree or have been awarded the Commissioner’s Key
- Earned Arrowhead Honor
- Current registration as a commissioner

Course Requirements
Completion of seven additional courses of instruction (total of 14), at least seven of the courses at the master’s program level

Performance
- Approval of district commissioner
- Approval of district executive

Suggested Degree Requirements
Certificate of Achievement for Postgraduate Studies

This certificate may be earned as often as a participant desires (whether or not they have completed the doctor’s degree).

Prerequisites

• Completion of the master’s degree
• Current registration as a commissioner

Course Requirements

Completion of any seven additional courses of instruction at the master’s or doctor’s program levels not used to qualify for other college awards

Performance

• Approval of district commissioner
• Approval of district executive

Note: The above degree requirements are similar to those used by most College of Commissioner Science programs. The dean’s cabinet may tailor the requirements to meet the commissioner training program of the council. Some councils may want to add a degree just for round-table commissioners or an associate degree for newly recruited commissioners who have only attended the college and not completed commissioner basic training.

Remember that college course and degree requirements are not standardized nationally. The college of commissioner science is strictly a local council event.
The following courses are similar to those used in recent council commissioner conference programs. The dean’s cabinet may adjust the course offerings to meet the current needs of commissioners in the particular local council.

When a curriculum has been agreed upon, the council should prepare a course catalog to be distributed with college admission material to assist individuals with registration. The following course descriptions can be helpful in preparing the course catalog.

**Bachelor’s Program Courses**

**BCS 101  Introduction to Commissioner Science**
An overview of commissioner service and the single most important resource—The Commissioner Fieldbook.

**BCS 102  Unit Charter Renewal**
Review a proven plan for reregistering Scouting units on time with minimal loss in membership and leaders. Learn the role of the commissioner to facilitate and achieve on-time charter renewal.

**BCS 103  The Commissioner and the District**
Interaction of the commissioner with the district executive and district committee. Understanding district and council operation.

**BCS 104  Unit Visitation**
Provides participants with insights on effective unit visits, what to look for, and how to be a help—not a hindrance.

**BCS 105  Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs**
Helps commissioners understand how to respond to unit needs. Participants become familiar with Unit Commissioner Worksheets and Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews.

**BCS 106  A Commissioner’s Priorities**
Suggests the priorities for a unit commissioner’s Scouting time and energy, reviews steps in handling unit problems, and covers the important Quality Unit Award.

**BCS 107  Youth Protection Training**
A seminar designed to provide a commissioner with an overview of what constitutes child abuse and the responsibility of the local council and commissioner in preventing child abuse and reporting suspected cases. The complete Youth Protection Guidelines training is presented.

**BCS 108  Effective Roundtables I**
Designed for roundtable commissioners and roundtable staff members. Covers basic roundtable ingredients, planning cycle, and resource materials.

**BCS 109  Effective Roundtables II**
Designed for roundtable commissioners and roundtable staff members as a continuation of BCS 108. Covers promotion and publicity, roundtable location, and a variety of morale builders.

**BCS 110  Commissioner Style**
Presents important qualities of commissioner diplomacy, a concept of “exceptional service,” thoughts about “roots and wings,” service recovery, and explains how to remove a volunteer.

**BCS 111  Health and Safety Training**
This session is the actual Health and Safety Training Course Syllabus of the Boy Scouts of America.

**BCS 112  What Would You Do?**
A group participation/discussion session on 10 fascinating situations that commissioners might encounter.

**BCS 113  Service to New Units**
Reviews specific commissioner actions to provide adequate care for new units.

**BCS 114  Good Commissioner-Professional Relationships**
This special partnership is the core of Scouting success at a council/district level. Learn the qualities and tips that make this relationship work well.

**BCS 115  Commissioners and Diversity**
BSA’s leadership and membership reflects the demographic character of our nation. Commissioners can use diversity to make Scouting stronger and more effective.
### Master’s Program Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCS 301</td>
<td>No-Lapse/No-Drop Commitment</td>
<td>The group will explore why units lapse or drop and how to prevent it, how to develop a no-lapse/no-drop plan for a district, and why this is so important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 302</td>
<td>Unit Finance</td>
<td>An overview of the unit budget plan, who pays for Scouting at all levels, a variety of successful unit money-earning projects, and how to help units with special financial needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 303</td>
<td>Commissioner Lifesaving I</td>
<td>This session sets the stage for saving a unit and reviews the basic unit lifesaving steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 304</td>
<td>Commissioner Lifesaving II</td>
<td>This is an in-depth continuation of MCS 303, dealing with the seven unit “hurry cases.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 306</td>
<td>Counseling Skills</td>
<td>This session presents counseling as an effective method for commissioners to help units succeed. It covers many elements of good counseling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 307</td>
<td>Webelos-to-Scout Transition</td>
<td>Covers important ways commissioners can help boys make the transition from a Cub Scout pack to a Boy Scout troop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 308</td>
<td>Venturing and the Commissioner</td>
<td>This session stresses the importance of a commissioner’s commitment to Venturing and suggests basic elements of a plan for a commissioner to help every crew succeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 309</td>
<td>Good Commissioners Need Both Head and Heart</td>
<td>Includes great reflections for experienced commissioners. Take home thought-provoking tips and anecdotes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 401</td>
<td>Just for ADCs</td>
<td>This session emphasizes the importance of the assistant district commissioner, his or her responsibilities, the effective ADC’s people skills, and the evaluation of his or her work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 402</td>
<td>Recruiting New Commissioners</td>
<td>This bread-and-butter session for all administrative commissioners covers the steps of recruiting commissioners, group recruiting techniques, and sources of prospects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 403</td>
<td>Orienting and Training Commissioners</td>
<td>A session for all administrative commissioners—covers all aspects of commissioner training, including new commissioner orientation, basic training, Arrowhead Honor, the Commissioner’s Key, and continuing education. A variety of classroom techniques are also reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 404</td>
<td>Advanced Roundtable Leadership</td>
<td>An advanced seminar for roundtable commissioners (not staff) and other administrative commissioners. Includes roundtable staff recruitment, roundtable evaluation, and roundtable finance. Also reviews several important fine points for roundtable success, including how to support your staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 405</td>
<td>Effective Unit Service in Low-Income Urban Communities</td>
<td>This session emphasizes the importance of Scouting for low-income urban communities and suggests practical methods for recruiting local unit adults, helping units with special financial needs, and providing effective commissioner help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 406</td>
<td>Effective Unit Service in Remote Rural Areas</td>
<td>This session helps commissioners tailor their service to sparsely populated rural areas, with practical methods for recruiting rural adults and working with rural units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 407</td>
<td>How to Remove a Volunteer</td>
<td>An open discussion of a topic only recently put in print. The session provides a variety of practical guidelines on this sensitive topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 408</td>
<td>The Commissioner Leader’s Top 10 List</td>
<td>Today everyone has their top 10 list. This group will explore a top 10 list to guarantee good commissioner service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCS 409</td>
<td>District Commissioner Basics</td>
<td>A great overview of this important position, including all major responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Doctor’s Program Courses

DCS 601 Selecting a Thesis/Research Project Topic
This session introduces the participants to the thesis project, discusses what constitutes a good thesis or research topic, and helps them select their general thesis topic.

DCS 602 Limiting the Scope of the Topic
Participants receive help in reducing the thesis topic to workable size and ideas for thesis/project research.

DCS 603 Developing the Thesis Outline and Writing the Report
This session covers the thesis outline and a variety of suggestions for writing and revising the report.

DCS 604 Thesis Workshop
This course is for those who feel they need more help getting started on or completing their thesis.

DCS 608 Advanced Commissioner Lifesaving
Administrative commissioners are taught to give leadership to a commissioner lifesaving concept. It also guides selected districts in setting up the lifesaving team approach.

DCS 610 Preventing Commissioner Burnout
Covers types of burnout and how to prevent or correct it to maximize effective commissioner tenure. Includes valuable tips on time management and refers to several aspects of “commissioner wellness.”

DCS 611 Consider Your Spouse and Family
Suggests ways to enhance family relations and resolve family conflicts regarding Scouting. Discusses how commissioners’ spouses can receive recognition from Scouting.

DCS 612 The Commissioner’s Awareness of AIDS
This timely and important course for commissioners urges councils to use the excellent resources of the American Red Cross to help provide important information with implications for Scouting and administrative Scouters.
Council of College of Commissioner Science

Boy Scouts of America

COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

on the Nomination of the Faculty, and the Approval of the Council

Has Qualified

As a

BACHELOR OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

In Witness Thereof We Have Hereby Set Our Hands This Day of

in the Year

________________________________________   ____________________________________
Council Commissioner                     Scout Executive

________________________________________
Dean of College
Council
Boy Scouts of America

COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE
on the Nomination of the Faculty, and the Approval of the Council
Has Qualified

As a
MASTER OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

In Witness Thereof We Have Hereby Set Our Hands This Day of
in the Year

_________________________________  ________________
Council Commissioner                   Scout Executive

_________________________________
Dean of College
Council
Boy Scouts of America

COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE
on the Nomination of the Faculty, and the Approval of the Council
Has Qualified

As a
DOCTOR OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

In Witness Thereof We Have Hereby Set Our Hands This Day of
in the Year

__________________________________________  _________________________________________
Council Commissioner                                   Scout Executive

__________________________________________
Dean of College
Council
Boy Scouts of America

COLLEGE OF COMMISSIONER SCIENCE
on the Nomination of the Faculty, and the Approval of the Council
Has Qualified

For the Certificate of Achievement for
POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN COMMISSIONER SCIENCE

In Witness Thereof We Have Hereby Set Our Hands This Day of

in the Year

__________________________  __________________________
Council Commissioner            Scout Executive

__________________________
Dean of College
Know ye that, having special trust and confidence in the abilities of

this Warrant is given for service as

of the _______ College of Commissioner Science,

this ______ day of ______________, ________.

--------------------------------------------
                      College Dean

--------------------------------------------
               Scout Executive                  Council Commissioner
The College of Commissioner Science

Commissioner’s Record Card

Commissioner’s name _________________________  
District ____________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Note year in which courses were taken.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCS 101</td>
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<td>BCS 102</td>
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<td>DCS 612</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Training Outlines

The training session outlines on the following pages can be used in a variety of ways.

1. District commissioners and district executives use parts of the outlines for training topics at monthly district staff meetings. Outlines can easily be copied for use by commissioners assigned to present a specific topic.

2. Parts of the outlines can be used for training topics at council commissioner meetings.

3. Each outline can be copied and given to session leaders for the council commissioner conference.

4. The outlines have been coded as degree requirements for councils that run a college of commissioner science.

5. Many of the outlines also are useful in the personal coaching of any district Scouter, regardless of the Scouter’s title.
INTRODUCTION TO COMMISSIONER SCIENCE  
(BCS 101)

Give each participant an up-to-date Commission Fieldbook.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Every district needs a dynamic commissioner staff. Commissioners go deep into our Scouting tradition.

B. As a commissioner, your role is different from that of other Scouters. The insignia you wear displays a wreath around the Scouting fleur-de-lis, representing your commission to serve chartered organizations in the operation of Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews. The quality of Scouting depends upon the men and women who wear this wreath of service.

C. There are many resources to help you succeed. A good commissioner doesn’t know everything about commissioner service, but a good commissioner does know how to use Scouting resources to get the answers.

II. COMMISSIONER FIELDBOOK – FRONT TO BACK

A. The purpose of the Commissioner Fieldbook is to provide a resource of practical, usable information, simply stated and readily adaptable. The material herein reflects the experience of hundreds of commissioners from all parts of the country.

B. Refer to the contents page to review the parts of the book.

C. Have everyone walk through the Commissioner Fieldbook as a reference for the remainder of the session.

III. COMMISSIONER ORIENTATION SECTION

A. Gives you an overview of Scouting and commissioner service.

B. Use this section with your orientation coach.

C. Note the orientation projects on page 8 of the Commissioner Fieldbook.

D. Be sure you’ve seen the orientation video, The Unit Commissioner’s Orientation: Helping Units Succeed, AV-04V001R.
IV. THE COMMISSIONER CONCEPT

A. The only reason for having commissioners is to help units succeed.

B. The commissioner’s specific mission is to keep units operating at maximum efficiency so that they can deliver a good program to a growing membership.

C. Be results oriented rather than procedures oriented.

D. Roles the commissioner plays:
   1. Friend of the unit
   2. Representative of the Boy Scouts of America
   3. Unit “doctor”
   4. Teacher
   5. Counselor

V. THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER STAFF

A. The district commissioner.

B. Assistant district commissioners.

C. Unit commissioners—note the outline of duties.

D. Roundtable commissioners.

E. Your district executive.

VI. PROVIDING UNIT SERVICE

A. The central idea behind successful commissioners is “we care.” These are powerful words. They are a powerful force in human relations. A caring attitude is reflected in everything a good commissioner says and does.

   Good commissioners pay attention to what unit volunteers are saying and they are alert to the feelings behind the words.

   Caring is a habit. The more that commissioners view their job with a caring attitude, the more successful that unit will be.

B. Unit contacts:
   1. Frequency
   2. Unit meeting visits
   3. Unit committee visits
   4. Other contacts
C. The annual commissioner service plan.
D. Other ways to help a unit.
E. The national Quality Unit Award.
F. A special note: unit commissioners should not fall into the trap of doing everything in Scouting except their appointed job—unit service (see page 24 of the Commissioner Fieldbook on priorities).

VII. COMMISSIONER STYLE

A. This chapter lists important qualities of a successful commissioner.
B. “Exceptional district service equals unit leader perception of help received minus help the unit leader expected.”
C. What are “Roots and Wings”?
D. Service Recovery: How to right a wrong.
E. Course BCS 110 covers commissioner style in more detail.

VIII. BE A LIFESAVING COMMISSIONER

A. Commissioner lifesaving is providing prompt, intensive, and often persistent care when major problems occur in a unit.
B. Courses MCS 303 and MCS 304 cover commissioner lifesaving in detail.

IX. COUNSELING

A. Counseling is the ability to listen and react in a way that will help others solve their own problems.
B. This section of the fieldbook is your counselor’s guide. MCS 306 provides further instruction in commissioner counseling skills.

X. UNIT CHARTER RENEWAL

A. The commissioner facilitates the on-time annual charter renewal of all assigned units.
B. Course BCS 102 covers unit charter renewal in detail.

XI. UNIT COMMISSIONER TRAINING

A. Orientation video within 48 hours
B. Personal coaching/orientation within two weeks
C. Basic training within two months
D. Arrowhead Honor within one year
E. Commissioner’s Key after three years
F. Continuing education every month/year

XII. COMMISSIONER RESOURCES

A list of basic resources.

XIII. UNIT COMMISSIONER WORKSHEETS

XIV. SUMMARY

The Commissioner Fieldbook is your guide, but it is only a tool. It is up to you to build something with it.
UNIT CHARTER RENEWAL
(BCS 102)

Be sure each participant has the “Charter Renewal” chapter of the latest Commissioner Fieldbook.

I. WHY RECHARTER?

A. BSA is unique in that it does not own or operate Scouting units. It grants charters to community organizations that adopt the program and operate units.

   It’s like a franchise, and commissioners help renew the annual franchise agreement.

B. The ownership belongs to other community organizations or groups such as
   1. Churches
   2. Schools/PTAs
   3. Service clubs
   4. Businesses and labor unions

II. WHEN DO UNITS RECHARTER?

A. Before the charter date, which is the date of expiration.

B. Charter length may be a minimum of six months and a maximum of 18 months. Most are for one year.

C. Each council may have a preferred pattern of recharter dates.

III. THE CHARTER RENEWAL PROCESS
    Commissioners are responsible for unit charter renewal, so it is essential that they know the steps in the process.

A. Schedule with number of days before charter expiration:
   -90 days District executive visits head of chartered organization.
   -60 days Commissioner and unit committee conduct membership inventory.
   -45–60 days Units choosing to renew their charters online select a person as their renewal processor.
   -45 days Commissioner and unit committee chairman conduct charter renewal meeting.
-15 days  Renewal application submitted to local council service center.
+30 days  Commissioner presents charter to the chartered organization.

B. **Ninety days before charter renewal date, the district executive renews the relationship with the executive officer of the chartered organization.** Obviously, if problems are anticipated in the rechartering of the unit and/or if there is significant corrective action to be taken, the visit should be held earlier. Allow as much lead time as necessary so that positive action may take place before the renewal date.

The commissioner should keep the district executive advised of any matter that could affect the smooth renewal of the charter. Don’t wait until charter renewal time to address major problems.

The district executive
- Confers about the success or needs of the unit and notes any weaknesses
- Reviews the role of the chartered organization and the local council to help the unit be successful
- Reviews key personnel to determine replacements, additional personnel, and recognition
- Guides the head of the organization into naming the key person responsible for handling the rechartering process

The local council provides a computer printout of adults and youth members presently registered. This form serves as the unit charter application and is enclosed in the prepared unit charter renewal envelope.

In districts where all units have the same renewal date, the district executive must set up an earlier schedule of visits, and a key commissioner might help with selective visits.

C. **Sixty days before unit renewal date, the commissioner and unit committee conduct a membership inventory of currently registered youth and adults,** using the computer printout. Contacts or visits should be made to inactive youth and adults. Every effort should be made to recruit additional youth and adults so that the unit can reregister with no loss in membership.

The charter review date is set and officials of the chartered organization, the unit committee, unit leaders, and the unit commissioner or other district or council representative are urged to attend.
How to Do a Membership Inventory

• Appoint a unit adult to conduct the inventory.
• You will receive computer printouts of all youth and adults registered during the past year.
• Set a membership inventory date at a unit meeting. Before the inventory date, meet with unit leaders to discuss ways to make the best use of the inventory.
• At the unit meeting, the unit adult in charge of the inventory calls the roll. Following the unit meeting, the leaders and committee members meet. Absent or inactive members are coded only on the unit copy of the computer printout. A review of the unit record book will supply information on recent attendance.
• All absent or inactive members are assigned to various persons to contact them to determine if they are to be reregistered. Unit leaders and committee members agree on a plan to recruit new adults and youth.
• The commissioner gives special attention to the registration of an adequate number of quality adults. Discuss this with both a key unit person and a commissioner leader or district executive. Do not let anyone “sit on” the forms. If you feel that the process is not progressing, discover who has the forms and what is delaying them.

D. Sixty to 45 days before renewal date, units choosing to renew their charters online will select a person as their renewal processor. He/she will visit the local council’s Web site, complete the steps through the submittal process, and print a revised charter renewal application to be brought to the unit’s charter renewal meeting for review, discussion, and authorized signatures.

To assist districts in this process, there is a report available to council employees with membership reporting capabilities entitled Commissioner’s Status Report. This report provides commissioners with the renewal status of each unit, including the date of first login, the current stage of the process completed, and date submitted. Two other reports that are available are the New Members Added Report and the Members Not Renewed Report. Both of these reports are designed to provide information to the district in an effort to follow up with new youth and dropped youth identified through the renewal process.

E. Forty-five days before unit renewal date, the commissioner and unit committee chairman conduct the charter renewal meeting. Attendance at this meeting should include the commissioner, chartered organization representative, executive officer of the chartered organization, unit leader, and all other unit volunteers. The executive officer of the chartered organization approves all volunteers and the unit leader certifies the youth to be registered. This also is a good time to be sure that a pack or troop is a 100 percent Boys’ Life unit. If necessary, the commissioner can help complete the renewal form.
A review is conducted to determine if the unit qualifies for the National Quality Unit Award for the past charter year and to make commitments for the next charter year. The Quality Unit worksheet should be completed and submitted even if the unit does not qualify. It will show the commissioner which requirements the unit needs help with.

Note the agenda in the Commissioner Fieldbook.

Additional changes may be made to the application. The renewal application with appropriate fees and Quality Unit worksheets are all completed at this meeting.

All forms and fees are then delivered to the council office or the district’s charter renewal turn-in meeting at least 15 days before the unit renewal date.

This allows adequate time for processing and any unforeseen delays. If the process is badly delayed, carry the forms by hand through the rechartering process and take them to your district executive.

If the unit has renewed its charter using the Internet, the registrar reviews this information online along with the hard copies from the unit charter renewal meeting. The registrar then creates the new registration cards for the unit and new charter for the commissioner to present.

F. Thirty days after charter renewal, a formal presentation of the new charter and membership certificates is made at an appropriate gathering of the chartered organization.

Note the sample charter presentation ceremony in the Commissioner Fieldbook.

Make it the celebration phase of an ongoing relationship between the organization and the BSA. Be sure everyone present is recognized, from the head of the organization to the newest youth member.

Please Note—Commissioners and professional staff must be sensitive to the fact that some units (for a variety of reasons) may need or choose to use the paper method for charter renewal. Help units use the option that is best for them.

IV. FAILURE TO RECHARTER

If the unit fails to recharter on time, immediately discover who has the charter renewal forms and what is holding them up. Consult with your district executive. Hand-carry the forms through the rechartering process and take them to your district executive.

If the unit needs a major reorganization, complete the reorganization before the charter expiration.
V. CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION

Review a typical computer printout used for charter renewal. (Show how easy the paperwork is if they just follow the directions and take it one step at a time.)

VI. TWO PRINCIPLES ASSURE SUCCESS

A. Keep the unit charter renewal process simple. Do not attach anything to the recharter process that does not specifically have to do with the chartered organization's renewal of its charter, the reregistration of leaders and youth, or its Quality Unit status. The addition of anything else to the renewal process or paperwork has the potential for delaying prompt renewal, particularly for units that might be prone for any other reason not to renew their charter on time. Keep paperwork simple. Do not add a bunch of items to unit renewal packets. Simple renewal steps are summarized above. Please do not add anything.

B. Anticipate anything that could delay on-time renewal of the unit’s charter. Good commissioners get ahead of the curve. Is the unit leader going to be out of town for a month? Are there unit problems that might delay the renewal? Has there been a loss of adults? If the unit needs a major reorganization, plan and complete the reorganization well before the charter expiration. Each council may have a preferred pattern of renewal dates. Some might find it best for all units of a district to renew charters in the same month. This pattern is often combined with a renewal meeting with help available for all units to facilitate paperwork. In rural districts a different approach might be needed. What’s best for each of your districts?
I. VOLUNTEERS AND PROFESSIONALS WORKING TOGETHER

Scouting’s special relationship between volunteers and professionals is the core of its success. When the relationship thrives, the movement thrives. (Refer to “Your District Executive” in the Commissioner Fieldbook and chapter 8 in “A Guide for Commissioners on Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships.”)

A. What makes the relationship work? (Discuss and list on a flip chart.)

B. Who makes the important decisions?

C. The flavor of the relationship.

D. How can the unit commissioner and the professional best work together?

E. Common problem areas and how to avoid them.

II. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

A. Discuss the organizational chart and each group of people in the district.

B. How important is the role of the commissioner?

C. Review how the commissioner uses the resources of the district committee and its operating committees.

III. COUNCIL ORGANIZATION

A. Briefly discuss the council organizational chart (council and district).

B. How we support one another.

C. District or council identity.

IV. LET’S TALK ABOUT A SUCCESSFUL DISTRICT

A. List qualities of a successful district.

B. Requirements for the Quality District Award.

C. How does the unit commissioner contribute?
UNIT VISITATION
(BCS 104)

Be sure each participant has the “Providing Unit Service” chapter of the latest Commissioner Fieldbook.

I. The ultimate responsibility of unit commissioners is to see that every unit assigned to them succeeds. Commissioners do a variety of things to help units succeed, but the most basic task is the unit visit. Without unit visits, we can’t know how to help a unit improve its program and operation. Without visits, we only find out about major problems after the unit fails or weakens and the kids have “voted with their feet” and left the unit.

Commissioners visit each unit at least monthly. Some units will need more frequent visits—new units or troubled units for example.

II. TYPES OF VISITS

A. Unit meetings—where Scouting really happens—bottom line. These meetings are your best way to observe what’s happening.

B. Unit committee meetings—often your best opportunity to interact with unit adults.

C. Individual get-together with unit leader.

D. Visit with other unit adults.

E. Effective phone contacts.

F. E-mail, fax, and Web sites are efficient tools, but don’t let technology replace person-to-person kindness. Face-to-face helpfulness is still the most valuable unit service method.

III. VISITATION STRATEGY—BEFORE YOU GO

A. You go as a friend of the unit—not as the district “superspy.”

B. Constantly ask yourself how you can help the unit.
   1. Know what is best for the success of your units.
   2. Your help should strengthen the roles of unit adults, not glorify the commissioner. “It’s better to teach a person to fish than to feed him a fish.”
   3. The commissioner operates quietly, generally in the background.
   4. Be helpful, not critical.
C. It’s usually better to call first.
   1. It’s common courtesy.
   2. Calling beforehand helps assure you’ll be welcome.
   3. It shows you’re not there to snoop.

D. Know your units, do your homework, know what to expect.

IV. DURING THE VISIT

A. Watch and listen.

B. Be careful not to disrupt the meeting.

C. Stay long enough to get an accurate impression.

D. Avoid making lengthy notes during the visit.

E. Meet and chat with other adults who are “on the sidelines.”

F. Get to know some of the boys.

G. Don’t distract the leader—talk with him or her during free time, perhaps not until after the meeting.

H. Always give the leader a chance to mention problems or ask questions.

I. Always take some freebies—even if only applications.

V. AFTER THE VISIT

A. After, not during the meeting, review and fill out a commissioner worksheet (in the back of the Commissioner Fieldbook).

B. Determine the priority needs of the unit. At any point in time, different units will have different priority needs, and needs change over time.

C. Determine how you (or others in the district) can be most helpful. Perhaps it’s only to provide a personal “well done” or “congratulations.”

D. Discuss special needs with your ADC, district commissioner, or district executive. If there is a crisis, communicate immediately.

VI. BRAINSTORM WAYS TO HELP A UNIT

VII. PRIORITIZE YOUR UNITS

A. Spend your time with the weakest units.

B. Strong units need a helpful contact. Weak units need significant attention.
VIII. KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

IX. (If time permits) HOW TO CONDUCT A UNIFORM INSPECTION

Refer to the Commissioner Fieldbook.

X. COUNSELING

Refer to the section on counseling in the Commissioner Fieldbook.
PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO COMMON UNIT NEEDS
(BCS 105)

Give each participant a copy of *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews.*

I. A COMMISSIONER’S PRIMARY MISSION IS TO HELP UNITS

   A. Succeed.

   B. Develop a better program.

   C. Operate more effectively.

II. UNIT COMMISSIONER WORKSHEETS

   A. Have everyone review the worksheets in the back of the *Commissioner Helps* book.

   B. Review the nine to 10 categories to be observed for each type of unit.

   C. Demonstrate how to use the unit profile.

   D. Emphasize how to use “Some Ways to Help” suggestions.

III. COMMISSIONER RESPONSE TO UNIT NEEDS

   A. Introduce *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews.*

   B. Under each program element or heading are several standards based on proven experience and policy.

   C. Following the standards are a number of practical commissioner action responses to help the unit with a given standard or program need.

   D. Note the abbreviations (C, S, and V) where an item is not common to all types of units.

IV. “FIND A SOLUTION” CONTEST

   A. Divide the group into teams of two or three.

   B. Read a statement from the following list. The first team to find the correct page in *Commissioner Helps* with the information needed to help with the statement read, earns a point. Keep score.
C. After each point is scored, take a minute or two to review the possible commissioner actions listed under the correct topic.

D. Suggested contest statements:
   1. St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church has a new pastor who is unfamiliar with Scouting.
   2. Neither Troop 41 nor Crew 41 appear to have any program planned more than two weeks in advance.
   3. Last week you attended a pack meeting and only three parents were present.
   4. One of your assigned troops has not added a new boy member in 10 months.
   5. One of your troops has very few boys in Scout uniform.
   6. At their May pack meeting, Cubmaster Bob Newguy tells you he looks forward to seeing you in September.
   7. The chairman of a unit committee calls and expresses concern about the adequacy of the unit’s meeting place.

E. Award a small prize to the winning team.

V. CLASS PROJECT
   A. Divide the group into larger teams of four to six persons. You might simply combine teams from the preceding contest.

   B. Assign the following case situation and ask each team to list every section of the Commissioner Helps book that could help them respond to the unit situation:

   “A Cub Scout pack consisting of six members, one den leader (untrained), one Cubmaster (untrained), no committee members, and parents who say they’re willing to help but never make a move to do so.”

VI. UNIT PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR COMMISSIONERS VIDEO, AV-04V002

   A. This video is used to help commissioners increase their skills in handling common, often unit life-threatening problems. One or two tape segments are often used as a training topic at each monthly council and district commissioner meeting.

   B. There are 14 problem segments on the video. Select one in the last third of the video—least likely to have been used in the districts. Or, let the participants quickly select one of the problems that they would most like to explore.

   C. Show the video segment to set up the problem.
D. Turn the video off and have the group discuss their ideas for a solution.

E. Return to the video to add video solutions to the group’s ideas.

(Check with the session leaders of “No-Lapse/No-Drop Commitment” and “Commissioner Lifesaving II” to be sure each of you uses different problems from the video.)
A COMMISSIONER’S PRIORITIES
(BCS 106)

Be sure each participant has the “Special Notes on Priorities” section of the Commissioner Fieldbook.

I. KNOW YOUR UNITS—OUR NO. 1 PRIORITY

A. Know the unit adults.

B. Be a friend of the unit. Do unit people view you as a person who really cares?

C. Understand the environment in which the unit operates:
   1. Chartered organization
   2. History and experience with Scouting
   3. Income and education level
   4. Inner-city neighborhood
   5. Urban/suburban
   6. Remote rural area

D. Visit often enough to be up-to-date.

E. Beware the hazard of placing emphasis on the district rather than on units and unit advocacy.

II. PRIORITIZE UNIT NEEDS

A. Keep a running list of needs, problems, and desirable improvements for each of your units. Highlight the most urgent needs and problems.

B. Evaluate your time—it is limited.
   1. Concentrate your commissioner energies on the unit needs you highlighted.
   2. Beware the hazard of giving the most attention to the healthiest and most active units. Good commissioners don’t do that. Establish your priority unit(s). Priority units receive your most careful attention.

III. BEWARE THE HAZARD OF JOB DIVERSION

Caution: Don’t fall into the trap of doing everything else in the district except your appointed job—unit service.
A. Because of the many programs and activities of Scouting, unit commissioners might find themselves promoting projects, carrying messages, acting as judges, running FOS campaigns, etc. While all these activities are unquestionably important, they are not the primary responsibilities of unit commissioners.

Unit commissioners do cooperate with other Scouting personnel working on specific programs even though they are not responsible for them.

B. Don’t feel guilty about occasionally saying “no” to other requests.

C. Serve in the commissioner position only. Some people, of course, may desire to remain affiliated with their home unit—perhaps in their own church. However, understand that being a commissioner is your primary Scouting job. Use your time helping with specific unit needs and helping each unit become effective with its unit program and unit operation.

D. Your principal Scouting obligation must be with commissioner responsibilities.

There is no room in a person’s schedule for other Scouting positions. A commissioner who accepts other jobs in Scouting probably does not understand the scope of his assignment. Carrying other jobs in Scouting will only dilute the effectiveness of his vital role as a commissioner.

IV. TYPICAL PRIORITY UNIT NEEDS

The following are high priorities for commissioners because they are major threats to unit survival and/or indications that boys may not be receiving good Scouting:

A. Unit not meeting

B. Unit with no leader

C. New unit leader lacks orientation or training

D. Unit with no active committee

E. Unit with no new youth members

F. Unit with weak leadership

G. Unit conflict with chartered organization

H. Unit charter renewal time

(These priorities are covered in detail in courses MCS 303 and MCS 304, Commissioner Lifesaving I and II.)
V. STEPS IN HANDLING A PROBLEM

A. Identify the problem.

B. Decide if it is a problem.

C. Discuss the problem with the ADC.

D. Is assistance needed from the district committee?

E. Decide whether you will handle it alone or with the ADC.

F. Decide who is to handle the problem.

G. Plan your actions.

H. Plan your alternatives.

I. Put the plan into action.

J. Evaluate.

VI. THE QUALITY UNIT AWARD

A. A unit commissioner is successful when the units he or she serves are providing a quality program for youth. The national Quality Unit Award is one of the BSA's principal measurements of Scouting success.

The Quality Unit Award recognizes outstanding packs, troops, teams, crews, and ships that conduct quality programs for their youth. Here’s how it works:

B. The unit may earn the Quality Unit Award based on its past charter year achievement. During the unit’s annual charter renewal meeting, a review is made by a council representative, usually a commissioner, with unit adults to determine if the unit qualifies as a Quality Unit for the past charter year and to make a commitment for the coming charter year.

C. The unit fills out the report for the past charter year and the commitment for the coming charter year on the Quality Unit forms. One copy is retained by the unit and one copy is returned to the local council service center so units can be properly recognized.

D. There are streamers, plaques, emblems, and pins to use for recognizing units and unit members. You will want to help present the recognition pieces.
E. As a commissioner, you

1. Become knowledgeable about the award criteria, forms, and procedures. See your current Unit Commissioner Program Notebook for the latest award criteria for packs, troops, teams, and crews.

2. Carefully brief unit personnel of the units you serve.

3. Throughout the year, provide help and encouragement for units to meet award criteria.

4. Guide the annual review of unit achievement for the past charter year and commitment for the current charter year.

5. Provide recognition for unit achievement.

6. Stay in close touch with the assistant district commissioner, district commissioner, or district executive about how the district can help strengthen the quality of a particular unit’s program and leadership.

F. Review the current worksheet and criteria for a Quality Pack.

G. Review the current worksheet and criteria for a Quality Troop.

H. Review the current worksheet and criteria for a Quality Crew.
I. INTRODUCTION

The Boy Scouts of America has identified the problem of child abuse as one that is unacceptable in our society. We have adopted a strategy to guide our Youth Protection program.

A. Educating Scouting volunteers, parents, and Scouts to aid in the detection and prevention of child abuse. This training program is a key element in the educational program of the BSA. In addition, information is provided to members and their families through BSA publications and video productions.

B. Establishing leader-selection procedures to prevent offenders from entering the BSA leadership ranks. The adult leader application form requests relevant information that should be checked by the chartered organization before accepting the applicant into unit leadership. The National Council Registration Service routinely screens applicants against a listing of individuals known to be ineligible for BSA membership.

C. Establishing policies that create barriers to child abuse within the program. BSA has adopted various policies to guide the interaction of adult and youth members.

D. Encouraging Scouts to report improper behavior in order to identify offenders quickly. Through stressing the “three Rs” of Youth Protection (recognize/resist/report), members are encouraged to report attempted or actual abuse.

E. Swift removal and reporting of alleged offenders. Anytime abuse is suspected in Scouting, the alleged offender will not be eligible to participate in the program until completely exonerated of the accusations. The Scout executive is responsible for reporting all suspected abuse to the proper authorities irrespective of whether the person making the allegations to him reports to the authorities.
II. YOUTH PROTECTION GUIDELINES TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEER LEADERS AND PARENTS

Present this video-directed course in its entirety. Be sure to use the latest version of training developed by the Boy Scouts of America.

III. COMMISSIONER DUTIES

A. Conduct an annual Youth Protection visit each fall for unit adults in every unit (usually as part of your November visit at a unit committee meeting). Review the latest training dates, booklets, and videos.

B. Help units and their chartered organizations use proper leader-selection procedures.

C. Coach unit people if child abuse occurs.


E. Explain to unit adults how the boy and parent use the inserts in the front of the youth handbooks.

F. Consult with your council. Talk with your district commissioner or district executive to find out about the latest BSA resources on the prevention of child abuse.
EFFECTIVE ROUNDTABLES I  
(BCS 108)

The major resources for this course are the latest editions of the *Cub Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, *Boy Scout Roundtable Planning Guide*, and *Venturing Roundtable Guide*. *Cub Scout Roundtable Commissioner, Staff Basic Training Manual*, and *Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner Training* may also be helpful resources (although these conference sessions should not be considered a substitute for basic training). All of these references have pages that can be copied for handouts.

I. INTRODUCTION
   A. Essential elements for success
      1. The will to do
      2. The skill to do
   B. Who should attend roundtables
   C. When and where to hold roundtables
   D. Why people attend

II. ROUNDTABLE STRUCTURE
   A. Combined sessions
   B. Separate sessions

III. BASIC INGREDIENTS OF A ROUNDTABLE PROGRAM
   A. Preopening
      1. Exhibits
      2. Display
      3. Literature
   B. Opening
   C. Information and recognition
   D. Cub Scout program theme/Boy Scout program feature
   E. Closing
   F. After the meeting
IV. THE PLANNING CYCLE

A. Annual program planning
   1. Annual planning conference
   2. Monthly program themes
   3. Use of theme managers

B. Quarterly planning meeting

C. Monthly staff meetings
   1. Program themes
   2. Personal resources
   3. District and council events
   4. Special dates

V. ROUNDTABLE PLANNING CHECKLISTS

VI. RESOURCE MATERIALS

   Divide the class into separate Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing groups for the remainder of the class time.

   A. Planning guides
   B. *Program Helps*
   C. *Scouting* magazine
   D. *Boys’ Life* magazine
   E. Scouting literature
   F. Other resources

VII. CLOSING (PREVIEW BCS 109)
VIII. PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY

A. Regular date, time, and meeting place.
   1. “Think second Thursday.”
   2. Have a permanent meeting place.
   3. A dependable schedule is important for good attendance.

B. Reminders.

C. Newsletters/e-mails/council Web site.

D. Door prizes.

E. Forming a roundtable pack or troop.

F. Unit involvement draws attendance. Get lots of people involved in the production!

G. Recognition.

H. Promotional plans.
   I. Gimmicks, goodies, and product samples.
   J. Attendance awards.
   K. Personal contact is best.
   L. Phone squads.
   M. Line up interesting guests and brief speakers who will draw attendance.

IX. LOCATION

A. Adequate space

B. Adequate parking

C. Available year-round

D. Areas for split sessions

E. Attractive and interesting facility

F. Easily accessible
G. Easily accessible for people with disabilities
H. Meets health and safety requirements

X. ROUNDTABLE MORALE BUILDERS

A. Displays and exhibits
   1. Program theme ideas
   2. Council and district events
   3. Scouting literature
   4. Equipment
   5. Unit show-and-tell
   6. Scouting memorabilia
   7. Trading post
   8. Boys’ Life
   9. Other stuff

B. Information center
   1. Announcements (keep them brief)
   2. Written notices and packets
   3. Scouting “supermarket”
   4. Physical property bank

C. Songs
   1. Use of songs
   2. Songleading tips
   3. Songbooks

D. Icebreakers, stunts, and skits
   1. Icebreakers
   2. Group meeting sparklers
   3. Cheers and applause
   4. Stunts and skits
      a. Developing skits
      b. Staging skits
      c. Resources
   5. Funny lost-and-found
E. Games and contests
   1. Value of games
   2. Types of games
   3. Use of games

F. Recognitions
   1. New people/new units
   2. Units and leaders
   3. Awards
   4. Fun stuff

G. Ceremonies
   1. Purpose of ceremonies
   2. Essential ingredients
   3. Staging ceremonies
   4. Involvement and participation
   5. Types of ceremonies
   6. Ceremonial props

XI. REVIEW OF QUALITY ROUNDTABLE INGREDIENTS
   A. Action
   B. Material
   C. Handouts
   D. Skills and crafts
   E. New ideas
   F. Useful information
   G. Fun
   H. Food
COMMISSIONER STYLE
(BSC 110)

Be sure each participant has the “Your Commissioner Style” chapter of the latest Commissioner Fieldbook.

I. INTRODUCTION

A commissioner’s style—how they provide service—is as important as what they do in the service process.

II. BE A FRONTLINE DIPLOMAT

To help units succeed, today’s commissioners must be people-oriented more than procedures-oriented. They are truly a council’s frontline diplomats. Because they operate mostly by persuasion rather than by legislation, unit commissioners should exercise the highest degree of diplomacy.

(Conduct a presentation/group discussion on each of nine qualities of a “commissioner diplomat.” Place the quality on a chalkboard or flip chart as each quality is discussed.)

1. Be an effective communicator
2. Be a good listener
3. Have sound judgment
4. Be tactful
5. Have a Scouting background or be a fast-track learner
6. Be persistent and patient
7. Be adaptable
8. Know and practice Scouting ideals
9. Be enthusiastic
10. Treat everyone with respect, even when they annoy you.

III. EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

A part of commissioner style is to provide “exceptional service” as defined in the Commissioner Fieldbook. (Display definition on a display card or overhead projector.)
Exceptional service can also be stated like a mathematical formula:

\[
\text{EXCEPTIONAL DISTRICT SERVICE EQUALS UNIT LEADER PERCEPTION OF HELP RECEIVED MINUS HELP THE UNIT LEADER EXPECTED.}
\]

Simply meeting the expectations of unit leaders is not enough in our increasingly competitive society. Most people expect more than just “good enough” service. Exceptional commissioner service results in successful units.

Have the group suggest ways to exceed the expectations of unit adults.

IV. ROOTS AND WINGS

Good commissioners have both “roots” and “wings.”

A. Roots

Roots give Scouters a sense of confidence and commitment, those feelings that cause people to continue helping youth despite challenges and barriers along the way. Commissioners help units feel a part of the great traditions of Scouting—the inspiration of a campfire, the pride in wearing the uniform, or the excitement of the camporee. Commissioners uphold the ideals of the Scout Law and Promise, the value of youth leadership, and the quality of good unit programs. Good commissioners have roots.

Commissioners have some of the deepest roots in Scouting’s history; they are the keepers of the traditions and standards of the BSA.
B. **Wings**

Perhaps it’s a paradox that commissioners also have **wings**. They are on the cutting edge of progress in the BSA as they help unit leaders understand and utilize changes and new ideas to keep Scouting relevant to the world in which we live.

**Wings** give Scouters the excitement of personal growth and the freedom to embrace change. With wings, Scouting can remain relevant and responsive to youth. Commissioners help units feel comfortable with program improvements. They help units see the excitement of new ideas. Commissioners help each unit relate what the unit is doing in the community around it and the cultural background of the young people it serves. Good commissioners have wings.

C. Effective commissioners balance their roots and their wings.

D. Have the group brainstorm two lists as you list on a chalkboard or flip chart.

What are specific examples of traditions and standards in Scouting that should probably not change (“roots”)?

What are specific examples of recent changes in Scouting which we should try to quickly adapt to (“wings”)?

V. **SERVICE RECOVERY**

Service recovery means **HOW TO RIGHT A WRONG**. We may strive for perfection, but we won’t be perfect; so when there are mistakes, we must have a process to make them right.

Such advice is as valuable for Scouting as for businesses, schools, and other organizations in the community. We do make mistakes: the national office prints conflicting information in two of its publications; a local council double-books a favorite summer campsite; a district changes the roundtable location and forgets to tell leaders; a commissioner fails to show up at a pack committee meeting; a Scoutmaster forgets to award a Second Class badge at a court of honor.

When a mistake happens, what should we do?

(Have the group suggest specific steps commissioners need to be prepared to take to right a wrong. Then add any of the following points they may have missed.)

- **Find a sincere way to say “I’m sorry.”** Admitting a goof-up might not be easy, but it sets the stage for overcoming a blunder.

- **Act immediately.** People appreciate prompt action. Don’t let problems fester; they often get worse—at least in the minds of the offended.)
• **Take the initiative.** It’s often wise to notify a unit of a blunder and start the recovery process even before unit Scouters discover the mistake: “Bill, we lost your charter renewal envelope. We’ll help you redo the paperwork, and the council will reimburse you the bank fees to stop payment on your check for registration fees.”

• **Smooth ruffled feathers.** Remember that some people might be upset not only with the person or group who blundered but also with the whole Scouting organization.

• **Let them know you care.** Council and district attitudes toward unit people are crucial. Unit Scouters must be treated like the champions of Scouting they are. Commissioners must assure them that “We care about you!”

• **Turn a blunder into an opportunity.** When a mistake happens, don’t think just about damage control. Find creative ways to handle the problem to maximize unit leaders’ satisfaction with the district or council so that they feel better about Scouting than they would have if the mistake had never happened.

• **Be prepared.** Commissioners are empowered to handle, correct, and make restitution for blunders that affect unit people. Know how to listen for a problem, interpret what you hear, and take appropriate action.
HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING
(BSC 111)

To conduct this session, use the *Health and Safety Training Course Syllabus*, No. 19-100.

The council health and safety committee and/or risk management committee, with the consent of the Scout executive, have the responsibility to appoint people qualified to teach the BSA Health and Safety Training Course. This course introduces the concept of the “sandwich principle” with emphasis on the importance of qualified supervision and discipline. The course features the BSA booklet *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416D, and the video *Scouting Safety . . . Begins with Leadership*, AV-09V025.

Experience has shown that the vast majority of serious injuries and fatalities in Scouting occur in unit-related activities conducted off council properties. Scheduling this training feature for commissioners is important because safe activities are great activities—and they save lives and prevent tragic injuries. Doing so will help commissioners promote the principles for safe Scouting with our unit leaders.
WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
(BCS 112)

This is a group participation/discussion session on some fascinating situations that commissioners might encounter.

I. Divide your participants into small groups. Give each group a separate problem to solve. Ask them to come up with some creative solutions to not only solve the problem, but to solve it in a way that will allow all parties to share positively in the solution.

II. Distribute a list of all 10 situations to all participants so they can review the problem and make notes as each group reports.

III. Have each group make a brief report.

IV. After each small group reports, ask the larger group to suggest at least one idea from the report which could serve as a broader guideline for commissioners in other kinds of situations.

SITUATIONS:

1. One of your friends, a new unit commissioner, meets for the first time with a longtime Cubmaster. While the Cubmaster is not hostile, he is decidedly formal. In the course of conversation, he says, “We don’t support Friends of Scouting in this unit because the council has never done anything for us.” The new commissioner calls you and says, “So what do I do now?”

2. You receive a call from a harried Scoutmaster. She reports that her unit commissioner is an impossible chauvinist who resents women being in leadership positions in Scouting. She, with the backing of her unit committee, demands the immediate reassignment of the commissioner. As an ADC, your course of action would be . . .

3. You receive a call from John Smith, who informs you he is the new unit commissioner for Troop 1 and Pack 1. John wants to talk to you about some changes he thinks should be made in the operation and leadership of both units. He informs you that he has already spoken to the pastor of the church which holds the unit charters. You have never heard of John Smith before. What do you do next?

4. You are a unit commissioner. You receive a call from an irate mother of a young Scout. Mom launches into a tirade about how her son’s advancement is being frustrated by members of the Scout’s unit. It seems her son had earned 17 merit badges at summer camp. He worked from 5 in the morning until 11 at night and had the approval of the provisional assistant Scoutmaster at the camp. She stated that the troop advancement committee is sitting on the blue cards, not pro-
cessing them. Mom makes it clear that her son, who is 12 and a half, is going to be the youngest Eagle Scout in the nation. As soon as you hang up the phone you should . . .

5. You receive a call from a single-parent father who is trying to get his twin sons into a Cub pack. He has been told by all the units in the area that they are full. What would you do?

6. You learn that one of your packs is telling their Cubs that denners and assistant denners who have completed their terms can cut the cords off and continue to wear the small yellow shoulder tab. The women of the pack have voted to wear the green Venturing uniform shirt with the blue tabs. What should you start doing?

7. You meet a Scoutmaster at the council service center and he complains to you that he can never get any information about what’s happening in the district and the council. He feels isolated and forgotten. What would you recommend?

8. It has come to your attention that one of your newly assigned troops has not attended a council summer camp in over six years. In fact, the troop puts on its own camp on privately owned land. The troop committee supports this program and feels the camp experience they are providing is far superior to anything happening in a council camp. Should you do anything?

9. You have a unit in your area that has never, in the memory of man, ever done its charter renewal correctly. The unit leaders refuse to attend the orientation meetings and, in fact, do not take charter renewal very seriously. Should you do anything with this unit? If so, what’s the first thing?

10. The committee chairman of a newly formed Boy Scout troop calls you and wants a laundry list of all the training opportunities for Scout leaders. Make up the list and prioritize it, showing the chairman who should take what training in what order.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. New units are a tremendous factor in membership growth—so more young people will grow in character and in personal fitness.

B. How many of you currently serve a new unit?

How many have served a new unit in the past?

Some of you will be assigned a new unit in the future.

II. COMMISSIONER TASKS IN SERVING A NEW UNIT

A. First, be absolutely sure that a new unit is under the care of a commissioner before the organizer leaves the unit. Provide transition; allow no time to elapse between the organizer’s and the commissioner’s supervision.

- How do the organizer and commissioner work together?
- How do they handle the transition?

B. Make the presentation of the first unit charter a very special event for members of the chartered organization and unit personnel.

- Where in Scouting literature can you find details on unit charter presentations? *(Commissioner Fieldbook, pages 45–47)*

C. Attend the first meeting of the unit committee. Listen and guide, but do not take over. If necessary, help the committee chairman build the agenda.

- What is your role at a unit committee meeting? (A guest and a coach)
- What is your unwritten agenda for new troop committee meetings? (Building good team relationships, orientation on unit committee operation, coaching in unit program, etc.)

D. Unit leader training is a priority. Follow up if unit leaders missed Fast Start, New Leader Essentials, or the appropriate new leader specific course. Provide the missing sessions if they cannot get to district courses. Tailor the training to the unit.

- (Review all the component courses for Basic Leader Training.)
- (Review why Basic Leader Training must take place ASAP—hopefully as part of the process of organizing the unit.)
E. Be sure new unit leaders get “youth buy-in.” In crews and posts, be sure youth officers are elected and that the adviser trains the officers, using appropriate training material. Success requires that youth embrace the program.

In troops, be sure the patrol method is used. Troop success depends on the development of boy leaders.

In packs, be sure all dens are meeting regularly.

F. Don’t assume the unit will have a program. Guide the unit in planning the first month or two of its program.

• How would you go about helping a new unit with its first two months’ program?

• Be sure unit leaders know about program helps and other program resources.

G. Don’t appear to be a checker-upper. Commissioners are there to assist and guide, like good friends. First impressions are very important with a new unit.

• (Brief discussion)

H. Help the unit start plans for a long-term outdoor experience (Cub Scout resident camp or day camp, Boy Scout resident camp, Venturing superactivity, etc.).

• Why is this important?

I. Recognize unit successes. Congratulate leaders for all achievements, no matter how small.

• Why? (Increase self-confidence, overcome fear of failure, positive reinforcement, etc.)

J. Help leaders solve immediate concerns.

• (Elicit examples from group.)

• Failure to solve immediate concerns quickly may undermine further development of very new units with inexperienced leaders.

K. Play a helpful mentoring role with unit folk, and a trusting relationship will have begun.

• How does the commissioner’s initial experience with a new unit affect the commissioner’s ability to help the unit in the future?

• What clues might indicate that you have a good trust level with the new unit’s leadership?
GOOD COMMISSIONER-PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS
(BCS 114)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Since the early days of Scouting in the United States, good volunteer-professional relationships has been one of the special hallmarks of the Boy Scouts of America. Today, this special partnership between volunteers and professionals is the core of its success at a council/district level. When the partnership thrives, the Scouting movement thrives. If the partnership is not working well, Scouting suffers.

B. Both commissioners and professionals share responsibility for building good working relationships in Scouting. No matter what your job or task in the council, skill in working effectively with your professional is important.

Today we’re going to look at a few general qualities and practical tips for building a good relationship.

II. QUALITIES OF A GOOD RELATIONSHIP

A. (Lead discussion.)

What evidence would suggest that a good relationship exists between a volunteer and a professional?

Elicit:

☐ Each understands what the other “brings to the table.”

☐ They seek each other’s counsel.

☐ They enjoy each other’s company.

B. Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual recognition of each other’s role and competency.

1. (Uncover the above statement on a large banner, poster, flip chart, or other medium to remain on display throughout the session.)

2. When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other, and they share the same objectives (to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth).

In Scout districts, for example, mutual dependence results because district executives know they cannot possibly do all the
work that needs to be done, and district volunteers know they need the coaching and experience of full-time professionals.

If partners have complete confidence in each other, they will seek each other’s counsel. Neither partner has a monopoly on wisdom, judgement, or experience. When the full resources of both parties are applied to decision making, the combination is unbeatable.

Your professional is a Scouting friend and counselor. Working together is more effective when commissioners and professionals enjoy each other’s company. Professionals do not work for district volunteers, but with them as partners on behalf of youth. The unselfish service they both render and their common dedication breeds mutual respect and a feeling of kinship. One test of the relationship is whether the two parties think of each other as friends.

3. Occasionally a volunteer will say to a professional, “Remember, you get paid for this, and I don’t.” But that is not the significant difference between volunteers and professionals. The significant difference is that volunteers are able to give only a portion of their time to Scouting, while professionals give their full time, and then some.

This means professionals are dependent upon the movement for the material things of life, but it does not mean professionals look upon Scouting differently than volunteers. Both are dedicated to the same principles, and both are trying to live out those principles in their lives and in their work.

The fact that professionals give all their time means their experience is broader and deepens more quickly. Their training is more intensive and continues throughout their professional careers. This makes their coaching more valuable to volunteers. So seek out the guidance of your professional coach.

4. These qualities are a final result of our efforts. The remainder of the session will help us achieve the result.

III. TIPS FOR BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

Here are a few tips on how good commissioners work with their professionals:

(Place the following 10 tips in a container and have 10 participants, each in turn, take one and share with the group. Following each statement, take a couple of minutes for group discussion and instructor comment.)

A. Intentionally begin to build a good relationship with your professional from your very first visit. Be positive. Be enthusiastic. Be well prepared. Think in advance about the impression you want to make as one of the trusted volunteers of the district.
B. Be accessible to your professional adviser. Exchange phone numbers, e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, etc. Avoid the impression that you are too busy or annoyed when he calls. Return his calls.

C. Create a welcome environment for the new professional and plan ways to incorporate him or her into the team. Remember that it’s easy for a group to turn inward and make newcomers feel awkward or unwelcome. Send a letter of introduction to appropriate volunteers from an appropriate person in authority (council president, Scout executive, etc.). This helps a person feel good about joining the district or council. It also helps volunteers get acquainted with the new pro.

D. A professional will try to make efficient use of commissioners’ time and, as best they can, plan visits and meetings at times that are best for volunteers. Commissioners and professionals should help make the most efficient use of each other’s Scouting time.

E. Commissioners should know that they can turn to their pro for advice or troubleshooting. Help create the kind of relationship in which you are comfortable asking for help.

F. There will inevitably be some professionals you don’t like as much as others. That’s human nature. However, part of being a good Scouter is working with all kinds of people, even when the human chemistry isn’t just perfect. Feel free to talk with your professional partner about how you are working together.

G. While you obviously want to form a Scouting relationship, it is nevertheless important to get to know your professional as a whole person. Most of us will feel more comfortable working with someone who is interested in other aspects of our lives as well as our Scouting responsibilities.

   Keep in mind that Scouting is not a person’s only priority in life. They will have family priorities and may be active in religious and other activities.

H. Let your professional adviser know if you plan to have your spouse, secretary, or work associate assist you with a Scouting task, and how the pro can be helpful to that person.

I. Develop good communication in which you and your professional really listen to and understand each other.
J. In some instances the function of guiding other volunteers is shared between you and a pro. A district executive works with operating committee chairmen who also look to the district chairman for guidance. Both the district commissioner and district executive have a direct working relationship with ADCs. Unit commissioners work with both their district executive and their ADC.

You and the professional should be careful to avoid confusion for volunteers and to ensure that they receive consistent messages and have a compatible relationship with both their volunteer leader and the professional.

IV. A CLOSING NOTE

Historically, Scouting’s great success has resulted because of volunteer talent and the professionals who guide and support talented volunteers.

The continuing greatness of Scouting as a volunteer movement is in your capable hands as you and your volunteer team work effectively with your professional adviser.
COMMISSIONERS AND DIVERSITY
(BCS 115)

I. DIVERSITY—A TRULY IMPORTANT IDEA

The United States of America is a unique microcosm of the world’s people.

(Think about it) (pause)

Its makeup is unlike any other country in the world.

This has been one of the key elements of our power and success as a nation.

IN THE PAST, this country was called “the great melting pot.” Customs and cultures from many lands were expected to blend together like ingredients in a cream soup. But was this really accurate?

TODAY, we have a better understanding. We’re starting to realize that the United States is more like a beautiful tapestry with the variety of threads with different colors and textures woven together to make this work of art.

II. DIVERSITY—A SCOUTING VALUE

The Boy Scouts of America’s leadership and membership is growing to reflect the demographic character of our nation. We are and will be a DIVERSE organization.

(Discussion question)

Take a look at your unit, district/council back home. Does it reflect the demographic makeup of your community? Or take a look at your own organization where you work.

The strength and inclusiveness that results from this demographic growth will help us accomplish our vision as an organization.

III. POSITIVE TYPES OF DIVERSITY

A. (Have group develop a list. Record on a flipchart. Be sure the list includes the following:)

• Race

• Ethnic/nationality background

• Gender
• Age
• Marital status—single, married, divorced
• Work experience
• Personality
• Religion
• Cultural values

Diversity in the Boy Scouts of America is a desired state. It is an environment where all DIFFERENCES: age, gender, race, ethnicity, physical ability, personality, and life experiences are valued and integrated into every aspect of the organization's operations.

IV. DIVERSITY WITHIN UNITY

The membership of the Boy Scouts of America is united by our mission and vision and by our common values, expressed in the Boy Scout and Cub Scout Oath and Law and the Venturing Oath.

What else can you think of that unites us in Scouting?

(Group response)

Diversity is the uniqueness that each of us brings to fulfilling our mission and achieving the vision.

When we build on our common values, our differences can become a distinct advantage, allowing us to reach more young people with a richer program of Scouting.

V. GROUP PROJECTS

A. (Form small groups of four to eight persons. Assign a project question to each group. Have each group select a person to report back.)

1. Why does diversity make Scouting stronger? Give some examples of how diversity makes Scouting better.

2. How can commissioners help value individuals and use diversity to make Scouting stronger?

3. Each one of us can change the world or at least a small part of it. When we treat people fairly and respect their differences, the people around us respect us. Those watching us learn by our actions and often imitate us. Make a list of possible examples of how a commissioner can be a role model on diversity.
4. People catch prejudice from other people, and no one or no group is immune from prejudging others. However, we can recognize and build up resistance to prejudices in ourselves and help friends and family do the same. Positive attitudes toward other people are rooted in a strong positive self-image. Self-assured people are not threatened by differences and are open to new experiences. What can commissioners do to overcome prejudice?

B. (Have each group give a brief report.)

VI. SUMMARY

The strength of the Boy Scouts of America lies in its mission, its vision, its traditions, but most of all in its people.

We strive to create an environment where people are valued as individuals and are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness. From that effort can come an environment where everyone is energized to contribute to the success of our mission, and we and our nation are better for it.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. Why make a no-lapse/no-drop commitment? List the reasons.

B. Why is a continuity of unit tenure important? List the reasons.

C. What do you think constitutes a no-lapse/no-drop commitment?

II. WHY UNITS LAPSE AND HOW TO PREVENT IT

For each reason “why,” have the group determine how to prevent the lapse.

A. The charter renewal process was started too late (less than 90 days before charter expiration).

B. The commissioner left all the steps of charter renewal up to the unit.

C. The unit held up the renewal papers for a missing signature.

D. The commissioner failed to get involved (or get others in the district involved) to help solve a major unit problem until it was charter renewal time.

E. The commissioner assumed unit people would turn in the renewal forms.

F. The district/council tried to use charter renewal time to get the unit to do a lot of other things other than simply getting reregistered.

G. Someone in the unit “sat on” the forms.

H. The unit hadn’t collected all the registration fees.

I. You name others.
III. WHY UNITS DROP AND HOW TO PREVENT IT

Two optional projects:

A. Have the group list six to eight of the gravest unit problems leading to a dropped unit.
   1. Divide the group into six to eight small teams and assign each team one of the unit problems.
   2. The teams outline how to solve the problem.
   3. The teams report to the larger group.

B. Or use the *Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners* video, AV-04V002.
   1. There are 14 problem segments on the video. Select one in the last third of the video—least likely to have been used in the districts. Or, let the participants quickly select one of the problems that they would most like to explore.
   2. Show the video segment to set up the problem.
   3. Turn the video off and have the group members discuss their ideas for a solution.
   4. Return to the video to add video solutions to the group’s ideas.

   (Check with the session leaders of “Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs” and “Lifesaving II” to be sure each of you uses different problems from the video.)

IV. THE COMMITMENT

Have the group discuss how a district commissioner staff could develop a strong no-lapse/no-drop commitment and some of the motivational ideas for such a plan.
UNIT FINANCE
(MCS 302)

I. REVIEWING OUR RESOURCES

A. The Scoutmaster Handbook (section on troop finance)

B. Cub Scout Leader Book (section on pack finance)

C. Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities and Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Low-Income Urban Communities (folders on unit funding)

II. WHO PAYS FOR SCOUTING?

A. The youth

B. The unit

C. Chartered organization

D. Local council

E. National Council

III. UNIT BUDGET PLAN

A. Purpose and objectives.

B. Review sample budget plans for a pack, a troop, and a crew.

C. Discuss the commissioner’s role in helping units establish a budget plan that meets Scouting’s purposes (teaches thrift).

D. Covers unit expenses, including Boys’ Life magazine.

E. Accident insurance.
IV. UNIT MONEY-EARNING PROJECTS

A. Review the application form:
   1. Why approval is necessary
   2. Ten guides to money-earning projects
   3. Wearing of uniform
   4. Commercialism

B. Solicit and list ideas for acceptable unit money-earning projects.

V. LOCAL COUNCIL FINANCES

A. Review the FOS fact sheet

B. Discuss the need for unit FOS

C. Discuss methods of communicating the FOS story to units

D. United Way/other support

VI. NATIONAL COUNCIL

A. Registration fees, other income sources

B. Supply Group profits

C. Local council benefits received from BSA

VII. HELPING UNITS WITH SPECIAL $ NEEDS

Distribute the rural and urban Best Methods folders and use them to help participants know how to help units fund

A. Uniforms

B. Summer camp

C. Equipment

D. Registration fees
Be sure each participant has the “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner” chapter of the latest Commissioner Fieldbook.

I. WHAT IS COMMISSIONER LIFESAVING?

A. No, you don’t carry a rope and life buoy. But, when there’s a “critical illness” in one of your units, you become a “Scouting paramedic.” You become a “lifesaving commissioner.” You may even help put together a “lifesaving team.”

B. The urgent cases you’re likely to face include loss of adult leadership, no unit program, or conflict between unit leaders and the chartered organization. Without “intensive care” from you or a team of lifesavers, such a unit could become terminal and stop serving kids.

C. Dead units, obviously, provide no help to youth. Perhaps your district volunteers have made a pact not to lose another unit. Perhaps you have made a commitment never to lose a unit. That will require prompt, intensive, and often persistent care when major problems occur.

II. WATCH THE VITAL SIGNS

A. Just as paramedics and other medical caregivers check vital signs, so does a good commissioner. He or she watches the vital signs of a unit. Any one or a group of bad signs should alert you to a life-threatening situation.

B. What are some of these life-threatening situations? (Hold a group brainstorming session. See the Commissioner Fieldbook.)

III. GO INTO ACTION FAST

(See the Commissioner Fieldbook section, “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner.”)

A. Don’t wait until next month’s commissioner staff meeting. Don’t wait until someone else suggests the perfect solution. Go into action now.

A commissioner might be tempted to give the most attention to the healthiest and most active units. Paramedics don’t do that. Neither do lifesaving commissioners. Establish that unit as a priority unit. Priority units receive your most careful attention.

B. Consult with your assistant district commissioner or district commissioner.
C. Ask six basic questions.

D. Be enthusiastic. Demonstrate that you care.

E. Apply “first aid.”

F. Apply “second aid.”

G. Generate a real atmosphere of teamwork.

H. Replacing a leader is a delicate matter.

IV. CONTINUE NORMAL CARE

A. Medical caregivers don’t stop routine care and preventive health practices when the patient lands in the hospital. It’s just that the emergency must come first.

B. Use a time of crisis as a time to resolve other much smaller problems. Sometimes, in time of crisis, you really have the attention of unit people. It may be a good time to help them see other ways they can improve their unit program and operation.

C. Use *Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews* to continue normal unit care.
V. TYPICAL HURRY CASES

A. Using the Commissioner Fieldbook section on lifesaving, Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews, and the Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners video, develop this course as a major problem-solving session. By the end of class time, participants should understand how to be a vital force in solving the following unit crises:

1. Unit not meeting (“stopped breathing”)
2. Unit with no leader (“no heartbeat”)
3. Unit with no committee (“choking”)
4. Unit with no new members (“severe bleeding”)
5. Unit conflict with the chartered organization (“poisoning by mouth”)
6. New unit leader lacks orientation or training (“blue baby”)
7. Unit with weak leadership (“comatose”)

B. Use the Unit Problem-Solving for Commissioners video, AV-04V002, with at least three of the above problems:

1. Show the appropriate video sequence to set up the problem.
2. Turn the video off and have the group members discuss their ideas for a solution.
3. Return to the video for additional video solutions to the group’s ideas.

(Check with the session leaders of “Practical Solutions to Common Unit Needs” and “No Lapse/No Drop Commitment” to be sure each of you is using different problems from the video.)
COUNSELING SKILLS  
(MCS 306)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The best way to strengthen a unit is to strengthen its leadership. Counseling is an effective method of helping unit leaders develop their potential. Even the leader who has completed formal training and has years of experience can benefit from counseling. Where the need for an answer or a solution is not immediate, counseling is preferred over teaching. As a commissioner, you should develop your counseling skills.

B. What is counseling?

1. Counseling is the ability to listen and react in a way that will help others solve their own problems and attain their potential.

2. Counseling is the art of helping others arrive at the right answer by their own analysis of the situation and the facts. When it is done skillfully they may not even know that they have been guided.

3. You should counsel whenever someone needs encouragement in a difficult task, or help in solving a problem, interpreting facts, or resolving indecision or confusion.

II. ELEMENTS OF GOOD COUNSELING

A. Carefully select a time and place where there will be few interruptions. Provide a relaxed atmosphere. The midst of a unit meeting is obviously not such a time.

B. Listen more than you speak. You may need to check out your understanding with the other person. (“Bill, are you saying that . . . ?” “Sue, is . . . how you really feel?”)

C. Try to understand what a leader tells you. Listen for hidden meanings and watch body language.

D. Let the leader know that you really hear what he or she is saying.

E. Do not give quick, easy advice. People need to be guided as they find ways to solve their own problems.

F. Summarize the problem and help them organize their thoughts.

G. Support their thinking with further information and data. You may suggest several possibilities, but let the leader select the one he or
she thinks might work. Provide facts. Know the difference between information and advice.

H. *Encourage* the leader to review verbally several possible solutions to the problem.

I. *Reflect feelings.* Restating feelings indicated by the leader helps to clarify his or her meanings and to show sympathy for his or her point of view.

J. *Use positive body language.* Leaning forward, good eye contact, and hand gestures indicate interest. (How would you feel if the listener’s eyes were closed?)

K. *Be aware of your biases.* Commissioners are likely to have conversations that test their own prejudices. Perhaps you don’t feel that women make good Scoutmasters. Be aware of a prejudice of this kind. Try to remain open in a conversation where prejudice might make you a poor counselor.

L. *Avoid making judgments.* A warm sympathetic listener creates a spirit of openness—especially for emotions. If the commissioner criticizes each statement and each feeling expressed, the leader will likely clam up.

M. *Avoid anger.* Some leaders can be very trying. They may accuse or criticize the commissioner, or use ethnic or sexual insults. Anger is the worst defense. Remain cool, professional.

III. MAKING SUGGESTIONS

A. Often it’s better to offer a suggestion in the form of a question. Sometimes they are more acceptable when they come as questions.

   Good questions relate directly to what the speaker is saying. (An abrupt diversion in the direction of conversation may be a turnoff to the other person.)
B. What are some questions that might help in the following situations?

1. A unit leader tells you he is not getting real help from his unit committee.

2. A Cubmaster says that none of the men in the pack will respect her leadership.

3. A pastor bemoans the fact that the church board doesn’t understand why the troop that meets in the church does the things it does.

4. A crew Advisor says that the crew officers don’t take any initiative in running the crew.

IV. ADDITIONAL COUNSELING TIPS

(Review as many of the additional suggestions from the “Counseling” chapter of the Commissioner Fieldbook as time permits.)

V. ROLE-PLAYING

The instructor may want to design several role-plays of counseling situations with third-party observer/evaluators.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. A vital commissioner task is to ensure that every Webelos Scout continues his Scouting experience as a Boy Scout.

B. Many Webelos Scouts go on to Boy Scouting with no help at all, but a lot of them need to know more about their opportunities for fun and adventure in the troop.

C. We also must let him know that he is wanted.

D. Distribute copies of Webelos-to-Scout Transition.

II. THE PACK/TROOP RELATIONSHIP

A. The key factor in the transition process is the establishment of a working relationship between a pack and a troop—especially between the pack’s Webelos den and the Boy Scout troop that most of the Webelos Scouts will join. The commissioner is often the connecting link between the pack and troop. Promote communication by planning a meeting of key leaders.

B. This relationship should be firmly in place by the start of the Webelos Scouts’ fifth-grade year. Every fifth-grade Webelos den should be linked to a troop, and every troop should be involved with one or more Webelos dens.

C. A Cub Scout becomes more confident and enthusiastic about his Scouting future as he becomes more familiar with the boys and adult leaders of the troop he will be joining.

D. Of course in many cases these relationships already exist and have been effective for many years. But some Webelos dens are not linked to troops and the commissioner’s help is crucial in establishing a good relationship. Similarly, troops with no “feeder” Webelos dens might need help.

III. JOINT ACTIVITIES

A. The troop may provide Webelos den chiefs for the pack, as well as assistance in planning and conducting outdoor activities.

B. The most important result of the den/troop relationship is the experience of joint activities.
The fifth-grade Webelos den and the troop should hold several activities together, including a joint campout. The den could also join the troop in a court of honor, campfire program, day hike, field trip or joint Good Turn for the chartered organization or community. Visiting a camporee or other district or council Boy Scout event as guests of the troop might also be included.

C. Through these joint activities, Webelos Scouts not only learn of the fun of Boy Scouting, they also get acquainted with the individual Scouts in the troop. When the time comes to move into Boy Scouting, it is no longer a leap into the unknown, but a step into an already familiar and friendly situation.

D. Commissioners are often facilitators between pack and troop for joint activities.

E. Work with packs and leaders to develop a crossover ceremony at the blue and gold banquet.

IV. EARLY SPRING GRADUATION

A. Summer camp is a vital part of the Boy Scout experience, particularly for the new Scout. The expanded Webelos Scout program gives us a great opportunity to guarantee that graduating Webelos Scouts participate in summer camp by getting them into the troop in time to prepare for Boy Scout camp.

B. Webelos Scouts may become Boy Scouts as soon as they have earned the Arrow of Light Award.

V. FROM DEN TO PATROL

Webelos Scouting and Boy Scouting have been designed to neatly dovetail together, and the Webelos den can move right into the troop as a new Scout patrol. When the whole den moves into Boy Scouting together, they continue to provide friendship and support to each other, which allows each boy to make a smooth transition with his friends into the troop.
VI. WEBELO TRACKING

A. Commissioners can have a system to identify and track each fifth-grade Webelos Scout to ensure that he has the opportunity to continue his Scouting experience as a Boy Scout. Follow-up should be planned to maintain contact with each boy until he is enrolled in a troop.

B. Be sure new Scouts have completed a Boy Scout application, that they have a copy of the troop’s activities, and that they know when and where the troop meets.

C. Work with the pack and troop in their charter renewal process to help ensure Webelos Scouts are moved from pack rosters to troop rosters.

VII. WEBELOS DEN CHIEF

A. The Webelos den chief is a registered Boy Scout, active in the troop and selected by the Scoutmaster to serve as a program assistant to the Webelos den leader. He should be skilled in conducting ceremonies, leading songs and games, teaching skills, giving demonstrations, and helping to prepare the Webelos Scouts for the troop experience ahead.

B. By his example, he may be the single most important person in influencing Webelos Scouts to join the troop.

VIII. SUMMARY

The unit commissioner provides continuing program support to the pack and the troop and helps establish working relationships between the troop and the fifth-grade Webelos dens of the pack. He or she also encourages and supports joint activities as well as graduation and promotes participation in district and council transition activities such as Webelos Woods.
VENTURING AND THE COMMISSIONER
(MCS 308)

I. THE COMMISSIONER’S COMMITMENT TO VENTURING

A. Venturing is one of the basic programs of the Boy Scouts of America. Because as a commissioner you are a key advocate of unit program, your commitment to Venturing is essential. Your commitment to good unit service for Venturing crews is vital.

B. High school–age young adults are at a crossroads in life. They are confronted by an increasing number of challenges. Your council places the Venturing program at that crossroads to help youth find direction for their lives. Venturing helps young adults

1. Overcome nagging self-doubts.
2. Lose feelings of extreme isolation.
3. Reach for independence.
4. Resolve questions of moral values.

C. The overwhelming positive response to Venturing and Exploring by young people between the ages of 14 and 20 is evidence that these programs are effectively meeting the developmental needs of this age group.

Venturing is a program that works. It provides ideals to last a lifetime, sets a solid course for the future, and lets young adults plan their own activities for positive recognition today.

II. COMMISSIONERS SUPPORT VENTURING CREW PROGRAM

Here are just a few of the things that unit commissioners can do to help crews succeed:

A. Be sure that elected youth officers, not adults, plan and run activities and meetings. The program must give Venturers adult-like experiences in adult-like roles.

B. Help the crew establish a balanced program that includes something during the year from each of the six experience areas, not just activity that is related to their crew specialty. Help crew leaders and officers brainstorm ideas for community service projects, outdoor activities, fitness projects, and crew social activities.

C. Facilitate communication. Give crew leaders information on the latest program resources, scholarships, training courses, and council- and national-level activities.
D. Help youth officers and adult Advisors participate in the council’s activities and meetings for crew leaders.

E. Take the Venturing Leader Specific Training course with one of your Advisors.

F. Be sure that youth officers receive the crew officer briefing.

G. Read the Venturing Leader Manual.

III. BE SURE CREWS RENEW THEIR CHARTERS ON TIME

A. Guide the crew leaders through the charter renewal process.

B. Help with the membership and leadership inventories.

C. Help the crew committee chair conduct the charter renewal meeting.

D. Present the new crew charter to the chartered organization.

IV. COMMISSIONER HELPS

A. Use Commissioner Helps for Packs, Troops, and Crews, No. 33618, which provides crew program standards along with specific actions for commissioners and service team members to take in helping the crew.

Walk participants through this book and point out the specific references to the Venturing program and commissioner actions.

B. Review the Unit Commissioner Worksheet (crew), No. 33660B, found in the back of the book. Discuss its use (after you leave the unit visited). Review each item.

V. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VENTURING
GOOD COMMISSIONERS NEED BOTH HEAD AND HEART
(MCS 309)

The objective of this session is to help commissioners with at least a year or two of experience reflect back on some of the important qualities of good commissioner service (the “head”). The session also provides a variety of inspirational anecdotes for them to share with unit adults as well as other commissioners (the “heart”).

(Be sure to prepare a variety of short handouts for participants to take home.)

I. SERVICE—A HALLMARK FOR COMMISSIONERS

A. Derived from the Goldsmith’s Hall in old London, a hallmark is an official mark stamped on gold and silver articles in England to attest to their purity. Service is truly the hallmark of commissioners which attests to the purity of Scouting.

Let’s look at some important ideas about service as it relates to commissioners.

B. Presentation steps:

1. Copy and then cut apart each of the 12 service ideas below, and place them in an interesting container.
2. Have 12 participants each draw one of the service ideas.
3. Each participant in turn reads aloud their idea.
4. Invite group discussion after each item to elaborate its meaning.
5. The instructor may also add comments highlighting the importance of each item.
6. At the end, hand out a list of the 12 items.

C. Service ideas:

1. Unit service must be unit oriented—oriented to the needs and goals of unit adults. Because units are so different, commissioner service must be flexible in adapting to unit needs.

   Try to view life from the unit leader’s point of view. That’s called empathy. A commissioner with a unit-oriented attitude will not be overly district or council centered. Try to fit the service of the district to the unit, not forcing the unit to always fit the mold of the district. It’s a mistake to use a single strategy for multiple markets. Turn the organization chart upside down to put the unit on top.

2. Be a good listener. Listen intently. When we listen to unit people, we pay attention to what they are saying, but we are also alert
to the feelings behind the words. Developing a good service attitude begins with listening.

3. The attitude of the commissioner dictates the quality and effectiveness of unit service as perceived by unit adults. Unit leaders want a commissioner who seems to be interested in their problems; that’s as important as resolving the problems. What works well is what is perceived to work well.

4. Caring is a habit. The more we view Scout units with a caring attitude, the more good service attitudes and behavior become a part of us.

5. Good unit service really means exceeding unit leaders’ expectations. Average commissioners will usually do those things most unit folk may expect. Excellent commissioners go beyond unit expectations.

6. Good commissioners take ownership of service responsibility. They are committed to service and they work to make units succeed.

7. In recent years, we’ve heard a lot about the contrast between “high-tech” and “high-touch.” There is a place in Scouting for high-tech, such as cell phones, GPIs, fax, computers, video, and the Internet. But unit service is an interpersonal event, and many people today strive for the high-touch contrast to technology. Scouting is a very person-oriented service, and commissioners need good interpersonal skills.

8. Commissioners must be available to unit people. Good service requires frequent contact and opportunity for communication.

9. Service providers know and use their resources. For commissioners, that includes members of the district committee, the district executive, Scouting literature, and commissioner initiative in locating other resources in the community.

10. Good commissioners are problem solvers. They have the can-do attitude.

11. Good service providers appreciate good humor and enjoy the process of service.

12. Alert unit commissioners provide feedback to the council on its service to units. They often know what council improvements would better help more units to succeed.

In the years ahead, council success will increasingly depend on the responsiveness of commissioners to unit needs. Service is truly the hallmark of commissioners and the assurance of Scouting’s future.
II. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF UNIT SERVICE

1. A unit leader is the most important person in Scouting.

2. Unit leaders are not dependent on us; we are dependent on them.

3. Units are not interruptions of our work; they are the purpose of it.

4. Unit adults do us a favor when they call.

5. A unit Scouter is central to our team—not an outsider.

6. Unit leaders are not cold statistics; they are human beings with feelings and emotions like our own.

7. A unit leader is not someone to argue or match wits with.

8. Unit adults bring us their needs; it is our job to help meet those needs.

9. Unit folk are deserving of the most courteous treatment we can give them.

10. A unit is the lifeblood of this and every other council.

(Present the above on a flip chart, overhead projector, or PowerPoint. Invite discussion. Distribute as a handout.)
III. A PARABLE

This parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule.

The mule fell into the farmer’s well. The farmer heard the mule “praying” or whatever mules do when they fall into wells.

After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving.

Instead, he called his neighbors together, told them what had happened, and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, HE COULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP! This he did, blow after blow. “Shake it off and step up . . . shake it off and step up . . . shake it off and step up!” he repeated to encourage himself.

No matter how painful the blows or how distressing the situation seemed, the old mule fought panic and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!

It wasn’t long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, STEPPED TRIUMPHANTLY OVER THE WALL OF THAT WELL! What seemingly would bury him actually helped him . . . all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

THAT’S LIFE! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, THE PROBLEMS THAT COME ALONG TO BURY US USUALLY HAVE WITHIN THEM THE VERY POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT US . . . AND BENEFIT SCOUTING, TOO!

(Distribute the above. Have participants read. Invite three persons to each share a one-minute implication for commissioners.)
IV. EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW I LEARNED FROM NOAH

A. Don’t miss the boat.

B. Don’t forget that we’re all in the same boat.

C. Plan ahead. It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.

D. Stay fit. When you’re 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something really big.

E. Don’t listen to critics; just get on with what has to be done.

F. Build your future on high ground.

G. Two heads are better than one.

H. Speed isn’t always an advantage; the snails were on board with the cheetahs.

I. When you’re stressed, float awhile.

J. Remember that woodpeckers inside are a larger threat than the storm outside.

(Distribute the above.)
V. ANECDOTES

(Distribute the following. Then elicit from the group how a commissioner might use one or more of these with unit adults, unit committee meetings, unit banquets, roundtables, etc.)

Prepare handouts of the following words of wisdom:

- “The only things we keep permanently are those things we give away.”
  — Waite Phillips
  Philmont Scout Ranch donor

- We cannot direct the wind, BUT we can adjust the sails.

- Life is 10 percent what happens to you and 90 percent how you respond to it.

- Lead your life so you won’t be afraid to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.

- To the Scouting world you might be one person, but to one unit leader, you might be the Scouting world.

- The bridge you burn now may be the one you later need to cross.

- Learn from the mistakes of others. You can’t live long enough to make them all yourself.

- A Lesson From Geese

As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird following. By flying in a “V” formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if one bird flew alone.

A group of Scouters who share a common direction and sense of community can provide better service because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

- Laughter is the shortest distance between two people.

- There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child; there are 7 million.

- The mark of an effective Scouter is to see something in a mud puddle besides mud.
• No man stands so tall as when he stoops to help a boy.

• Character is what you do when no one is looking.

• Praise does wonders for a boy’s sense of hearing.

• More Wisdom From Geese
  Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation with those who are headed where we want to go (and be willing to accept their help as well as give ours to the others).

• A bend in the road is not the end of the road—unless you fail to make the turn!

• If you always learn from your mistakes, then your mistakes will seem worthwhile.

• Remember this: When a person goes into a hardware store looking for a drill or a drill bit, what he or she really wants is a hole. As a commissioner, ask yourself, “What kind of holes do my unit leaders want?” Then make sure you are providing them with the holes they need.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. The assistant district commissioner is the shining star of Scouting. The ADC carries a vision of effective Scouting and must communicate that vision through unit commissioners to every unit leader in the district.

B. ADCs make or break a district’s ability to ensure that every unit receives competent commissioner service. Even the best district commissioner in the council can’t personally train and guide all of the unit commissioners in the district (in a 60-unit district that’s at least 20 people). So, ADCs are responsible for an assigned share of units in the district and they supervise the commissioners who serve those units.

II. ADC RESPONSIBILITIES

A. A district may have one or more assistant district commissioners. Each is responsible for an assigned share of the units in the district and the unit commissioners who serve those units.

A good commissioner staff has one ADC for every 15 units. That’s one ADC for every five unit commissioners needed.

B. Assistant district commissioners are often assigned a geographic area of the district. They work closely with the district commissioner and district executive.

C. Major responsibilities include

1. Recruiting enough unit commissioners to serve their assigned units and area
2. Conducting personal coaching and orientation sessions for unit commissioners
3. Maintaining regular contact with their unit commissioners to provide guidance in unit service needs
4. Serving units with no assigned unit commissioner
5. Helping unit commissioners evaluate and improve their unit service performance

III. GOOD ADCs HAVE GOOD PEOPLE SKILLS

A. They help recruit the right people.

B. They provide clear instructions and specific ideas for their staff.
C. They listen to what people say and what people feel.

D. They never play favorites.

E. They coach unit commissioners through real unit problem-solving situations.

F. They treat all Scouters with courtesy and dignity.

G. They praise each commissioner often for specific achievements.

H. They don’t try to take over for their staff but are always ready to support or assist them to be successful.

IV. ADC WORK SESSIONS

A. Service to individual units is best planned and evaluated as an assistant district commissioner meets with his or her assigned unit commissioners, usually as a part of the monthly meeting of the district’s commissioner staff.

Be sure to allow time in these breakout sessions of ADCs and their respective teams of unit commissioners to review the health of each unit by:

- Sharing important observations from recent visits with units.
- Giving priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit.
- Identifying specific ways to help each unit improve its program.
- Determining who will provide specific help during the coming month. Usually this is the assigned unit commissioner, but more challenging situations may require assistance from the ADC, a district committee member, or even the district commissioner.
- Checking the progress on last month’s assignments.

B. Much of the ADC’s effectiveness is also through personal coaching of individual unit commissioners.

V. EVALUATION

A. How is commissioner work measured? ADCs measure both their own and their unit commissioners’ effectiveness by asking these questions:
  1. Do my units have effective unit leaders?
2. Do my units have boys enthusiastically involved in a good unit program?
3. Do my units have active unit committees?
4. Do my chartered organizations feel a sense of ownership for their units, and do unit volunteers have good relationships with their chartered organizations?
5. Do all units reregister on time?
6. Do units show membership increases?
7. Are my unit leaders happy to see me visit, or are they counting the minutes until I leave?
8. Are my units reasonably active in district events?
9. Have my units met the Quality Unit criteria?

B. Commissioner Self-Evaluation Sheets are a great yardstick for ADCs to help unit commissioners evaluate their effectiveness. Review this form from the back of the Commissioner Fieldbook with participants.

VI. THE COMMISSIONER’S COMMISSION

ADCs should see that all new unit commissioners are promptly oriented and attend commissioner basic training so that they can receive their commission.

A. Use the 10 orientation projects on page 8 of the Commissioner Fieldbook.

B. Commissioner basic training should be scheduled somewhere in the council at least every other month.

C. Use the commissioning ceremony found in appendix H of the Commissioner Fieldbook.

VII. ADC OPEN FORUM

At the beginning of the session, have participants place questions and concerns about ADC work on 3-by-5-inch cards. Use the remaining session time to share and find answers to these questions.
RECRUITING NEW COMMISSIONERS
(MCS 402)

I. FIELDING A COMPLETE TEAM

A. Quality program flourishes and membership grows in a Scouting district only when there is a complete team of quality commissioners. This avoids overloading the same few volunteers who rarely say no, but who may find it easier to drop out of Scouting than to complain, “That’s enough! I can’t do any more!”

B. Know the standard. Provide a ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units. A good staff also has one assistant district commissioner for every five unit commissioners, plus adequate roundtable commissioners and staff.

C. In order for a district commissioner or ADC to earn the Commissioner’s Key, he or she must develop and put into action a suitable recruiting plan.

II. RECRUITING COMMISSIONERS—STEP BY STEP

A. Distribute copies of the chapter on recruiting in Commissioner Administration of Unit Service.

B. Develop a flip chart or other device to walk the group through all eight steps. Encourage discussion on each step.

C. Why people volunteer—a great discussion question. (See pages 6–7 of Selecting District People, No. 34512.)

III. GROUP RECRUITING

A. Group recruiting is a special and exciting approach for a district. It involves bringing three or more people together to hear about Scouting and then asking them to serve in some capacity. Key administrative commissioners and the district executive meet to plan and accept assignments for the group recruiting event.

B. Group recruiting has several advantages.

C. There are two types of group recruiting:

1. Leadership conference. This is best used when there are only a few existing commissioners. Decide on the date, time, place, and nature of the event. Develop a list of many prospects at an informal gathering of community leaders. Select a host who can attract the prospects. The host invites prospects to his or her club, office,
living room, barbecue, or other attractive or prestigious location. A luncheon is an appropriate setting. The program inspires, tells the Scouting story, presents the need, and asks for a commitment.

2. Group recruiting in a single company or organization. The company president or other organization leader is asked to list and bring together selected employees, often working through company department heads or the personnel director. The meeting, usually held on company time, informs, inspires, asks, and gets commitments. District leaders match people to jobs and follow up immediately. A company may be asked to “adopt” and fill the entire staff.

IV. HIGHLIGHTS OF RECRUITING DISTRICT VOLUNTEERS

Show the video *Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: Part 2—Recruiting District Volunteers, AV-06V002A.*

V. WHERE DO YOU FIND THEM?

A. Wonderful people are available for commissioner service. Begin a project inventory of index cards listing potential commissioners. Jot down information such as occupation, hobbies, children, volunteer experience, membership in organizations, interests, and the right person to help recruit them. Don’t discount anyone.

B. Consider such sources as

1. Your friends, associates, and business contacts.
2. Chamber of commerce listings of organizations, major employers, boards of directors, and labor unions.
3. Service club membership rosters.
4. Educators; real estate brokers; shopkeepers; government employees; and other business, professional, and service people. Consider people whose activities cause them to travel through your district as well as those who are permanently located in the district.
6. Check boy applications for parents with previous Scouting experience.
7. Former successful Scouters.
8. Check FOS donor lists for people with special people skills.
9. Neighborhood association leaders and other local opinion setters.
10. Review past unit and district rosters with your district executive for names of former Scouts who are not now involved.
11. Ask current Scouters, but don’t “steal” unit leaders; theirs is the most important job in Scouting.
12. Concentrate on people who are no longer eligible for Jaycee membership because of the age limit of 35.

13. Check with local presidents, managers, personnel directors, and owners for employees whose qualities match those you are looking for.

14. List other sources of commissioner prospects in your community.

VI. RECRUITING TOOL

A. Use *Highlights for Unit Commissioners . . . an Overview*, No. 34721B, to help recruit and orient new commissioners. It can be read in less than nine minutes, and helps you make the sale. It provides Fast Start information in this era of time-conscious, task-oriented volunteers.

VII. RECRUITING YOUNGER COMMISSIONERS

A. Do not rely on veteran Scouters. Go to sources of younger adults, i.e., Jaycees, new NESA members, younger professional people in the community, etc.

B. Younger prospects may be especially time-conscious.
   1. Be very specific and focused about what you ask them to do.
   2. Do not let their Scouting time get diffused in doing anything else in Scouting but unit service.

VIII. AND REMEMBER

*Recruiting unit commissioners is a journey, not a final destination.*
I. INTRODUCTION

A. One dramatic development in American society is the interest in learning as a lifetime activity. Education has become as important an activity for adults as it always has been for children.

B. Commissioners must also view learning as an important part of their Scouting lives. Plan to participate in the following commissioner training opportunities within the period allotted from the time you agreed to serve:

1. Orientation video within 48 hours
2. Personal coaching/orientation within two weeks
3. Commissioner basic training within two months
4. Arrowhead Honor within one year
5. Commissioner’s Key after three years
6. Continuing education every month/year

II. THREE APPROACHES TO TRAINING COMMISSIONERS

A. **Group training.** This is the most common and most effective approach. It provides fun and fellowship and builds Scouting spirit. These ingredients are as essential in Scouting training as is the knowledge imparted. Group training builds a team spirit in a group of commissioners dedicated to quality Scouting.

B. **Personal coaching.** Personal coaching may be used in a one-on-one situation or with an instructor and a small group of trainees. It is normally used to provide immediate training for new commissioners, as they will not be effective without training. This training method is sufficient to get them started, but they must attend a basic training course when it is available.

C. **Self-study.** The least desirable method, self-study should be used only when group training is not available and personal coaching is not possible. Self-study consists of reading assignments, etc., but must include contact with an instructor or counselor even if only by telephone.
III. ORIENTATION

A. Be sure the new commissioner views the orientation video *The Unit Commissioner’s Orientation: Helping Units Succeed, AV-04V001R*, within 48 hours of being recruited.

B. Coaching/orientation sessions for unit commissioners are usually conducted by district commissioners or assistant district commissioners, sometimes by the district executive. Coaching sessions help develop good commissioner communication that extends far beyond training.

Personal coaching is also on-the-job training. Coaching sessions are short and related to the trainee’s experiences on the job. Coaching breaks the total job of commissioners into bite-sized pieces for better digestion. Use pages 4–9 of the *Commissioner Fieldbook* as part of your first orientation session with new commissioners. Review other sections of the fieldbook in subsequent sessions.

C. Review the 10 orientation projects on page 8 of the *Commissioner Fieldbook*.

IV. BASIC TRAINING

A. The new commissioner should participate in the three-session commissioner basic training within two months of being recruited. The training involves actual visits to Scouting units and includes these sessions: “Units: The Commissioner’s Greatest Priority,” “How to Help a Unit,” and “Why Commissioners?”

B. After completion of commissioner basic training, the Trained Leader emblem may be worn below the badge of office.

C. Briefly review the latest edition of the *Commissioner Basic Training Manual, No. 33613F*.

D. Discuss and compare the two ways to do basic training:
   1. Three separate days with intervening supervised unit visits
   2. One-day course with unit visits just before and just after the course
V. ARROWHEAD HONOR

A. Only commissioners may wear the Arrowhead. It is a visible sign of competence. Arrowhead Honor projects are measurements of performance. Successful completion is the result of good training. The Arrowhead Honor signifies a high level of performance and the ability to put training into practice.

B. Review the latest Arrowhead Honor requirements and projects.

C. Should be completed within a year of being recruited.

D. Roundtable staff members earn the Scouter’s Training Award.

VI. COMMISSIONER’S KEY

A. Requires three years’ tenure.

B. Review requirements.

VII. CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR COMMISSIONERS

A. Should occur every month at district commissioner staff meetings. Review the list of training topics in the appendix of Commissioner Administration of Unit Service.

The district commissioner and district executive select a topic each month that best matches the current skill needs of their commissioners. Parts of the training outlines in Continuing Education for Commissioners, No. 33615, provide ready-to-go training topics for the district commissioner staff meetings.

B. Should occur every year at the annual council commissioner conference. Review the list of suggested session topics.

VIII. SESSION/CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES

Review the list of classroom ideas found in section 3 of Continuing Education for Commissioners.
ADVANCED ROUNDTABLE LEADERSHIP
(MCS 404)

Give everyone a copy of *Highlights of District Volunteer Recruiting: An Overview.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The roundtable commissioner’s job is to recruit, train, and motivate a staff.

II. RECRUITING A FULL STAFF

A. Steps in successful recruiting. Use *Highlights of District Volunteer Recruiting: An Overview* to cover the eight steps.

B. View the video *Highlights of District Operations for the 21st Century: Part 2—Recruiting District Volunteers*, AV-06V002A. Discuss the video to reinforce the steps.

C. Sources of prospects/where to look:
   1. Current Scouters
   2. Former Scouters
   3. Former Scouts
   4. Scouters who attend roundtables regularly
   5. Order of the Arrow members
   6. Pow wow leaders
   7. Day camp staff
   8. Recommendations of current staff
   9. Recommendations of district executives
   10. Recommendations of district commissioner
   11. Merit badge counselors
   12. Former Wood Badge staff members

III. ROUNDTABLE EVALUATION

A. Evaluation is the first step to the next roundtable.
   1. We must know what we did right and wrong.
   2. Do the right things again.
   3. Improve and change the wrongs.
B. Evaluations can be done by staff members and participants.
   1. Most of the time staff members do the evaluation.
   2. Let the participants evaluate sometimes.

C. The best time to evaluate is immediately following the roundtable.
   1. This is when your knowledge is the sharpest.
   2. The 15 minutes immediately afterward will tell you more about it
      than a two-hour session a week later.

D. Things to consider:
   1. You asked the questions because you really wanted to know.
   2. Don’t rationalize the answers.
   3. Use answers to make changes.
   4. Listen to what they say and give them what they want.
   5. How was the roundtable content (program features, games, proj-
      ects, agenda order, etc.)? Was it complete, yet brief?
   6. How well did roundtable program items get carried out (clarity,
      enthusiasm, sense of purpose, usefulness).
   7. How were the people relationships? (This is more important than
      the content.)
      a. Staff members with participants
      b. Participants with participants
      c. Staff members with staff members
      d. New people with old-timers
      e. Other relationships
   8. What percent of the agenda thoroughly involved participants?
   9. Was part of the program inspirational?
   10. Did everyone have fun?
   11. Cover any other evaluation items you think are important.
IV. ROUNDTABLE FINANCE

A. A large budget is not necessary.

B. Possible expenses:
   1. Name tags
   2. Handouts
   3. Recognitions
   4. Refreshments
   5. Project/activity material

C. Donated materials.

D. Free meeting place.

E. Consider a refreshment “kitty.”

F. Council budget.

G. Districts do not have accounts.

V. ROUNDTABLE FINE POINTS

A. Staff members must prepare for all situations:
   1. Always have a backup to units.
   2. Have more than enough material to handle any situation.
   3. Be flexible enough to make changes.
   4. Attendance is unpredictable.

B. Don’t forget to start and end on time.

C. Once the roundtable is planned everyone must have an agenda.
   1. This will ensure that they all know their responsibility.
   2. It will allow better transition and flow during presentation.

D. Provide the district executive with a copy of the plan.
   1. If they know what you’re doing, they will be able to give you support.
   2. They will be aware of any time problems you’re going to have.
   3. They will be able to inform you of any announcements you might be missing.
   4. They will be able to inform you of any special recognitions needed.
E. Support the staff.
   1. A supportive climate motivates people to do their best.
   2. Give your staff a call to see if you can be of assistance to them.
   3. Show confidence in individual staff members and in the staff as a whole.
   4. Let them know that you know they will do their best.
   5. Make assignments to fit their capabilities.
   6. They must realize how much the participants depend on them.
   7. Don’t forget the two most important words: thank you.
   8. Don’t forget the five most important words: you did a good job.
   9. Open communication is important.
  10. Know their likes and dislikes.
  11. They must be able to say “I like that” or “I don’t like that.”
  12. They must know what is expected of them.
  13. Set the example.

VI. CASE STUDIES

A. Split the group into small teams, each with a different problem to solve.

B. Regroup the entire class to report, exchange ideas, and draw upon the total group’s experience.

C. Suggested case studies:
   1. A Scouter volunteered to bake a decorative cake for a special-event roundtable. The following week, this Scouter presents you with a $30 bill for the cake. Who pays the bill?
   2. You just received a call from one of your roundtable staff members who told you that the building you normally use will be undergoing renovation for the next three months and cannot be used. Your next roundtable is two weeks away. What now?
   3. A guest speaker just used 20 minutes beyond his scheduled 10 minutes on the roundtable plan. It is now only 20 minutes before the scheduled closing ceremony. Yet, you still have 40 to 50 minutes of material to present. You need a plan—quick!
   4. You and your roundtable staff have been preparing a 30- to 35-page roundtable guide to hand out each month. A local business has been printing 60 to 70 copies a month, free. Now, however, they will need to charge for the service. What are your options?
   5. Create your own.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. Definition: This session refers to those urban communities where poverty is a prevailing influence and where community considerations require refinement and flexibility for volunteer-led packs, troops, crews, and posts to be successful.

B. Service to low-income communities is a part of our Scouting roots. Baden-Powell said, “Our aim is to give equal chances to all and to give the most help to the least fortunate.”

C. Distribute Best Methods kits.

II. “BOTTOM LINE” SUCCESS STORIES

A. Have each person pull the “Bottom Line” folder out of the Best Methods kit.

B. Review the success stories.
   1. Have each participant read one of the stories aloud or
   2. Divide into three teams. Assign each team one page and have them select one story to share with the overall group.

C. Present a list of benefits of volunteer-led Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Venturing crews, and Explorer posts for the low-income urban community.
   1. The program provides young people a much-needed constructive relationship with an additional caring adult in the child’s local neighborhood. It provides an important contact with concerned adults outside the school.
   2. One of the greatest contributions of Scouting in low-income urban communities is the involvement of neighborhood adults in working with their own children. We strengthen local low-income urban adults’ abilities to care for their children.
3. Scouting gives low-income urban people the opportunity and the help to come together to run their own lives. As an urban single adult in Rochester, New York, once said, “Scouting is an excellent vehicle for uniting inner-city neighborhoods—areas that are often divided by economic and social pressures.”

4. The program gives adults a sense of self-worth and helps kids to develop self-esteem. Community volunteers help convince kids that they are worthwhile people.

5. Packs, troops, crews, and posts develop habits of good citizenship linked to the child’s real environment.

6. The uniform, the name, the image, and the program of traditional Scouting places a low-income child on an equal status with youth everywhere.

7. Scouting expands the urban child’s horizons beyond that of the home and school classroom.

D. While many things contribute to Scouting in low-income urban communities, two things are absolutely essential:

1. A belief in the ability of low-income adults to contribute in important ways to Scouting for their children

2. A willingness to make an effort to use appropriate practices to involve low-income adults in Scouting

III. RECRUITING UNIT ADULTS

Use the “Recruiting Adults” folder from the Best Methods kit to help participants learn how to involve low-income urban adults in unit leadership.

Show the video Recruiting Urban Unit Leaders, AV-07V012.

IV. OVERCOMING UNIT $ NEEDS

Use the “Unit Funding” folder from the Best Methods kit to teach the participants ways to help units fund uniforms, equipment, summer camp, etc.

V. PEOPLE CONSIDERATIONS IN COMMISSIONER SERVICE WITH LOW-INCOME URBAN UNITS

Use the “Unit Service” folder from the Best Methods kit. Develop an effective classroom technique or visual method for sharing the 20 statements.
EFFEECTIVE UNIT SERVICE IN REMOTE RURAL AREAS
(MCS 406)

Obtain copies of Best Methods for District Volunteers Serving Rural Communities, No. 7-504, one for each participant.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Definition: Today there is a great variety of rural communities. Some are stable, high-growth areas, or otherwise responsive to conventional Scouting methods. The rural areas that pose the greatest challenge to normal Scouting operation are those characterized by poverty or isolation from urban areas. These areas are the special focus of this session.

B. Tailoring Scouting to rural areas is a part of our Scouting heritage. Baden-Powell taught that “what suits one particular troop or one kind of boy, in one kind of place, will not suit another within a mile of it, much less those scattered over the world and existing under totally different conditions.”

C. Distribute Best Methods kits.

II. "BOTTOM LINE" SUCCESS STORIES

A. Have each person pull the “Bottom Line” folder out of the Best Methods kit.

B. Review the success stories.
   1. Have each participant read one of the stories aloud
   or
   2. Divide into three teams, assign each team one page, and have them select one story to share with the overall group.

III. RECRUITING UNIT ADULTS

Use the “Recruiting Adults” folder from the Best Methods kit to help participants learn how to involve rural adults in unit leadership.
IV. SHOW THE AUDIOVISUAL

*Scouting in Rural America.* Discuss how commissioners might use this slide/cassette show.

V. PEOPLE CONSIDERATIONS IN COMMISSIONER SERVICE WITH RURAL UNITS

Use the “Unit Service” folder from the *Best Methods* kit. Develop an effective classroom technique or visual method for sharing the 20 statements.

VI. RURAL OPTIONS

Present a variety of refinements for adapting Scouting to sparsely populated rural areas.

A. Den aides instead of den chiefs

B. Lone Cub Scouts/Lone Boy Scouts

C. Wagon-wheel troops—weekly patrol meetings and monthly troop meetings (extended Saturday or Sunday meeting which includes an outdoor activity, community Good Turn, or family activity)

D. Schoolbus dens/schoolbus patrols

E. Unit “mailboxes” at roundtables (folders or envelopes for each unit in milk crates)

F. “Circuit riders”—using people who travel throughout a remote rural area on a regular basis, usually because of their job, to perform selected unit service tasks
Be sure each participant has the chapter on “How to Remove a Volunteer” from the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook*.

Present the following material with the help of a prepared flip chart or overhead slides. Allow plenty of time for discussion after each section.

I. OVERVIEW

As a commissioner, you should be prepared to help guide volunteers with how to remove a volunteer.

*Note:* This session does not address removing a person for cause or grounds for legal action such as theft, misrepresentation, or committing an immoral act. (That information exists elsewhere.) This session will focus on the ineffective volunteer, the person who just isn’t working out.

First, here are some types of poor performance:

1. **Bad chemistry.** This refers to the person who just can’t get along with others and may even greatly offend some, driving good people out of Scouting.

2. **Bad politics.** This volunteer is a poor team player who is not in keeping with the organization’s image. This person prevents others from being effective and may also drive them out of Scouting. This volunteer may hate his or her Scouting responsibility and lets others know it.

3. **Bad job.** This volunteer may be a nice person but simply doesn’t perform assigned tasks and can’t seem to meet the objectives of his or her Scouting responsibilities.

II. WHAT TO DO

Guide volunteers with these ideas first. Sometimes easy solutions work.

- Some people simply don’t know what to do, so train them. Sit down for a friendly and helpful coaching session.

- Find something else for them to do in Scouting. Most people have things they can do well. Discover their hidden talents. Gracefully change their assignment to build on their strengths.
• Some people try to do too much in Scouting. That’s often our fault. We have asked them to do more than is reasonable, so reduce their workload.

• Get your facts straight; don’t act on hearsay.

• Sit down in a relaxed setting to talk about what’s going on. Often the person is the first to know things aren’t working out but might be reluctant to ask for help.

III. IF ALL ELSE FAILS

There will be times when a volunteer has gone beyond the point where the coaching, training, or change of assignment will help. Quick action might need to be taken for the good of Scouting. Don’t let a bad problem fester. Now what?

First, you don’t really “fire” a volunteer, you replace one. “Hire” and “fire” are words for the workplace, not volunteer organizations. Replacing a volunteer sounds more positive.

IV. WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY?

Who has the authority to remove a volunteer? A good rule of thumb is this: The person or group with the authority to appoint a volunteer has the authority to remove and replace that volunteer. For example, a district commissioner appoints an assistant district commissioner (ADC); the district commissioner may clearly find a replacement for the ADC.

In the case of unit Scouters, commissioners must remember that it is the chartered organization that has made the appointment. The commissioner role is to help the head of the chartered organization or other key unit Scouter make the change.

In the case of an elected officer, the local council may decide to go through the nominating committee process.

V. NOW ACT

Write or make a visit. Here are some ideas you can suggest to key people in your chartered organization or district.

• If writing, use some variation of the following:

  Dear ______,

  On behalf of the ________ Council (or the chartered organization), I extend our thanks for your role in ________ (unit or district). Your time, efforts, and involvement are appreciated. Your replacement has been nominated and confirmed by ________. This is effective ______ (date).
Your support in this transition would be appreciated as the ________ (organization/unit/committee/etc.) endeavors to carry out the policies and procedures of the BSA.

• If you visit (in most cases, this is best), don’t go alone. Having a second person along might keep things under control and running smoothly. Here are a few additional tips:

  — Make an appointment. Say that you want to talk about his or her future as a _____ in Scouting, and mention the volunteer who is coming with you. Refuse to say more. He or she should get the message.

  — Be businesslike, brief, and pleasant. Tell the person that you have made a mistake. He or she apparently isn’t able to carry out the assignment. You had assumed otherwise, and that was your mistake. Commend the person’s other contributions in or out of Scouting, but indicate that you must now take action to replace the volunteer in this assignment. Be factual. Be prepared to listen. Don’t argue.

  — Honor the person’s dignity and avoid gossip. Don’t verbally attack the volunteer. Protect his or her self-esteem. Share the responsibility and say, “We’ve both made some mistakes.” Don’t dump all of the blame on the other person. Don’t say something you might be sorry for later. Just explain, wait, listen, repeat yourself if necessary, and leave.

  — Be prepared for four possible reactions. The volunteer might:
    1. Be smooth and controlled
    2. Be shocked and emotional
    3. Become angry
    4. Be relieved and ready to discuss practical solutions for the future

  — Before pulling the plug, make sure members of the next higher authority to you are behind you. Then you can tell the person that the decision is nonnegotiable.
Some of this may seem a bit strong. There is no joy in this task for anyone. Removing a volunteer is one of a leader’s most difficult tasks. It requires discipline, good judgment, and sensitivity. Always keep two things in mind: (1) Do what’s best for youth, and (2) the BSA has a right to choose its leaders.

VI. LEARN FOR THE FUTURE

Try to do the following:

• Get a clear understanding of the assignment before recruiting.
• Select the right person.
• Try new people out a bit at a time.
• Train and coach.
• Have an understanding of what constitutes a job well done.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. Today everyone has their top 10 list, including commissioners. This session is designed to help experienced commissioners review their priorities and—for some of us—to get back to the basics.

B. This session summarizes key factors in good commissioner service. Most of the key points are covered in depth in other sessions.

II. THE LIST

(This session can be graphically enhanced with a banner, flip-chart page, or electronic portrayal of each of the 10 points.)

(Identify the chapter and page reference for in-depth information on each point.)

NO. 10—THE ONLY REASON FOR HAVING COMMISSIONERS IS TO HELP UNITS SUCCEED.

A. (Have participants rapidly brainstorm as many specific ways in which a commissioner might help a unit as can be placed on a flip chart in five minutes. You may need to alternate with two recorders, each with a flip chart. If the group is large, hold a contest with two or three smaller groups.)


NO. 9—KNOW THE STANDARD: PROVIDE A RATIO OF ONE UNIT COMMISSIONER FOR EVERY THREE UNITS. A GOOD STAFF ALSO HAS ONE ADC FOR EVERY FIVE UNIT COMMISSIONERS.

A. (Share the ratio of units to unit commissioners for each district in the council.)

B. (Briefly review) The eight steps to recruit a commissioner (Commissioner Administration, pages 13–14)

C. (Briefly review) Group recruiting (page 14)

D. Fourteen sources for new commissioners (page 16)
NO. 8—BE SURE THAT EVERY NEW COMMISSIONER RECEIVES BASIC
TRAINING WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF BEING RECRUITED.

A. Why within two months?

B. Where and when will basic training be offered during the next six
months?


NO. 7—COMMISSIONERS MUST CONTINUALLY ADJUST THEIR
SKILLS TO PROVIDE A MORE VALUABLE SERVICE TO UNITS. FOR ALL
COMMISSIONERS, TRAINING IS A CONTINUING PROCESS—AT EVERY
MEETING, EVERY MONTH, EVERY YEAR.

A. (Dramatically present page 1 of Continuing Education for
Commissioners.)

NO. 6—A COMMISSIONER PLAYS SEVERAL ROLES, INCLUDING

• FRIEND OF THE UNIT

• BSA REPRESENTATIVE

• UNIT DOCTOR

• TEACHER

• COACH/COUNSELOR

A. (Take each of the five roles in turn and elicit from the group a couple
of brief personal examples whereby participants have played the
role.)

B. See Commissioner Fieldbook, page 11.

NO. 5—EXCEPTIONAL COMMISSIONER SERVICE EXCEEDS UNIT
LEADER EXPECTATIONS RATHER THAN BARELY MEETING THEIR
EXPECTATIONS.

A. (Make a three-minute presentation on the concept of “exceptional
service” as found on pages 24–25 in the Commissioner Fieldbook.)

B. (Ask for two or three examples of exceptional service from
participants.)
NO. 4—COMMISSIONER-PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS SHOULD INVOLVE THE FINEST FRATERNAL QUALITIES. THEY BOTH SHARE THE WREATH OF SERVICE.

A. (You may want to have a professional and a volunteer present this point together.)

B. Qualities of a good relationship

Good volunteer-professional relationships are characterized by mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual recognition of each other’s role and competency.

When the partnership is working well, both partners are aware of their interdependence, they have complete confidence in each other, and they share the same objectives (to help units succeed in providing a quality program for youth). In Scout districts, for example, mutual dependence results because district executives know they cannot possibly do all the work that needs to be done, and district volunteers know they need the coaching and experience of full-time professionals.

If partners have complete confidence in each other, they will seek each other’s counsel. Neither partner has a monopoly on wisdom, judgement, or experience. When the full resources of both parties are applied to decision making, the combination is unbeatable.

C. (Have each participant give one short tip or guideline for developing good commissioner-professional relationships.)

D. See Commissioner Administration, pages 12–14.

NO. 3—“COMMISSIONER LIFESAVING” IS PROVIDING PROMPT, INTENSIVE, AND OFTEN PERSISTENT CARE WHEN MAJOR PROBLEMS OCCUR. A GOOD COMMISSIONER IS PREPARED TO RESPOND QUICKLY WHEN A UNIT HAS A UNIT LIFE-THREATENING SITUATION.

A. See Commissioner Fieldbook, pages 27–30, on “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner.”

B. Definition of “commissioner lifesaving” (page 27)

C. Typical hurry cases (pages 28–29)

NO. 2—COMMISSIONERS HAVE MANY TASKS, BUT THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT ARE

• Coaching unit adults to enrich unit program
• Being an enabler for unit problem solving
• Ensuring the annual on-time renewal of the unit charter.

AND—DRUM ROLL—THE NO. 1 WAY TO GUARANTEE GOOD COMMISSIONER SERVICE:

• ALTHOUGH A COMMISSIONER NEEDS UNIT PROGRAM INFORMATION, HIS OR HER SUCCESS DEPENDS LARGELY ON GOOD PEOPLE SKILLS TO EFFECTIVELY SERVE UNIT ADULTS.

A. (See Commissioner Fieldbook, page 24, on “Frontline Diplomat.”)

B. (Lead brief discussion on other people skills helpful to commissioners.)

III. Perhaps Scouting is never that simple, but sometimes it’s good to summarize our tasks in a few simple words.
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER BASICS—AN OUTLINE
(MCS 409)

The following outline can be used to develop and localize a course for district commissioners. Be sure each participant has the latest edition of Commissioner Administration.

I. INTRODUCTION

The district commissioner recruits, trains, and directs an adequate team of commissioners to assure that all packs, troops, teams, and crews of the district have a quality program so that young people will remain in the Scouting program.

II. DISTRICT COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBILITIES

(Using an interactive activity with course participants, review all of the responsibilities of district commissioners included in chapter 4 of Commissioner Administration.)

III. COMMISSIONER RECRUITING—AN OVERVIEW

(Use a flip chart, overhead, or PowerPoint presentation to outline overall methods of selecting and recruiting a complete staff. Point out that a more detailed session is needed in this topic. See “Recruiting New Commissioners” training session in this manual.)

A. Recruiting Commissioners—Eight Steps

B. Group Recruiting

C. Agenda for a Recruiting Event

D. Sources for Commissioner Prospects

E. Recruiting Resources

F. Staffing levels
   1. Ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units
   2. One ADC for every five unit commissioners
   3. One roundtable commissioner for each roundtable

IV. TRAINING COMMISSIONERS

(Involve the group in an activity to review the “Six Elements of Good Commissioner Training.” See chapter 10 of Commissioner Administration.)
V. CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSIGNING UNIT COMMISSIONERS

(Cover this topic in detail using chapter 6 of Commissioner Administration.)

VI. YOUR MONTHLY COMMISSIONER STAFF MEETING

A. This meeting is sharply focused on the needs of individual units and how to help unit adults improve the program of individual units.

B. This gathering needs to be monthly and not held in conjunction with any other meeting of the district. Any other arrangement will prevent the district commissioner and district executive from fulfilling their defined roles at the meeting.

C. The most important part of the meeting is concurrent ADC breakout sessions with sufficient time for assistant district commissioners and their respective unit commissioners to review the health of each unit.

• Sharing important observations from recent visits with units.

• Giving priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit.

• Identifying specific ways to help each unit improve its program.

• Determining who will provide specific help during the coming month. Usually this is the assigned unit commissioner, but more challenging situations may require assistance from the ADC, a district committee member, or even the district commissioner.

• Checking progress on last month’s assignments.

• During these team meetings, the district commissioner and district executive will each sit in on the ADC group where their direct input is needed the most.

D. The other essential part of each meeting is a brief training topic. Training is a continuous process for commissioners. The district commissioner and district executive should select a topic each month that matches current skill needs of their commissioners. The course outlines in the latest Continuing Education for Commissioners provide ready-made training topics for district as well as council commissioner meetings.

E. (Distribute sample meeting agendas from appendix G of the Commissioner Administration, which become the work plan for the month.)

F. (If time permits, use one of the commissioner meeting scenarios from the DVD Meetings of the District.)
SELECTING A THESIS/RESEARCH PROJECT TOPIC

(DCS 601)

I. INTRODUCTION

The doctor of commissioner science degree requires the satisfactory
development of a thesis or research project on any topic of value to
Scouting in the local council, and which must be suitable for publication.

A. Thesis must be a minimum of 20 double-spaced, typed pages (8½-by-
11-inch white paper).

B. It must be bound in a nonpermanent binder so that the paper can be
reproduced if advisable.

C. Thesis must show evidence of meaningful research, project develop-
ment, and study.

D. Thesis becomes the property of the ____________________Council, Boy
Scouts of America. If published, full credit to the author will be given.

E. Thesis must be submitted to the council by July 1 for review and
acceptance if degree is to be awarded at the annual fall conference.

F. Thesis must include a complete bibliography.

G. Some persons may prefer to do an approved project not requiring a
written thesis. That’s OK.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Thesis

B. Hypothesis

C. Theory

D. Law

III. SELECTING A TOPIC—FIRST STEP

A. The topic should be in your area of interest.

B. It should be in your area of experience.

C. It should be in an area of need.
D. It should concern a problem you can research yourself. This is an individual project!

E. It should be limited in scope to allow completion in about one year.

IV. DISCUSSION OF TOPIC SELECTION

A. Area of interest
   1. Why? More likely to be completed
   2. Resources—more likely to have adequate personal resources
   3. Knowledge—more likely to have current knowledge

B. Area of experience and expertise
   2. Resource—personal experience
   3. May have greater value

C. Area of need
   1. Study should be useful to you and other Scouters
   2. Study may be useful to the district, council, area, region, or National Council
   3. Makes better use of your time and talents

D. Area that can be accomplished by you
   1. Availability of reference material
   2. Availability of needed resources
   3. Availability of experienced counselors

E. Area of research limited by time constraints
   1. Time required to complete research
   2. Time required to analyze material
   3. Time required to write, rewrite, and type in final form

V. SELECTION OF A TYPICAL TOPIC AND INITIAL DEVELOPMENT, IN TEAMS OF THREE

A. Divide the group into teams of three. Each team selects a topic to work on for the next 20 minutes, or has one assigned from a pool of topics available. Each team is encouraged to develop the initial stages as far as they can go in the 20-minute period. This period is to be devoted to what would be done and in what sequence, rather than how it would be done or its content.
B. Hold a discussion of selected teams’ accomplishments. Give at least three teams five minutes each to discuss what they did and why. Their approaches may be critiqued by the group.

VI. PRELIMINARY STEPS IN A GOOD THESIS OR PROJECT

A. Develop a thesis statement or problem definition. The project should attempt to find out why something works the way it does or perhaps why not. For example,

1. What are the motivating factors in Cub Scout advancement?
2. Why don’t some boys graduate from Cub Scouting into Boy Scouting? (factors or reasons)
   It must include a way to improve current procedures. For example:
   a. A new School Night approach
   b. New recruiting techniques for adult leaders
   c. New recruiting techniques for commissioners

B. Review existing literature in the field. This would, of course, include literature published by the BSA. It might include publications by others in the fields of education, management, voluntarism, motivation, etc. Do not limit yourself to BSA literature alone.

C. Observations, surveys, and interviews. Examples:
   1. Watching den, pack, or troop meetings over several weeks to spot leadership skills used or not used
   2. Interviewing boys, parents, leaders, etc., on their feelings, attitudes, etc.
   3. Surveying—a sample of new leaders and/or experienced leaders, etc.

D. Field testing. The project may test some new technique or idea so that conclusions as to its value can be drawn.
LIMITING THE SCOPE OF THE TOPIC
(DCS 602)

I. REDUCING THE PROBLEM TO WORKABLE SIZE

A. Why?
   1. Confines to the area of most experience
   2. Limits the area of required research
   3. Allows completion within time constraints

B. Limit the scope of study as to
   1. Place—distance and area that can be covered
   2. Time
   3. Number of cases studied
   4. A workable aspect or factor of the overall problem
   5. Financial cost
   6. Feasibility of the project
   7. Availability of data

II. A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

A. Training—in what area?

B. Cub Scout training—in the area of experience?

C. Cub Scout training for new leaders—what part of training?

D. Immediate Cub Scout training for new leaders—when is it provided?

E. Immediate essential Cub Scout training for new leaders—what type of training?

F. A method of providing immediate essential Cub Scout training to new Cub Scout leaders.
III. ANOTHER PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

A. Commissioner responsibilities.

B. Commissioner responsibilities to improve Quality Unit status.

C. Analysis shows that only 40 percent of units attended long-term camp.

D. A commissioner program to improve unit summer camp attendance.

IV. PRELIMINARY EXPLORATION OF THE PROBLEM OR TOPIC

A. Will help further limit the scope of the topic.

B. May involve
   1. Library research
   2. Exploratory interviews and visits
   3. Firsthand observation

C. Develop a preliminary outline of thesis report.

V. THESIS/PROJECT RESEARCH

A. Consider and select the best sources of information related to the topic:
   1. Library research
   2. Surveys and questionnaires
   3. Interview schedules
   4. Scouting literature
   5. Group interviews
   6. Consultants
   7. Review of other studies related to the topic
   8. Statistical data
   9. Experimentation
B. Distribute copies of a previously completed thesis. Have the group skim through and identify where the author obtained data and information. Brainstorm other sources the author might have used.

C. Preparation of questionnaires and interview schedules:
   1. Selection of question content to best satisfy the purpose and outline of the study
   2. Importance of unbiased wording
   3. Precoding
   4. Layout and order of questions
   5. Preliminary trial in the field
   6. Revision as a result of trial
   7. Preparation of instructions for interviewers or questionnaire recipients

D. Determination of samples:
   1. Size of sample
   2. Methods of sampling
   3. Selection and location of sample in the field

E. Transformation of information from tool of inquiry to tables or reports:
   1. Highest possible accuracy and reliability of data
   2. Uniformity/consistency of data
   3. Completeness of data
   4. Organization or coding of data, notes, etc.
   5. Tabulation of data
   6. Interpretation of results
I. TYPES OF THESES
   A. Informative reference
   B. Analytical report
   C. Experimental project report

II. A SAMPLE THESIS OUTLINE
   A. Prefatory material
      1. Title page
      2. Table of contents
      3. Lists of illustrations, tables, and charts
      4. Preface, foreword, or letter of transmittal
   B. Text or body of report
      1. Introductory chapters of background, purpose, problem, delimitation of subject, methods and summary of study findings
      2. Analysis and interpretation of findings
      3. Conclusions and recommendations based on data presented
      4. Summary chapter
   C. Supplementary material
      1. Appendixes
      2. Bibliography
      3. Index
      4. Glossary of terms

III. WRITING THE THESIS
   A. Revise your preliminary outline.
   B. Assembling material:
      1. Use of diagrams.
      2. Supporting material.
      3. What to put in appendixes.
4. Preparing the bibliography.
5. How-to and reference material.
6. Should you include an abstract?
7. Follow the outline—revise again if necessary.
8. Organize notes according to the outline.

C. Write the first draft.
   1. Introduction—Make clear the purpose of the thesis and arouse the interest of the reader.
   2. Paragraphing:
      a. Each paragraph should represent a new phase of the subject.
      b. Avoid excessively long paragraphs and very short paragraphs.
   3. Transitions between paragraphs:
      a. Use of transitional device at the beginning of each paragraph
         (1) Repetition of key word
         (2) Direct reference
         (3) Connectives
      b. The transitional paragraph
   4. The conclusion: Summarize or reemphasize the major point of the thesis.

D. Compile the bibliography. When using factual material or the thoughts of others, be sure to give accurate and complete credit in the bibliography.

IV. REREAD, REVISE, REWRITE

A. In revising the first draft, ask yourself the following:
   1. Have I made my purpose clear?
   2. Is the paragraphing correct?
   3. Do the paragraphs reveal the major points of the thesis?
   4. Is each paragraph unified and coherent?
   5. Are the paragraphs clearly related to one another?
   6. Are the sentences varied in structure?
7. Can sentences be better written?
8. Is my style too wordy?
9. What expressions or words can be eliminated?
10. Where is punctuation needed to make the meaning clearer?
11. Are all words spelled correctly?
12. What parts need to be rewritten for greater clarity?

B. Have a careful reader review your second draft and mark anything that is unclear or awkward.

C. Revise again.

V. TYPE IN FINAL FORM, EDIT, CORRECT, AND SUBMIT
I. INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS

Have each person discuss their areas of interest and current progress in topic selection, definition, limitation, research, or writing.

Faculty and other participants provide help, counsel, and encouragement as needed.

II. INTRODUCTION OF SCOUTERS RECEIVING PH.D. AND DISCUSSIONS LED BY THEM ON THEIR RESEARCH PROJECTS/THESSES
ADVANCED COMMISSIONER LIFESAVING
(DCS 608)

Preferably, all participants have taken MCS 303 and MCS 304 on Commissioner Lifesaving. If they have not, spend more time on the introduction.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Briefly review the concept of “commissioner lifesaving” as found in the Commissioner Fieldbook and covered in MCS 303 and MCS 304.

B. A good commissioner becomes a “lifesaving commissioner.” Council and district commissioners may even help put together “lifesaving teams” for their districts. The urgent cases you’re likely to face include loss of adult leadership, no unit program, or conflict between unit leaders and the chartered organization. Without “intensive care” from a commissioner or a team of lifesavers, such a unit could become a “terminal case” and stop serving kids.

Dead units, obviously, provide no help to youth. Perhaps district volunteers have made a pact not to lose another unit. Perhaps council commissioners have made a commitment never to lose a unit. In either case, major problems will require prompt, intensive, and persistent care. Have them use the Commissioner Fieldbook, especially the sections titled “Providing Unit Service,” “Be a Lifesaving Commissioner,” and “Counseling.”

C. Start by training your administrative commissioners. Be sure they understand the lifesaving concept. Obtain their commitment to carry the idea into their districts. Accent the training with unit success stories in your council.

II. THE LIFESAVING TEAM APPROACH

A. Individuals can save lives, but paramedic teams are often better. Some districts may use a lifesaving team approach to save the most distressed or highest priority units.

B. It’s usually best not to organize lifesaving teams until a district’s basic commissioner structure is in place. Organize the commissioner staff first, then the lifesaving team. (But don’t wait to train individual commissioners in the lifesaving techniques described in the Commissioner Fieldbook. Most commissioners should still be qualified as individual lifesavers.)
C. There are two kinds of lifesaving teams: the strictly ad hoc or temporary team and the permanent lifesaving team.

III. THE TEMPORARY TEAM

A. This is a lifesaving team of two or more people selected by the district commissioner with the advice of the district executive, solely for the short-term goal of helping a high-priority unit over a life-threatening situation. The selection of this ad hoc team is made on the basis of a single question: Who are the best people in the district to work with a particular unit during a particular crisis?

B. It may involve

1. The unit commissioner
2. An assistant district commissioner
3. A person in the community with special influence on the unit and its chartered organization
4. A key member of the chartered organization, perhaps the head of the organization
5. Another unit leader
6. Anyone who has the ability to help

C. The unit commissioner may head the team. In some cases, however, it may be best for someone other than the unit commissioner to give team leadership. It depends on the situation and the people.

IV. THE PERMANENT TEAM

A. A permanent lifesaving team works within the district to provide “Scouting CPR” and operate the district’s intensive care procedures.

B. Appointment is made by the district commissioner with the advice of the district executive.

C. They select one person who heads the permanent team as his or her ongoing Scouting job. The team leader wears the badge of an assistant district commissioner. There may be a couple of people who serve only on the team as troubleshooting commissioners: they wear the unit commissioner badge. There may be other Scouters with other Scouting jobs who also serve on the team.
D. Units are assigned to the team by the district commissioner. The team works with the unit until its life-threatening crisis is over. The unit is then reassigned to a regular unit commissioner.

V. THE DECISION

A. These different approaches are partly a matter of the philosophy of district leadership. One Key 3 does not want a hit team, a SWAT team, or any other kind of special team, permanently set up by the commissioner. Another Key 3 thinks a permanent team is a great idea. Some districts do well with the individual lifesaving commissioners.

B. Decide what plan best fits each district. What is indisputably important is that the council has some plan of action in every district to give special help to priority units with critical needs. Council and district commissioners are the key players in Scouting to virtually stop dropped units in the council. The decision is yours.
I. INTRODUCTION

A. How many of you have at one time or another thought, “I can’t do this Scouting one more day. I’m sick of it”? What influenced you to change your mind and remain in the program? (Get participant responses.)

We all have those feelings from time to time. Whether we work with a unit or on the commissioner staff, we have to be ready to face the reality that everyone gets burned out with Scouting at one time or another. This course will look at some ways we can help overcome those burnout situations and motivate ourselves and others toward better tenure in the BSA.

B. What are some of the types of burnout that occur in people?
   1. Fatigue
   2. Boredom
   3. Lack of motivation
   4. Others?

C. Fatigue
   1. What are some of the signs of fatigue?
      a. Tiredness
      b. Low energy
      c. Lack of ideas and planning
      d. Others?
   2. What might be some of the solutions to combating fatigue that you could try?
      a. Take a vacation.
      b. Have someone else take over for a meeting or two.
      c. Share an idea or enlist the help of others on a project.
      d. Go to bed earlier.
      e. Get help with late-night TV addiction.
D. Boredom

1. A person can be bored without being fatigued. Boredom means that you are no longer interested in the task or event.

2. What are some ideas to prevent or cure boredom? List the responses. Be sure to include the following:
   
a. Look for a change of pace—change meeting places, learn a new skill.

b. Visit another commissioner or other Scouting function—see what others are doing, gather ideas from others.

c. Plan for a special trip such as a Philmont commissioner course or special activity.

d. Teach a skill to others—be part of a commissioner training staff or help with a training event.

e. Redevelop your enthusiasm—read inspirational magazines.

f. Reflect on how far you have come over the past few years as a commissioner.

g. If you have been serving the same units, perhaps you should ask your district commissioner for a change of assignment.

E. Lack of motivation

1. Many times the cause for burnout is lack of motivation to keep trying.

   What is motivation? Allow time for a few responses.

   Motivation is often misunderstood. The dictionary definition of motivation is something “from within, not without, that prompts or incites an action."

2. What is the only real way to motivate? (Allow time for responses.)

   The only way to get a person to do something is to help that person want to do it.

   We can’t use money to motivate ourselves or others, so we must find other incentives to maintain motivation and prevent burnout.

   a. Keep up-to-date on your commissioner responsibilities. Take a new training course.

   b. A sincere, interested, helpful, and enthusiastic attitude will go a long way in motivating others.
c. You need to realize how important your individual talents, interest, and skills are to Scouting.

d. A sense of belonging to a group can create loyalty and motivate a person to continue. People will do a good job and remain active when they feel their voice is heard and their opinions are valued. Offer constructive ideas for improving commissioner service in your district. Help make decisions and solve problems.

e. Provide and seek recognition.

II. TIME MANAGEMENT

A. Some burnout may relate to how we organize and use our time.

B. These tips will help in managing your commissioner time:

1. Decide what’s important. Set your commissioner priorities. Do those things that will make a difference in the life of a unit—that will solve a problem or improve unit program.

2. Make commissioner service your primary Scouting role. Don’t try to do three or four other things in Scouting.


   a. Organize and file the stuff you can use—key manuals and guidelines.

   b. Throw out all the stuff you don’t need.

   c. Don’t let mail accumulate.

   d. Use your Commissioner Program Notebook for key notes, things to do, names, and phone numbers.

   e. Don’t waste time always looking for the papers you need.

4. Schedule appointments with long-winded people just before a meeting you must attend. This will cut down on time wasted by people who tend to overstay their welcome.

5. Group your commissioner tasks and appointments. Going to the roundtable? Good. Make a delivery en route. Arrange to meet with a unit leader before the roundtable. Plan to visit with others during the coffee break.

6. Don’t feel guilty about saying “no” (gracefully, of course). You just can’t do everything that people may ask you to do.
7. Don’t procrastinate. If the job looks too big, break it down into manageable bites.

8. Listen carefully—it saves time and helps you get it right the first time.

9. Make a weekly commissioner to-do list. Mark the priorities with an “A,” other important tasks with a “B,” other items with a “C.” Do the A’s first.

10. Make a schedule and stick to it.

III. COMMISSIONER WELLNESS

A. Learn to take it easy. Take time out for yourself to relax.

B. Keep your weight under control.

C. Get regular exercise. Stay fit.

D. Lead a balanced life.

E. Seek prompt medical help for problems.
CONSIDER YOUR SPOUSE AND FAMILY

(DCS 611)

I. INTRODUCTION

How many of you have known good, dedicated, hardworking volunteers who have left Scouting because they had difficulties dealing with their spouse and/or family regarding Scouting?

This course is intended to assist commissioners in ways to understand and strengthen their marriage and/or family relationships so that Scouting augments rather than detracts from the family and increases your personal happiness and tenure as a commissioner.

II. AN ANALOGY

A. Show a large wedding picture and a stringed musical instrument.

Ask the group to brainstorm for a minute and determine what these two items have in common.

Marriage and/or family relationships and this stringed instrument have a lot in common. They are both priceless in value and beautiful to look at. In addition, the value of both increases with age. If given proper attention, both can bring a feeling of satisfaction, exhilaration, and pleasure. However, both can get out of tune if not treated properly. Being out of tune does not lessen the value of either. Attention by the skilled hands of those who know them best are needed to adjust them so that they can produce the maximum amount of pleasure.

B. Although we will be talking more specifically about marriage during this course, the same types of problems would apply to family relationships as in the case of the unmarried Scouter.

C. A finely tuned marriage that is maturing will add greatly to your success as a person and as a commissioner. It has been said, “As the marriage functions, so functions much of the rest of your relationships.” Scouters are the kind of people who make good marriage partners. They know how to give love and build character, two essential ingredients of a marriage.

III. LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

The following are three short skits to present problems to be resolved. These can be ad-libbed.
A. Perform the skits.

Skit 1

Cast: one male, one female

Materials: Briefcase, man’s BSA hat, feather duster, table

Scene: Man holding briefcase and wearing hat is prepared to leave for evening. Woman is holding a feather duster. As man speaks, woman tries to interject with “But, . . . but, . . . wait.”

Man: Boy! What a day I’ve had! I’m not sure if I’m coming or going! Oh sweetheart, I’m on my way to the district commissioner’s meeting. I’ll just grab a bite to eat on the way. Don’t wait up for me. I’ll be late. Kiss the kids goodnight . . . see you later, dear.

(Man exits. Woman stands with her hands on her hips or with her arms folded and speaks with frustration in her voice.)

Woman: I didn’t even know he had a meeting tonight. He’s even forgotten the Browns are coming for dinner! Now what do I do? We simply must improve our communication!

Skit 2

Cast: one male, one female

Materials: Woman’s BSA uniform, books or briefcase, newspaper, chair, vest and glasses for man, soup can, small table with telephone

Scene: Woman is preparing to leave in uniform. She holds books or briefcase and a can of soup. Man is sitting at the table reading the newspaper. As the woman begins to speak, the man looks frustrated and looks at her rather than the newspaper.

Woman: John, I’m leaving now for the troop charter renewal meeting. Here is a can of soup for supper. (Puts soup on the table.) Make sure the kids are in bed by 8:30 sharp and don’t let them get into anything! Don’t forget to take all my phone messages. You know where I’ll be. See you later, dear. (Woman exits.)

Man: (Lays paper down angrily on table.) I wish she would tell me in advance where and when she is going! Sam, get out of the refrigerator! Kathy, stop hitting your brother! (Answers phone and pauses.) Yes, yes, I’ll tell her when she gets home. (Slams down the phone.) We need to make better plans.
Skit 3  
**Cast:** One woman, one female teenager  
**Materials:** Phone on table, BSA uniform, radio with headphones, books or briefcase  
**Scene:** Teen with headset on ears swinging to the music. Mother is leaving with books or briefcase.

**Woman:** Jan, I’m going to roundtable. (As she speaks, her voice gets louder.) You know the number at the church. Please take good care of your little brother . . . now, no friends over . . . lock up the house when I leave. I’ll be late. (Pause.) Be good! I love you. Did you hear what I said? (Woman exits.)

**Teenager:** (As she listens to the music she nods her head like she’s listening to her mother. As soon as her mother leaves, she picks up the phone and dials.)

Hi, Susan! Hey, Mom has gone to one of her gross Scout meetings again. (Pause.) Yeah, she’s always gone. I wonder if she really does love us, she’s gone so much of the time. Sometimes I wish Jimmy had never gotten into Scouting.

B. Solving the problems.

Explain that the skits will now be evaluated to identify the problems and possible solutions. The problems and solutions will be drawn from the participants.

As you evaluate each skit, write participants’ comments on a flip chart.

**Skit 1**  
What were two problems portrayed in this skit?

**Problems**

1. We never communicate with each other; that way we never argue.
2. Family is getting in the way. I don’t have time for Scouting.

**Solutions**

1. Communication is the key to good organization within the family. All family members are then aware of what is happening when it happens.

   When you know things have gotten off track, speak up. Smart couples look for ways to ease tensions before they get out of control.
2. Family *must* come first, but Scouting is important, too. I always schedule time accordingly.

*Skit 2* What about the second skit? What type of problems existed there?

**Problems**
1. There is no organization in my household, only confusion and frustration!
2. My spouse does not care for me!
3. She just does her own thing.

**Solutions**
1. We plan together and try to keep our priorities in proper order.
2. Consider your spouse! By working together, we keep the house tidy, the children are well cared for, and we share good meals. Then I can perform my commissioner duties more effectively. My spouse can pursue her activities more effectively. We *care* about each other and *show it often*.
3. I involve my spouse in my commissioner responsibilities. It makes for a better relationship.

*Skit 3* What was different about the type of problems shown in the third skit?

**Possible Problem**
1. I am a single parent. I don’t have time for everything.

**Solution**
As a single parent, I must plan ahead and carefully budget my time. I am careful not to take on too many responsibilities outside my home.

IV. OTHER PROBLEMS TO DISCUSS

There are other areas, with regard to Scouting, that often cause friction and problems that we should address.

(Have these prepared on a flip chart with space available to write comments.)

**A. Finances.** There is never enough money. It all goes to Scouting.

*Solution:* Plan a budget.

**B. Time together.** We never go on family vacation because vacation time all goes for Scouting.
Solution: This year we go on family vacation and Scouting next year. But we always do fun things together!

C. Values. What she does for Scouting is a waste of time.

Solution: What she does for Scouting is important and I support her! We communicate our values.

D. Overload. If I get asked to hold one more position or do one more job in this organization I will quit.

Solution: Scouting is important to me, but I know my limitations. To avoid overloading myself, I may have to say no without feeling guilty.

V. SPOUSE RECOGNITION

A. It is important that we recognize the spouse and family. Many things can be done in small but meaningful ways. Show just how much a spouse/family is appreciated by the Scouting program.

B. Ask for suggestions of ways a spouse can be recognized and encouraged.

C. Try these ideas:
   1. Use a spouse appreciation certificate: the Scouter’s Husband Award, the Scouter’s Wife Award, or a “ThankYou” pin.
   2. At unit, district, and council functions, select one spouse to represent all and present flowers, candy, plaque, poem, or song.
   3. At recognition dinners place a card, poem, or flower near each plate.
   4. Ask an executive or key commissioner to send a thank-you letter to each spouse.
   5. Recognize spouses at all events and activities.
   6. Have a Scouter testimonial for and on behalf of the spouses.
   7. Conduct an annual commissioner spouses’ recognition day—barbecue, picnic, or other appropriate activity.
   8. Schedule a spouses’ day at camp.
6. Commissioner Conferences at Philmont Training Center

The national commissioner conferences that take place each summer at the Philmont Training Center near Cimarron, New Mexico, offer commissioners:

- A mountaintop training conference with a topflight faculty
- The inspiring ambiance of a big sky sunset over a working ranch in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains
- Family programs for all groups from nursery through adult; the whole family benefits
- Recreation and personal time in an area rich in history and natural beauty
- A week of Scouting fellowship

Council commissioners and assistants, district commissioners, and assistants should attend the Administration of Commissioner Service conference. Send the most talented and promising unit commissioners to the Unit Commissioner conference. Select people to attend who will return home and set a positive example in quality service to units in the council. District commissioners might also attend the District Key 3 conference with their district chairman and district executive. Council commissioners should consider attending the Council Key 3 conference with their council president and Scout executive. The Key 3 conferences are a great team-building experience.

The following quote sums up the attitude of many commissioners who visit Philmont each summer: “The courses at Philmont offer an extensive look at the commissioner Service team. You leave Philmont with so much more enthusiasm, higher expectations, and eagerness to apply what you have learned. Visiting Philmont with your family is exciting—there are so many activities, hikes, and tours for children, spouses, and even for you between class times. The classroom experience is filled with fun and laughter and lots of knowledge.”