



**THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

2010

LEGION COLLEGE

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Will present MapPoint & Membership

PA American Legion



BUILDING EFFECTIVE MEMBERSHIP 2010

**MEMBERSHIP
IS EVERYONES
BUSINESS !!**

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Preparation and Training

Resources and Tools

Roles and Responsibilities

Improve Member Recruiting and Renewals

Realistic and Specific Goal Setting

Strong Public Relations Support

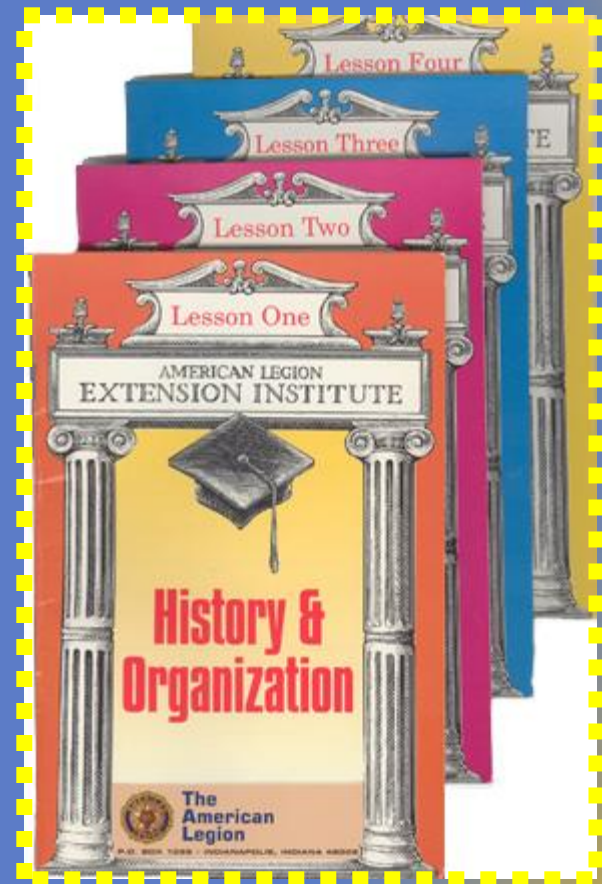
Effective Communications

Support Needed at all Levels

The American Legion Extension Institute

A course of study on the history, programs, policies, developments, positions, and future goals of The American Legion. Upon successful completion of the course, graduates receive a certificate. This course also serves as a handy reference set on the workings of the Legion.

Everyone here should try and complete this course. *If you haven't it's never too late.*
Price \$6.95



DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Essential Tools Needed

- The American Legion Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies
- The American Legion Post Membership Training Guide
- The American Legion Extension Institute Course
- Brochures, CDs, Pamphlets

POST COMMANDER

- Your leadership and guidance is essential to the success of your post.
- You are responsible for the duties of all officers of your post.
- You are guided by the constitution and the decisions of your membership.
- You are responsible for the success of all post programs.

Membership Chairman

1ST Vice Commander

- May be the strongest personality in the Post.
- Willing to work as hard as the commanders, maybe harder.
- Needs to promote membership within his respective position and aid the commanders in all membership endeavors and to take charge in the absence of his post commander.
- Needs to be well supplied with the necessary membership tools and resources.

Adjutants

- Same as a secretary of any organized body and a little more.
- All post activities revolve around him.
- Many Adjutants serve over a period of many years. A good post will recognize when it is time to change Adjutants.
- The Adjutant is the personnel officer.
- The Adjutant is the intimate contact with the individual member of the post.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

SUCCESSFUL MEMBERSHIP

IDEAS

BROCHURES

HANDBOOKS

DEVELOPING TECHNIQUES

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN LEGION IS A MATTER OF PRIDE

- Pride in Tradition.
- Pride in Heritage.
- Pride in Accomplishment.
- Pride in Serving.
- Pride in Belonging.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

- The American Legion is a strong thread in the fabric of America and to that thread strong we must grow our membership.
- The American Legion is *Still Serving America*.
- We have to let our communities know about our programs and the hours and monies we spend.
- These numbers to report are generated by our POST CONSOLIDATED REPORTS and we should miss no opportunity to report these numbers.
- We have to let our communities know of the FOUR PILLARS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, which we were founded on in 1919 and still holds true in 2010.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

- Membership in the American Legion drives all of efforts.
- Membership is the rock solid foundation of the American Legion.
- Membership is essential and it is the necessary ingredient for successful programs.
- So therefore without members there would be no legion programs. Without members we have no voice on Capital Hill. Without members there would be no accomplishments in assistance and support to veterans, their families, the community, state and nation.
- Through membership the American Legion has recorded consistent accomplishments for veterans, their families and our communities since 1919.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

- Membership teams can be a valuable resource when used to motivate and inspire our members.
- At each level of the American Legion we can share ideas and success stories in membership and our many programs that will grow this great organization of ours.
- We want each member to also share not only their success but their defeats and in turn receiving guidance and constructive criticism.
- We need a positive approach in membership to grow our organization.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

THE NECESSARY TEAMS NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH OUR MEMBERSHIP MISSION:

- CONTACT TEAM
- NEW MEMBER TEAM
- RETENTION TEAM
- Only you and your post can make it happen!

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CONTACT TEAM

- Identifies potential recruiting sites and good sources of membership.
- Identifies potential recruiting lists.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Roles and Responsibilities

CONTACT TEAM

- Identifies potential recruiting sites and good sources of membership.

Malls – Shopping Centers – Fairs

Community events – VA Facilities

Areas of large veterans population

Canvas the American Legion Aux and SAL

Reconnect Opportunity (See Reconnect Brochure)

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Roles and Responsibilities

CONTACT TEAM

- Identifies potential recruiting lists.
 - Property tax lists – Homestead Credit lists
 - Veterans preference lists
 - Former Department delinquencies
 - Current and former HQ Post (Post 945)
 - Other public listings available if allowed under public law

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Roles and Responsibilities

RETENTION TEAM

Retention this is where it is (our biggest problem)
contact current members (many different methods).

Personal contact is the most effective way of
communication to your current members and to
convince our non-renewals to renew.

Don't ever forget our members that doesn't visit the post.

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

WE CAN NEVER OVEREMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FOLLOWING

- RECRUITMENT

Prospects are everywhere

- RETENTION

Mad – Moved - Mortality

“The key to membership growth”

- RENEWALS

The answer to renewals is to retain our members

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

S.M.A.R.T GOAL SETTING

- SPECIFIC
- MEASURABLE
- ATTAINABLE
- REALISTIC
- TIME SENSITIVE

DEADLINES



Although your duties are many, varied, and time consuming, the one most important thing you are charged with is to obey ALL deadlines.

The correspondence you receive are almost always time sensitive. They sometimes require you to take action immediately! Do Not wait until the next Post meeting before you open these correspondences.

When acting on these correspondences always do so by the date on the letter or form.

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DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

EFFECTIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS SUPPORT

- Public Relations has a significant impact on our message.
- Gives us the ability to communicate to current & potential members.
- Creates a positive image of your post as a contributor to your communities.
- Everybody wants to belong to something good.
- Helps you be visible in your communities and intern be a viable post.

COMMUNICATION

MECHANICS OF COMMUNICATION

- Communication is a process in which the sender and the recipient get to play ball with a message in a field called a medium (the medium is how the message is sent).
- The goal here, whether communication is verbal, nonverbal or written is to make sure that all three elements work together well.
- Communications must be clear and concise.
- Communication, whether written, verbal. or nonverbal, is delivered in two paths.
- Internal path communications is directed internally to our own audience, legion family and our membership.
- External path communications is directed to outsiders, or anyone that is not in our legion family.

DEADLINES

TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- Be a good listener.
- Speak up if you do not understand information you have been given.
- Put information in writing as a note to yourself or a memo to your fellow legionnaires.
- Ask for guidance if you do not know how certain communication issues are handled.
- Think before you communicate.
- KISS & C (Keep It Simple, Stupid & Consistent).
- Understand body language.
- Focus on the mission of the Legion, not personalities.
- When in doubt, communicate.

DEADLINES

LEGION COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Tools that send communications through Department to National.

Dues – Charters – Resolutions

Tools that communicate at each level of the organization.

Electronic such as: Internet – Fax – Telephone

Face to Face such as: Recruiting – Visiting – Social Activities

Written Communications such as:

Legion (Dispatch/Magazine)

Post Newsletters/Bulletins

Letters/Special Announcements

Surveys

DEADLINES

- Communication is THE key to the success of your post.
- Newsletters are an excellent source in getting the word out.
- Encourage every member to attend your Post, District, Section and DEC Meetings.
- Personal Contact is still the most effective way to communicate.
- **Only you** can make it happen!

DEADLINES

ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS REQUIRES SUPPORT AT ALL
LEVELS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP
DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP
DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP
POST MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

POST INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Notify your members through post meetings, newsletters, flyers, bulletin boards, personal visits, advertising, press releases, personal phone contacts and many other methods.



DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAM

Challenges

- Building three teams alone will challenge us.
- Leaders are critical of their ability to motivate and influence others.
- Take advantage of recognition programs.
- Post should give many awards along with participating for National and Department awards.
- Sometimes at the post only the recruiters are awarded.
- Use the tools and resources available at all levels of the American Legion.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS AND AWARDS

- Race to the top
- Gold Brigade
- Silver Brigade
- 100% Club
- Recruiter of the year
- Commander's incentive awards

BUILDING EFFECTIVE POST MEMBERSHIP TEAMS

DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION PROGRAMS AND AWARDS

- AP Sundry Award
- Top District Commander (Class Awards)
- Post Commander of the Year
- Adjutant of the Year
- Go-Getters Program
- Go-Getters drawings (Over \$1600 awarded)

Questions & Answers



PROTOCOL

Each year we receive many requests from Post & District Commanders on the proper procedure for setting up programs and seating arrangements for official functions.

The following will serve as a guide to those individuals responsible for the various social affairs and functions of the Post. IF ANY ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED AT ANYTIME, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT.

Planning

- Meetings or social engagements are the responsibility of the Post or District Commander.
- Appoint your committee at least 3-4 months in advance of the actual date of the event.
- Have the committee meet regularly to make sure plans are running smoothly.
- Committee chairmen should appoint people to take charge of the following:
 - Parking of dignitaries vehicles
 - Welcoming dignitaries
 - Decorating tables
 - Place Cards for head table or guest tables
 - Entertainment

Guest Invitations

- Send invitations EARLY.
- State clearly the date, time and place of the event.
- What type of event is it – Joint with the Auxiliary or Past Commander/President dinner, etc.
- Is it a dinner or just a meeting.
- Is the individuals spouse invited? *NOTE: The spouse or traveling companion should also be an invited guest.*
- What role will the guest play after dinner? Brief remarks or main speaker?
- Will housing be provided? If so, what hotel (address, directions, phone, etc.)

Department Commander Invitation

- The Commander is in great demand, so be sure to send invitations EARLY and provide an alternate date.
- All invitations must be written and sent to the Department Adjutant's office.
- An RSVP will be given as to the Commander's availability to attend.
- The Commander will let you know who will accompany him.

Date of the Affair

- Have parking spaces available for your guests nearest the building.
- Have someone meet dignitaries when they arrive.
- Arrange special seating for guests until the dinner begins.
- Introduce your Post Officers to the guests.
- Make sure your Post Home is neat and clean.

During Dinner

- Make every attempt to start on time.
- Escort Commander and special guests to the head table.
- Make every effort to use the POW/MIA ceremony before dinner.
- If dinner is served buffet style, the head table should BE SERVED. If not buffet style, then the head table is SERVED FIRST.
- When eating, all male Legionnaires should remove their caps.

Program

- American Legion Auxiliary guests should speak first.
- Department Commander should be the last person to speak.
- You need a table close to the head table for all guests for the dignitaries.
- Keep the program short, otherwise you will lose your audience.

Entertainment

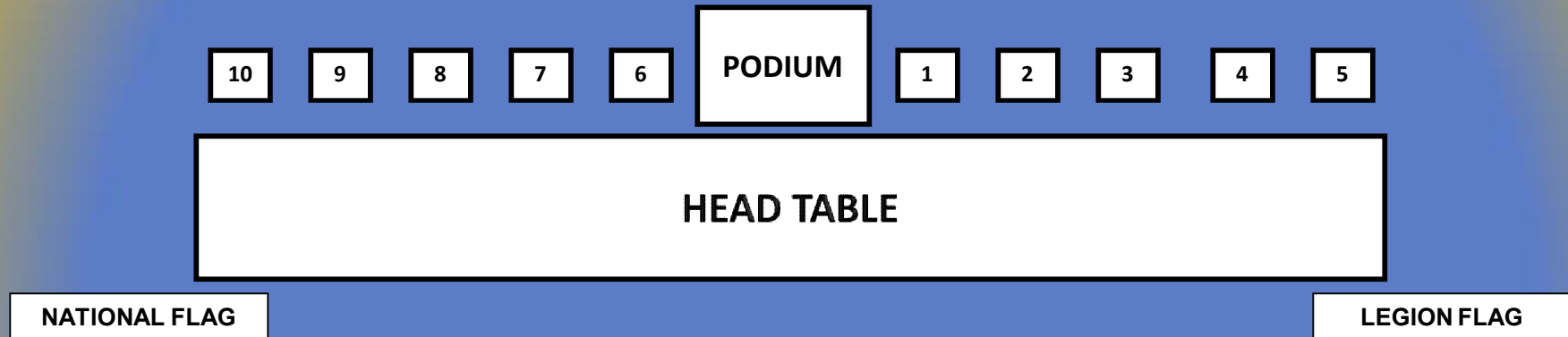
- If head table must be moved, have another table ready for your guests to be seated.
- Have someone familiar with the Post remain with the guests to make them feel at home.
- Provide refreshments for your guests.

Conclusion of the Event

- When your guests leave, escort them to their automobiles.
- Thank them for coming.

**REMEMBER, WHEN IN DOUBT,
COMMON SENSE WILL PREVAIL!**

Seating



1. Honored guest/main speaker
2. Spouse or guest of main speaker
3. Highest ranking guest Department Commander/Vice Commander/District Commander/Post commander or the same ranking person in the Auxiliary or SAL, depending upon who is sponsoring the event.
4. Highest ranking guest not already seated.
5. Chaplain
6. Master of ceremonies
7. Next highest ranking guest not already seated.
8. Next highest ranking guest not already seated.
9. Next highest ranking guest not already seated.
10. Next highest ranking guest not already seated.

This is a general rule and may be altered and changed to accommodate various programs. If the head table can accommodate more seats then you should follow the seating above and add seating to the far left and far right. If the table has to be smaller, it is acceptable to place guests at a prominent table in front of the podium or two tables as the case may be. Also, it is acceptable to have guests of guests seated at the same type of table in front of the head table.

HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

WHAT IS A RESOLUTION?

- A formal expression of the official opinion or will of the Post.
- Any proposal transmitted beyond your Post and within the organization must be “Germane” – closely related to the purpose for which The American Legion exists.
- Resolutions should be well written.
- Resolutions are all important to the policies and practices of The American Legion.
- The state and National organization cannot act on a given problem in the absence of a controlling resolution. However, we must act on a matter when mandated to do so by a resolution which has been properly adopted by the Department Convention or the Department Executive Committee.

Procedures

- If a Post or District submits a resolution, it remains the responsibility of the Post or District Commander to make sure each resolution truly reflects the sense of action taken by the Post or District – and is presented in the best possible form.
- A resolution should deal only with one subject.
- A resolution should contain “supporting documents” and its intent should be clearly defined.
- A resolution should be free of errors of fact and law.
- A resolution should contain material relevant to the purposes and programs of The American Legion.

Resolutions have two major points:

- PREAMBLE* – sets forth the reasons for the resolution.
- RESOLVING SECTION* – sets forth the intent of the resolution.

The preamble should be done AFTER you are finished with the resolving section. You can make better statements for the preamble once you have completed the resolving section. During a committee or floor debate, a preamble is usually amended last because changes in the resolution may require changes in the preamble.

Resolving Section

The resolving section of a resolution begins with the word “RESOLVED”, usually printed in capital letters and followed by a comma. Between this opening word and the statement of the resolutions intent should be the following information:

1. Identification of resolving authority.
2. The circumstance and place of action.
3. The date of action.
4. The first word after the above information would be “That” with a capital “T”.

Example: Resolved, by Post No. 400, The American Legion, Department of Pennsylvania, in regular (or special) meeting assembled in Carmichaels, PA on September 24, 2004, That...

The word “That” immediately following the resolving clause introduced the clause which is the object of the verb “Resolved”. It also shows the reader to find the point at which the meat of the resolution begins.

Resolving Section

Example: Resolved, by The American Legion, Department of Pennsylvania at their 81st Department Convention assembled in Philadelphia, PA on July 8-11, 1999, That The American Legion vigorously urges the Veterans Administration to promulgate an updated national cemetery master plan with a projected opening date for a national cemetery in the Pittsburgh, PA area.

There will be times when it is necessary to attach additional clauses or paragraphs to a resolution's resolving section in order to cover matters closely related to the main intent.

Resolving Section

Example: opening date for a national cemetery in the Pittsburgh, PA area; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to each and every member of Congress and the two senators representing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

NOTE: A PERIOD IS USED ONLY ONCE – AT THE CLOSE OF THE LAST PARAGRAPH.

The Resolution Preamble

The preamble of a resolution is made up of one or more paragraphs, each of which begins with “WHEREAS”. Two or more paragraphs are joined together by a semicolon followed by “and”.

Example: WHEREAS, The American Legion is an organization of war veterans who have dedicated themselves to the service of the community, state and nation; and

WHEREAS, This service is performed through The American Legion’s basic programs; and

Please note that each paragraph should contain a statement of fact, which is logically related to the intent of the resolution and explains and justifies the need for the resolution. Each paragraph would stand alone as a complete sentence if the “WHEREAS” were removed and a period were used in place of the semicolon at the end.

The final or last paragraph of the preamble is joined to the resolving section of the resolution to the resolving section by a semicolon using the following phrase: WHEREAS...; now therefore be it

Do not use a period in the preamble.

Resolutions are important business to The American Legion. Write them with thought and care.