



THE BEST OF

the COMMISSIONER

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DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS – YOUR MOST IMPORTANT TEAM MEMBERS

NEXT TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL ADVISER, DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF YOUR SCOUTING TEAM!

Yes, assistant council commissioners are important. Other members of the council structure are also important. But it is district commissioners whom you must rely on to accomplish what you are held accountable for as a council commissioner.

THEIR MISSION.

District commissioners mobilize their staff to strive for the highest quality of unit program for youth. They make sure that unit commissioners counsel and inspire unit adults, improve their assigned units' program, and help units solve problems before problems can sink the unit.

At his/her monthly staff meetings he/she allots major time for assistant district commissioners and their respective unit commissioners to review the health of each unit. They share important observations from recent visits with unit people. They give priority to unit trouble spots that could badly disrupt a unit. They identify specific ways to help each unit improve its program.

Above all, the district commissioner is the builder of a **complete** team of commissioners for the district.

A complete list of responsibilities is on pages 7-8 of *Commissioner Administration*.

QUALITIES TO SEEK.

The district commissioner must be a proven leader capable of enlisting other effective persons to serve. They are upbeat, personable, and a role model for Scouting ideals. They are passionate about the benefits of Scouting and a champion of the unit to make Scouting happen in the lives of young people.

Perhaps the greatest quality is identified by the teacher of leaders, Jim Collins, in his book, *Good to Great*. Collins' extensive research links leadership success to a blend of personal humility and unwavering resolve for results in the organization.

Great district commissioners channel their ego needs from themselves to the larger goal of a great commissioner staff and units with a great program for kids. This compelling modesty is in stark contrast to the popular image of larger-than-life charismatic leaders.

Great district commissioners are also fanatically driven to do whatever must be done to assure that each commissioner works with each unit to improve that unit's program for its youth. This unwavering resolve produces sustained results as Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers stay in the program longer and learn Scouting values to last a lifetime.

AS A COUNCIL COMMISSIONER:

- Visit with your staff adviser and/or Scout executive to discuss how to increase the effectiveness of district commissioners and how to better support district commissioners. Also discuss how the council's district executives and district commissioners can develop an even better team relationship.
- Use the following resources with your key people: *A Guide for Volunteers on Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships*, 14-144; *Good Volunteer-Professional Relationships: A Strategic Issue for Professionals*, 14-145; and the new DVD *Meetings of the District*, AV-06DVD07.
- Use your monthly council commissioner cabinet meetings to guide, support, and hold accountable district commissioners, *your most important team members*.

GOOD TURN FOR AMERICA—AND THE COMMISSIONER

February is the launch date for Good Turn for America — a multi-year initiative to support the many council community service projects related to food, shelter, and health needs.

Good Turn for America goals include the following:

- Inspire youth and adult leaders in and out of Scouting to higher levels of service and volunteerism.
- Provide additional program experiences to help youth members learn qualities of good citizenship and gain a sense of belonging to and being needed in their communities.
- Build service collaborations with community organizations across every community in the country.
- Affirm the BSA as the nation's leading collaborating organization in community service.
- Heighten our nation's awareness of BSA's service commitment to all communities and citizens.

Councils and districts plan, promote, and carry out Good Turn for America projects through the efforts of their respective activities and civic service committees.

Commissioner Role. Commissioners are also key players. They—

- Encourage units to plan Good Turn for America projects as a part of a balanced unit program.
- Help unit leaders learn and use the six criteria to ensure that a project actually teaches qualities of good citizenship. (See pages 26-27 of the *Activities and Civic Service Committee Guide*.)
- Help unit leaders understand how participation in Good Turn for America projects can help Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Venturers to achieve requirements toward rank advancement and other awards.
- Share Good Turn for America ideas and plans at district Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing roundtables.
- Look for ways in which Good Turn for America projects can strengthen the bond between Scouting units and their chartered organizations.

Unit Leader Role. Units should be given the flexibility to incorporate a variety of service projects into the Good Turn for America initiative. Unit leaders:

- Participate in the council and district activities organized under this initiative.
- Incorporate the Good Turn for America initiative into the unit's annual program plans.
- Consider planning additional unit-level community service projects.

- Enter service project data into goodturnforamerica.org.
- Coordinate with district and council committees to promote events and report successes. If these committees don't—do it yourself!



There are three major program areas.

1. Scouting for Food Activities in Collaboration With The Salvation Army or Other Local Organizations.

As unbelievable as it may seem, hunger remains a significant problem in the United States. In fact, one in five children in this country faces hunger. Hungry children, even those who experience only mild malnutrition during the critical stages of their development, may suffer irreparable harm. The BSA is concerned about hunger and helping community agencies provide food for the needy.

2. Scouting for Shelter Activities in Collaboration With Habitat for Humanity or Other Local Organizations.

The Urban Institute estimates that 3.5 million people in the United States, 1.35 million of them children, will experience homelessness during the course of a year. The need for simple, decent housing continues to grow in American communities.

The BSA is concerned about shelter to the needy and improving the quality of life of those who must live in group homes or shelters.

3. Scouting for Healthy Living Activities in Collaboration With the American Red Cross or Other Local Organizations.

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the United States. It is a major risk factor for the number one cause of death: heart disease. Heart disease can be reduced by proper exercise and diet. Our children are being raised in an increasingly sedentary society, and obesity is a major health concern for youth. One out of five obese youth develops diabetes. Some researchers predict that today's children will be the first generation of Americans whose life expectancy will actually be shorter than that of their parents. The culprit, they say, is the health problems associated with obesity.

The BSA is an organization that has always been concerned about the physical fitness and good health of Americans.

Details may be found in the *Good Turn for America Guidebook*, No. 02-673.

As Council Commissioner—

- **Have a knowledgeable council Scouter share Good Turn for America details at your next council commissioner meeting.**
- **Ask each district commissioner and district executive to cover this topic at their next district commissioner meetings.**
- **Copy and distribute this article to all commissioners.**

SERVICE

A Hallmark For Commissioners

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.

Customer service is a hot topic today in and out of Scouting. Ideas about service as it relates to commissioners are listed below **for you to share with your commissioners in the weeks ahead.**

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. ♠

A Commissioner QUIZ!

This is not really a test.

It might look like a test, but there is no penalty for a bad score.

Think of it as a way for you to brush up on your commissioner skills by playing a game of 18 questions. If anyone's score is less than perfect, no need to worry. Everyone will know the answer by the time you adjourn.

So relax, grab a pen, and let the game begin.

1. You have a district with 60 units. What's the minimum number of commissioners the district needs?

- a. 1 in 3
- b. 20
- c. Less than 20
- d. More than 20

2. After agreeing to serve, a new unit commissioner should view the orientation video—

- a. Within 48 hours
- b. Within 4 weeks
- c. Within 4 months
- d. Before receiving the Commissioner Key

3. You are told that an assistant Scoutmaster has allegedly sexually abused a Scout during a troop camp. You should—

- a. Launch a full-scale investigation
- b. Obtain solid proof before reporting to anyone
- c. Tell the alleged abuser they can no longer be in Scouting
- d. Inform the Scout executive immediately

4. The greatest hazard to the effectiveness of a commissioner is—

- a. Taking on non-commissioner-related Scouting responsibilities
- b. Drinking too much coffee at commissioner meetings
- c. Giving top priority to a troop that lost its Scoutmaster
- d. Failing to earn the Arrowhead Award

5. You've just reviewed a copy of Continuing Education for Commissioners, No. 33615D. How should your council make the best use of this resource?

- a. Use training topic outlines at district commissioner meetings
- b. Use training topic outlines at council commissioner meetings
- c. Use the resource in the planning of your council's annual commissioner conferences
- d. Do all of the above

6. Your district has 7 lapsed units. Your commissioner staff should—

- a. Be sure the lapsed situation is a top priority for the assigned unit commissioners and their ADCs
- b. Be sure the lapsed situation is a top priority for the district executive
- c. Set up a weekly phone check or other reporting process on each lapse
- d. Do all of the above

7. The two most important items on a district commissioner staff agenda are—

- a. Promotion of both district and council activities
- b. Inspirational opening and recognition of commissioner achievement
- c. A brief training topic and a time for ADCs to meet with their unit commissioners to review unit needs
- d. None of the above

8. "Commissioner Lifesaving" is—

- a. A process in which unit commissioners respond quickly when a unit has a life-threatening emergency
- b. Everything a commissioner does to help a unit stay healthy
- c. First aid skills such as CPR learned by commissioners
- d. First aid, swimming, and fire rescue skills that commissioners learned as Boy Scouts or Explorers

9. Explorer posts can receive unit service from—

- a. A unit commissioner
- b. A district Learning for Life committee
- c. The Learning for Life Division
- d. All of the above

10. You have been asked to make a presentation on the two most important ways commissioners can impact youth membership increases. You should include—

- a. Organizing new units and running school nights
- b. Preventing dropped units and ensuring full membership at the time of unit charter renewal
- c. Identifying unregistered boys at the district camporee and organizing new units
- d. Keeping district membership records and recruiting kids at school

11. An award that can only be earned by commissioners is—

- a. The Commissioner Key
- b. The Arrowhead Honor
- c. The Distinguished Commissioner Service Award
- d. All of the above

12. A good rule of thumb for the ratio of ADCs to unit commissioners is—

- a. 1 in 3
- b. 1 in 4
- c. 1 in 5
- d. 1 in 6

13. What should a district commissioner do who has a staff member who seems totally inadequate to do his or her job?

- a. Fire the sucker today
- b. Refer the problem to the professional
- c. Accept the fact that little can be done
- d. Review with your professional adviser the section in *The Commissioner Fieldbook*, No. 33621D, on “How to Remove a Volunteer”

14. When a Scout votes with his feet, walking out of a unit meeting never to return, it's probably because—

- a. Of the baseball team meeting down the street
- b. Uninspired leadership and program lacking fun and challenge
- c. His parents object to Scouting
- d. Illness or poor school grades

15. Effective service to rural and low-income urban areas requires which of the following?

- a. Additional methods and resources
- b. A neighborhood-based form of district/council outreach
- c. Commissioners and professionals with exceptional people skills
- d. All of the above

16. Kids are most likely to stay in a unit if—

- a. They are advancing in rank
- b. Their unit meets in the summer and youth members take part in a long-term camp or other outdoor event
- c. Unit meetings are fun, challenging, and inspiring
- d. The unit's commissioner makes sure unit leaders succeed

17. The tone and effectiveness of commissioner service is primarily set by—

- a. The quality of unit commissioners
- b. You
- c. The district commissioner and district executive
- d. None of the above

18. Commissioners can directly affect the quality of people selected as unit leaders by—

- a. Appointing the best people available
- b. Briefing the unit committee on the process as found in *Selecting Quality Leaders*, No. 18-981, and then coaching them as they complete the process
- c. Appointing your brother-in-law
- d. Personally conducting a commissioner kangaroo court

See QUIZ Answers on page 7.

KEY IDEAS FOR GOOD COMMISSIONER SERVICE

It is often useful to summarize key ideas without lengthier detail. Sometimes it is helpful to have a list of points to elaborate and illustrate out of your own personal experience.

Most of the following key points have been previously highlighted in *The Commissioner* newsletter or described in detail in our commissioner manuals.

1. Although a commissioner needs unit program information (or needs to know where to find it), his or her success depends largely on good people skills to effectively serve unit adults.
2. Exceptional commissioner service (our goal) exceeds unit leader expectations rather than barely meeting expectations.
3. The only reason for having commissioners is to help units succeed.
4. A commissioner plays several roles, including friend of the unit, BSA representative, “unit doctor,” teacher, and coach/counselor.
5. 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.
6. Be sure a new commissioner views the orientation video within 48 hours of being recruited and receives initial coaching from their ADC or DC within two weeks.
7. Guarantee that every new commissioner receives basic training within two months of being recruited.
8. *Continuing Education for Commissioners*, No. 33615C, is a resource based on the concept



that as commissioners we must continually adjust our skills to provide a more valuable service to our units. For all commission-

ers, training is a continuing process — at every meeting, every month, every year.

9. The unit commissioner is the council’s/district’s frontline diplomat and primary guide for unit adults.
10. Commissioner-professional relationships should involve the finest fraternal qualities. They both share the wreath of service.
11. “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.
12. Commissioners have many tasks, but the three most important are:
 - coaching unit adults to enrich unit program
 - being an enabler for unit problem solving, and
 - assuring the annual on-time renewal of the unit charter.
13. Increasing the number of units is one of the most direct causes of membership growth. The assignment of a unit commissioner during the new unit organization process is fundamental to helping a new unit to thrive.
14. Commissioner leaders strengthen commissioner operation by carrying out “Six Major Tasks for Volunteer Success”: 1. define responsibilities, 2. select and recruit, 3. orient and train, 4. coach volunteers, 5. recognize achievement, and 6. evaluate performance. ♦

ACCOUNTABILITY and the COMMISSIONER

- ✦ A unit commissioner learns that the Scoutmaster of one of his troops is being transferred to another city. Within three days, he has talked with the troop committee chairman and the chartered organization representative. He sets a date to meet with the troop committee to help them understand the process for replacing a unit leader. **THAT'S ACCOUNTABILITY.**
- ✦ An ADC gets sick and will miss tonight's district commissioner staff meeting. At the point in the meeting when everyone breaks out into ADC-unit commissioner team meetings, the district commissioner sits in with that team's unit commissioners to make sure their units get the help they need. They review unit needs and plan specific help. **THAT'S ACCOUNTABILITY.**
- ✦ A capable but new district commissioner discovers he doesn't have much of a staff and seems very hesitant on how to proceed. The council commissioner suggests to the field director that they meet with the new district commissioner and his district executive to brainstorm ideas for the district's action plan for recruiting a new commissioner staff. They are careful not to be overbearing with district leadership, but offer ideas, support, and encouragement. **THAT'S ACCOUNTABILITY.**
- ✦ By July, a Cub pack has not planned much of a fall program. Their unit commissioner carefully guides pack leaders through a pack program planning process and sits in on September meetings to make sure the pack program gets off to a good start. **THAT'S ACCOUNTABILITY.**
- ✦ A district executive asks a talented unit commissioner to handle the training topic at next month's district commissioner staff meeting. He makes sure the commissioner has the appropriate session outline from Continuing Education for Commissioners. **THAT'S ACCOUNTABILITY.**
- ✦ An ADC finds out that one of her unit commissioners has been selected as district camping committee chairman. She quickly identifies names of several persons she thinks would be a good replacement, and then calls her district commissioner to discuss what action they will take. This provides seamless service to the four units served by this unit commissioner. **THAT'S ACCOUNTABILITY.**

Quiz ANSWERS

- 1. **d.** More than 20. The district needs 20 unit commissioners just to meet the 1 unit commissioner per 3 unit ratio plus 4 ADCs to meet the 1 ADC per 5 unit commissioner ratio plus 3 roundtable commissioners and a district commissioner, for a total of 26 people.
- 2. **a.** See page 45 of the *Commissioner Fieldbook*, No. 33621D, for more information on commissioner training.
- 3. **d.** Immediately contact the Scout executive. He or she will see that proper procedures are followed as required by the BSA and state law. Volunteers are not to undertake investigations or make allegations of abuse or contact the alleged abuser. This is best left to trained professionals working through the Scout executive.
- 4. **a.** Commissioners are usually wonderful Scouters and can be asked to do many things. They must not fall into the trap of doing everything else in Scouting except their appointed job—unit service.
- 5. **d.** All of the above. This resource helps commissioners and professionals carry out all ongoing training beyond commissioner basic training.
- 6. **d.** Lapsed units are always a priority, as are any units with life-threatening problems.
- 7. **c.** ADC teams must share important observations from recent unit visits, identify key unit needs, and decide who will provide appropriate help.
- 8. **a.** Every commissioner of the council should be trained to be a "lifesaving commissioner."
- 9. **d.** Depends on how things are set up in the district and council and the nature of the local community.
- 10. **b.** Preventing dropped units and ensuring a full membership at unit charter renewal time. Other membership tasks are the responsibility of the district membership committee.
- 11. **d.** Be sure your district makes full use of all three.
- 12. **c.** 1 ADC for every 5 unit commissioners.
- 13. **d.** Please take some meeting time to share this with your district commissioners and council staff.
- 14. **b.** Your most important Scouting job is to visit units and to see that the unit has a great unit program.
- 15. **d.** Check out BSA rural and inner-city resource guidebooks.
- 16. **a, b, c,** and **d.** Again a reminder of commissioner priorities.
- 17. **c!!**
- 18. **b.** This is a great opportunity for you to make a major contribution as a commissioner. (Even though you can't personally appoint or remove a unit leader.)



YOUR DISTRICT EXECUTIVE

The special partnership between commissioners and the district executive is part of the core of Scouting's success. 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).

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, judgment, or experience. When the full resources of both parties are applied to decision making, the combination is almost unbeatable.

The district executive is a Scouting friend and counselor for every commissioner in the district. Working together is more effective when volunteers and professionals enjoy each other's company. Volunteers do not work for district executives, but with them on behalf of youth. The unselfish ser-

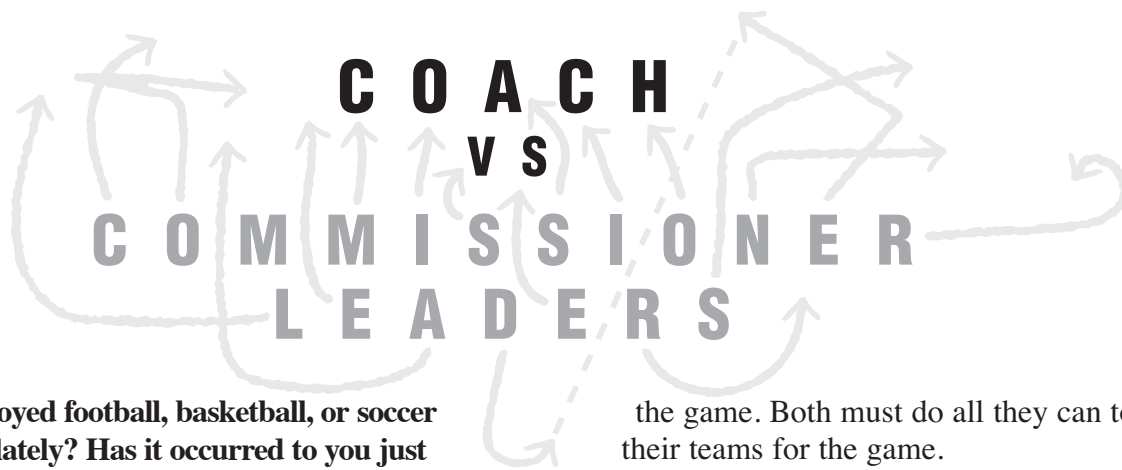
vice they both render and their common dedication breeds mutual respect and a feeling of kinship. One test of the relationship is whether the two parties think of each other as friends.

You can expect your district executive to:

1. Provide professional coaching
2. Give inspiration and encouragement
3. Maintain regular contact with heads of chartered organizations
4. Keep district records up to date
5. Arrange for help from the council service center
6. Provide vital behind-the-scenes administrative skill
7. Work with and support commissioners
8. Suggest action plans for recruiting commissioners

Take good care of your District Executive. Your District Executive cares about you. ♣

AS COUNCIL COMMISSIONER —
Share this article and discuss with each of your district commissioners. Ask your Scout executive to share with the council field staff.



Have you enjoyed football, basketball, or soccer on television lately? Has it occurred to you just how much we are like coaches? In particular, how council and district commissioners most closely parallel the coach.

Let's take recruiting, for example. Coaches determine what they need to fill the vacancies and weaknesses on the team; then they go after the best available prospects. Why? Because they know that their careers are in the hands of the players they successfully recruit. Administrative commissioners are the same way. They evaluate the vacancies, determine the weaknesses of the district, determine the top prospects available, and then go after them as hard as they can. In many cases, their success is determined by the caliber of volunteers he or she recruits.

After successfully recruiting the prospect, coaches begin the process of training the player. They teach them the system of the team and train them for the position they have in mind for the prospect. Likewise, district and council leaders train the commissioner for the position he or she will play. In some cases, it's a minor role until the player gains experience. In other cases the "superstar" is ready to start right away.

Motivation is key for administrative commissioners, whether they are telling an inspirational story to volunteers at the close of a roundtable or encouraging the unit commissioner to take one more action to help solve a unit problem. And we all know of the coach who exhorts the team to win one for the "Gipper."

And then it's game time. Whether it's the cross-state rival or the council's unit charter renewal plan, coaches and commissioners are looked to for the game plan and to have confidence in its success. Just as coaches can't throw the ball or score points, you must allow unit commissioners to play

the game. Both must do all they can to prepare their teams for the game.

Then comes the time in every game that every coach must face—when a key player is injured and has to be substituted. Scouting coaches must have backup players to substitute for a volunteer who has to leave the game.

During the game, coaches must be aware of the down and distance, the time remaining, and every other aspect of the game. Council and district commissioners must, likewise, be aware of all aspects of the program. And what about the player who is not doing the job? Coaches must have the courage and discipline to remove him or her when he or she is not performing. Coaches would be letting down the team if they left unproductive players in the game. The hardest part of the administrative commissioner's role as coach is to substitute for unproductive "players." We don't want to hurt their feelings, or maybe it's because we are afraid that there will be no one to replace the volunteer. But we owe it to the team to make the call and have the courage to follow through.

After the game, there was a press conference with the coach. He congratulated the fans, the management, and the team. He talked about the great job the team did. When he was asked about the plays that didn't work, he said that he hadn't prepared the team thoroughly enough, taking full responsibility. Our role as council and district commissioners is the same here, too. We give the credit to unit commissioners when things go right and accept the responsibility for a lack of preparation for things that don't work.

Then tomorrow we start preparing for the next game.

Commissioners and coaches: The job is the same; the field is different. ♦

Commissioner Priorities

In a world with so many needs and in the Scouting movement with so many opportunities, it's important to know our priorities.

At the recent national annual meeting in Chicago, our national commissioner shared some key thoughts about commissioner priorities. Please plan to share those thoughts with your commissioners in the days ahead.

Priority thought No. 1.

Commissioner service itself is truly a No. 1 priority in council success. Commissioners help units succeed and nothing in Scouting is more important than unit success.

Priority thought No. 2. As a commissioner, don't fall into the trap of doing everything else in Scouting except for your appointed job—unit service—it happens.

Commissioners are usually wonderful Scouters and can be asked to do many things. While these other Scouting activities might be important, they are often NOT the primary responsibility of commissioners.

You must concentrate your Scouting time on helping with specific unit needs and helping each unit become more effective with its program and operation.

Priority thought No. 3.

Prioritize unit needs. Keep a running list of needs, problems, and desirable improvements for each of your units. Highlight the most urgent needs and problems. Most people's time is limited. So, concentrate your energies on the unit needs you have highlighted.

For example, a unit commissioner becomes aware that the Scoutmaster of Troop 10 absolutely must be replaced. However, the commissioner has been asked by someone to find out who will represent his three units at a ticket sales kickoff, and get Troop 10 registered for the camporee, and solve a uniform problem in Troop 10. But hold on, absolutely nothing that commissioner might be expected to do is more important than helping Troop 10 with the replacement of its Scoutmaster.

Replacing a Scoutmaster involves the chartered organization and the troop committee. It might involve some very sensitive human relations and the need for a lot of careful commissioner diplomacy. It involves some important Scouting procedures; keeping things going during the transition of troop leadership; and getting the new Scoutmaster off to a good start.

The unit commissioner might not want to consider much else in Scouting until Troop 10 has a new Scoutmaster. Helping Troop 10 replace their Scoutmaster could be the difference between the life or death of the unit. By comparison, solving the uniform problem or getting someone out to a ticket sales meeting is inconsequential.

See the commissioner lifesaving section of the *Commissioner Fieldbook* for the process and specific procedures for treating the "hurry cases" of unit service. "Commissioner paramedics" deal with priorities.

Priority thought No. 4. A commissioner might be tempted to give the most attention to the healthiest and most active units. Good commissioners do not do that. They establish priority units. Priority units receive their most careful attention.

Priority thought No. 5. At district commissioner staff meetings, be sure the meeting is sharply focused on the needs of individual units, not preoccupied with district/council needs and projects.

Include time for assistant district commissioners and their unit commissioner teams to review the health of each unit and plan who will help meet specific unit needs during the month ahead. Priority should be given to unit trouble spots that could disrupt a unit, deciding who will provide help and discussing how to help. They share important observations from recent visits with unit people.

The concept for today's commissioner service focuses on the unit. The commissioner's specific mission is to keep units operating at maximum efficiency so that they can deliver a quality program to a growing membership.

In the 1990s, 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.

Three men working in a stone quarry were asked, "What are you doing here?" The first man said, "I'm cutting rock." The second man said, "I'm making \$10.75 an hour." But the third man said, "I'm building a cathedral."

Be sure your council is building a cathedral. Build a super team of people capable of providing the most dynamic commissioner service in the Boy Scouts of America. ♦

DO YOU HAVE A COMPLETE TEAM?

At the National Annual Meeting in San Antonio, the Boy Scouts of America launched a new report to help councils monitor their progress in providing a complete team of commissioners and district committee members.

Copies were distributed at the commissioner workshops and Key 3 seminars.

Similar to the report in *The Commissioner*, the expanded report shows the progress of local councils and areas, not just regional and national totals. The new report tabulates district committee people as well as commissioners and shows a comparison to the past year.

Council commissioners and Scout executives will receive this report at the end of each quarter.

- Use this report as another tool to motivate commissioner leaders and professional staff to complete your council's commissioner team.
- If the national report numbers seem low, take measures to ensure that current commissioners are registered. The report is based on the registration database.



- Be sure that your district Key 3s are using *Selecting District People*, No. 34512E, a state-of-the-art resource on recruiting district volunteers. District commissioners will find similar assistance in the *Commissioner Administration of Unit Service*, No. 34128D.

The Boy Scouts of America will also start publishing the top 20 councils with respect to commissioner registration. Regions may want to publish a regional top 20.

Many districts and councils have work to do. Some are doing great! Even if your council has achieved 100 percent of the commissioners and district committee people needed, consider recruiting quality trainees to fill future vacancies. People move on to new locations and new opportunities. Challenge your district Key 3s to quickly develop a complete team.

Then let *The Commissioner* know about your recruiting successes as well as creative things you have done to cause districts to maintain a complete commissioner team. ♣

Priorities For *council commissioners...*

1 VISION

Give all commissioners a vision of what it means to provide exceptional commissioner service to Scout units throughout the council.

People need a vision of the great things that they can accomplish. Good commissioner leadership projects such a vision.

2 QUALITY DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Work to upgrade the quality of people serving as district commissioners and uphold a high standard for their performance.

Help district chairmen and Scout professionals understand the qualities needed for a good district commissioner. Serve on a district nominating committee in those districts where the council president believes you could help the district replace its district commissioner.

3 A COMPLETE STAFF

Ensure adequate recruiting in all districts to achieve and maintain a ratio of one unit commissioner for every three units and one ADC for every five unit commissioners.

Join with the Scout executive to hold district commissioners and district executives accountable.

4 CONTINUING EDUCATION

Be sure that districts provide not only opportunities for immediate commissioner orientation and frequent basic training, but also provide monthly learning experiences for all commissioners.

Upgrade the quality of your annual council commissioner conference. Be sure that the conference includes the best in training sessions, fellowship, inspiration, and information on the latest in Scouting. Do everything possible to make it easy for everyone to attend, e.g., attractive setting and close to home.

5 PREVENTING DROPPED UNITS

Be sure each district has a commitment and a strategy to provide prompt, intensive, and persistent care when major problems occur that could threaten the life of a unit.

Develop a no-lapse/no-drop commitment in the council and each of its districts.

6 COMMISSIONER STYLE

Set a pattern of commissioner service characterized by:

- (A) *Service diplomacy*
- (B) *Exceptional service*
- (C) *"Roots and wings"*
- (D) *Good service recovery*

Share the ideas in the latest *Commissioner Fieldbook* on commissioner style. ♣