

LEADERSHIP

2027-2018

In this packet you will find many ideas on how a member and a unit can employ leadership skills. You may be surprised at some or the suggestions, you may think to yourself "Well of course, anyone knows that." The question that needs to be in your mind as you look this over is "Do I practice what I am reading?" It is so easy to become lax in our day to day actions that we forget to practice what we know to be correct.

Leadership is about encouraging others and assisting others when we notice them getting bogged down or overwhelmed. A leader does not have hold an office but is there to help others get organized and function to the best of their ability.

A leader in the American Legion Auxiliary needs to have basic knowledge about the organization and its history. That way they can answer questions potential members may ask about the ALA. You will find quite a few references to the *Welcome to the American Legion Auxiliary Senior Auxiliary Basics, A Course on our History and Legacy*. It is an organized course on the History of our organization, the different programs and what their functions are, and how we as an organization function. I strongly suggest taking the course.

Mid-Year reports are not hard, just write down what you have done that apply to Leadership. Same goes for the Year-End reports. They really are important.

Wishing you a great year serving our Vets, military families, and children.

Nancy O'Leary, Chairman

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LEADERSHIP 2017-2018

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Learn about and promote participation in the ALA.

Ideas for the Member:

- *Work with a mentor to develop/enhance interest, skills and knowledge of the ALA.
- * Become familiar with the different types of leadership training available through your department, the national organization, and your community.
- * Build your leadership skills by volunteering to chair a short-term project.
- * Give a short presentation on ALA training opportunities to the unit.

Ideas for a Unit:

- * Get to know the members of your unit. Help them to identify the skills they can put to use in service to our veterans. Not all leaders have titles.
- * Survey members to identify their interests and skills. Match projects based on individual members strengths.
- * Develop a plan to incorporate at least one aspect of leadership learning, monthly or quarterly, at meetings.
- * Hold a workshop/brunch focusing on preparation of reports and applying for awards.
- * Provide the ALA pin to new members.
- * Purchase a Unit Guidebook to share among members at meetings and encourage them to go online to download information.
- * Identify individuals willing to assist members who wish to acquire or strengthen computer skills in order to communicate via the internet.
- * Participate in the ALA Academy as a unit.

Enhance leaders' knowledge about ALA history, programs, and organization.

Ideas for a Member:

- *Take *Welcome to the American Legion Auxiliary Senior Auxiliary Basics, A Course on our History and Legacy* at www.ALAforVeterans.org under the Leadership tab.
- * Attend district/department training sessions/workshops.
- * Volunteer to be a trainer/course leader.
- * Attend an ALA Mission Training session or other national event.

Ideas for the Unit:

- *Initiate new members. Offer every new member an orientation packet.
- * Offer an ALA information refresher course for all members.

- *Encourage members to take *Welcome to the American Legion Auxiliary Senior Auxiliary Basic, A Course on our History and Legacy* at www.ALAforVeterans.org under the Leadership tab.
- * Recognize members who have completed the course either in a meeting or via public relations.
- * Encourage members to participate in Mission Training or other national event.

Encourage the use of ALA reference documents and materials, such as the Unit Guide Book, Unit, Department, and National Constitution & Bylaws, Department Operations Guide, ALA Girls State Program Guide, and the national website listing of previous annual reports, to include the Centennial Strategic Plan initiatives.

Ideas for a member:

- *Download/purchase the referenced documents and become familiar with them.
- *Volunteer to assist a Junior member in learning about the documents of the ALA.
- * Ask questions about any programs or terminology you don't fully understand.
- * Ask members to review the Unit Guide Book, Unit Constitution & Bylaws, Department Constitution & Bylaws and National Constitution & Bylaws, noting things that are puzzling or do not understand. Bring these questions to your leadership chairman for clarification.
- * Participate in the ALA Innovative Leadership Video Contest Challenge. If chosen, your video will be playing on the ALA YouTube channel. Go to www.ALAforVeterans.org or your department Leadership Chairman for specific information.

Ideas for a Unit:

- *Set aside a time to discuss important ALA documents at unit meetings and develop a committee to address changes in procedures based upon a review of the referenced documents.
- * Develop a plan to assist Junior members in learning about the referenced documents.
- * Utilizing available materials, collectively develop a unit plan for projects on which your unit wishes to work.
- * Hold a workshop to explain unit Constitution & Bylaws, Standing Rules, how the unit finances are structured, how the budget is planned, and how to write meeting minutes.
- *Set aside a "show me where it's printed" at meetings where members can ask why something is done the way it is or where in the governing documents it says we have to do it this way.
- * Ask members to review the Unit Guide Book, Unit Constitution & Bylaws, Department Constitution & Bylaws and National Constitution & Bylaws noting things they don't understand or find puzzling and address what comes from the discussion by documenting the results. Set aside time to answer any questions that arise from any discussion on ALA documents. Follow the guidelines on www.ALAforVeterans.org. Submit, to the national organization, the name of any member who demonstrates an innovative leadership recruitment or development practice, for a National President "Shout Out." Follow guidelines on www.ALAforVeterans.org.

Offer a mentoring program, utilizing the knowledge and experiences of members who have served as leaders beyond the unit level.

Ideas for members:

- *Complete a (member/leader data) unit survey for your unit. Refer to www.ALAforVeterans.org, Leadership page and How To Sheet found at the end of this program Plan.
- *Volunteer to be a mentor for a member or Junior member on the unit/department level.
- * Learn the process and apply for a unit, department, and/or national appointment.
- * Seek election to a unit, department, or national office.
- *Apply for a unit, department, or national committee appointment.

Ideas for units:

- *Use positive, experienced members to train and guide new members.
- *Encourage members to volunteer to train/guide new members.
- *Encourage members to become “experts” in some areas so that they can become the unit mentor in that area.
- *Discover potential leaders and talent within your unit by collecting a unit survey form from every member.

Nurture a culture of goodwill at all levels of the organization.

Ideas for members:

- *Resolve to consider your own behavior before evaluating others’. Expect the best of people.
- *Participate in discussions or debates while demonstrating respect for opinions that are different from your own. When you disagree, extend the olive branch of friendship since we all share a common mission.
- *Speak privately with another member directly, rather than involving others with your concerns.

Ideas for units:

- *Invite new members to participate in meetings and events.
- *Always greet new members and offer a new member packet.
- *Provide unit officers/board of directors contact information.
- *Unit leaders should encourage members to work their issues out directly with the parties involved rather than attempting to fix the situation by intervening.
- *Listen to what members have to say and thank them for their ideas.
- *Be open, rather than critical, of the ideas of others.
- *Assist in positive solutions to conflicts by focusing on the desired outcome.
- *Give praise and recognition when members do what is asked or go beyond what was expected.

Leadership Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and are intended as an opportunity for mid-year correction. Each Department Leadership Chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the Division Leadership Chairman, plus copy the National Leadership Chairman.

Year-End Reports

Annual reports reflect the program of units in the department, and may result in a national award for participation if award requirements are met. Each Department Leadership Chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the Division Leadership Chairman, plus copy the National Leadership Chairman. Members and units should follow their department's protocol and deadlines.

**For deadlines and contact information, please consult the Annual Supplement to the 2017-2022 Programs Action Plan or visit the Leadership Committee page on the national website, www.ALAforVeterans.org.*

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

- What department trainings were held for units and/or the department and were they well attended by returning and new participants?
- What topics or presentations were included in your trainings?
- Of members attending these trainings, did you require feedback concerning what they learned, how this training will improve their ability to lead, and what trainings they would like to attend in the future?
- Did you hold training on nurturing a culture of goodwill?
- Did your department successfully implement the unit member/leader data survey? What were the unit responses?

Leadership Awards

Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing! It helps us tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just three simple steps to add your part to our national success story:

- 1) Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet found in the Awards sections of the Programs Action Plan.
- 2) Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award's materials and guidelines section.
- 3) Submit as indicated in the Annual Supplement to the Programs Actions Plan.

National Report and Awards Cover Sheet, deadlines, and Leadership Committee contact information may be found on the Leadership Committee page on the national website, www.ALAforVeterans.org.

- A. ***Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Leadership Program***
- Award: Citation Plaque

- Presented to: One unit in each division (5) that best demonstrates innovative methods to help members develop the leader within.
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words
 - Types of training provided
 - Number of members attending leadership skills workshops/trainings
 - Attach an award cover sheet including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the department and Unit Leadership Chairman
 - Must have participation in *American Legion Auxiliary Senior Auxiliary Basics, A Course on our History and Legacy*.
 - Pictures and examples are encouraged.
 - Must show increased participation in Mission Training

B. Department Award: Best Department Leadership Program

- Award: Citation to a department in each division (5)
- Presented to: One department in each division that best demonstrates what her department did to promote a culture of goodwill.
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words
 - Include recommendations from units and members.
 - Pictures and examples are encouraged
 - Attach an award cover sheet, including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the Department Leadership Chairman.

How to Sheets

- How to Utilize a Member Data Survey Form
- How to Conduct a Unit Meeting
- How to Lead a Small Unit
- How to Grow Leadership Capacity, Nurturing a Culture of Goodwill

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. www.ALAforVeterans.org
 - a. *ALA Senior Basics Course: A Course on our History and Legacy*
 - b. *Junior Leadership Course: "The ALA: My Organization and What I need to Know to Grow as a Member"*
 - c. PowerPoint: "Officer Duties and Responsibilities"
 - d. How to sheets
 - e. *ALA Unit Guide Book*
 - f. *ALA Constitution & Bylaws*
 - g. ALA New Member Packet, refer to Membership Programs Actions Plan How To sheets



HOW TO UTILIZE A MEMBER DATA SURVEY FORM

Committee:

Leadership

Contact Information for Questions:

Leadership@ALAforVeterans.org

Utilize member strengths (ALA Centennial Strategic Plan, Goal 3D)

Not all members profess to be leaders but each member of your unit brings with her talents and strengths that will enhance the unit. While meetings allow us to become acquainted with members, not all members are able or willing to attend. You still would like their help when needed. Far too often we don't really know each member's training, likes or what she is able to offer the unit.

What is the purpose of a member data survey?

This form, when completed by each unit member, will give the unit a snapshot of the strengths each member possesses. Have each member of your unit complete a form. Decide who in the unit will be responsible for maintaining member records. Then, use these forms when you need help in the unit. For example, need a yearly audit of your "books?" The survey has identified someone in your unit who is a professional accountant. She doesn't come to meetings, but she may be willing to help the unit by auditing the books.

Ideas:

- Make copies of the data survey form and have each member in your unit complete and return it to the unit president. (*The Data Survey Form is in the Leadership Program Action Plan how to sheets.*)
- Have a designated person or committee members contact unit members who do not attend meetings to explain and complete the form remotely.
- The unit president compiles survey information and establishes her own references.
- The unit selects a person responsible for maintaining member survey records.
- The department provides a copy of the survey on their website for units to download, and includes a copy in their department's Programs Action Plan.
- Departments should award department certificates to units that have 100% of their membership complete the survey.



American Legion Auxiliary
Member Data Survey

Name

Phone Number- Home

Address

Phone Number – Work

City/State/Zip

Phone Number – Cell

Briefly tell us about yourself and your family:

What interests or hobbies do you have?

In order to help our unit and community grow and to honor our military and veterans would you be interested in any of the following:

- People: _____
Participating in Education Activities: _____
Working with Youth: _____
Scholarships: _____
Community Awareness/Activities: _____
Helping with Unit Activities: _____
Fundraising: _____
Assisting Auxiliary Members in Need (Auxiliary Emergency Fund): _____
Working projects that benefit our military and veterans: _____
If you are physically unable, would you be able to assist in your home with projects: _____
Or helping with a phone tree, when the need arises: _____
Do you have experience in a leadership role? _____

Please explain:

Thank you for continuing to honor our veterans, military and their families.



HOW TO CONDUCT A UNIT MEETING

Committee:

Leadership

Contact Information for Questions:

Leadership@ALAFORVeterans.org

The manner in which a unit meeting is conducted has a great bearing on its success or failure. Unless a meeting is well planned, intelligently conducted, and subjects are presented and discussed interestingly, members cannot be expected to be faithful in attendance. Routine business should be transacted in an efficient manner, yet the opportunity should be presented for active participation of members in the program. It is most important that unit elections and all unit business be conducted in accordance with unit bylaws, the current edition of "Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised," and department and national constitution and bylaws. All unit presidents must remember to be impartial while presiding and not participate in discussion. The majority vote rules, but the minority has the right to be heard. Committee members and officers may transact detailed business and should only bring important matters before the unit for decision. Special monthly activities should be stressed, and district and department officers, as well as local speakers, should be asked to add interest to the programs. Variety should be introduced in music and entertainment.

The President as Presiding Officer

- Calls the meeting to order at the designated time and, if a quorum is present, proceeds with necessary business.
- Preserves order throughout the meeting.
- Follows the accepted order of business.
- Refers to herself as "the Chair."
- Decides parliamentary questions. The president states the motion clearly after it has been seconded and before allowing discussion.
- Takes no part in any discussion while presiding; refrains from expressing a personal opinion on questions before the house; avoids all personal bias when giving information to the organization.
- Calls upon the vice president to preside if she wishes to speak on a motion or leave the chair. Remains out of chair until the vote on the pending motion is taken.
- May vote according to local bylaws.
- Recognizes a member who has not spoken previously on the question in preference to one who has spoken.



Suggested Order of Business

While this suggested order of business for unit meetings includes items that will not be used at every meeting throughout the year, this may be of some assistance to presidents of new units and to others who are not entirely familiar with the business to be transacted. The order should be modified to fit the circumstances of the particular occasion.

1. Call to Order
2. Advancement of Colors (optional); Salute to the colors if colors are not advanced
3. Prayer
4. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
5. National Anthem or other patriotic song
6. Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary
7. Roll call of officers
8. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
9. Treasurer's Financial Report
10. Initiation of candidates (quarterly, biannually, or annually, as is the unit custom)
11. Reports of: president, secretary, unit officers, executive committee, Membership committee, standing committees, special committees
12. Reading of communications, including those from national, department and district officers
13. Unfinished business
14. New business
15. Election and installation of officers
16. Announcements
17. Program - educational and entertaining (optional)
18. Adjournment of business meeting
19. Closing prayer
20. Retirement of Colors (optional). The American flag and the banner of the American Legion Auxiliary in miniature and in a small stand should not be used for the advancement or retirement of colors, as the stand of colors was not intended to be used for this purpose.

Unit Meeting Terminology

Call to Order: The presiding officer first calls the meeting to order.

Reading of the Minutes: The president asks the secretary to read the minutes of the previous regular meeting. If special meetings have been held, these minutes should be acted upon after the regular ones. The presiding officer asks for any corrections or additions to the minutes, she then declares the minutes "approved as read" or "approved as corrected" if any corrections have been made. The minutes can also be distributed ahead of time and adopted without a full reading.

Statement of the Treasurer: After the reading of the report by the treasurer, the report is entered into the minutes and filed for audit. At the annual meeting the annual report is read, and the auditor's report is read. The report of the auditor including the treasurer's report is accepted.



Reading of Communications: The secretary reads all communications from the department and national headquarters, local organization notices and matters of general interest. Any action, which may arise from the reading, is deferred until unfinished business or new business is considered.

Unfinished Business: Any business postponed from the previous meeting or any matter introduced at the meeting on which action of the unit was deferred is unfinished business. The secretary from the minutes of the last meeting prepares a list of such unfinished business for the presiding officer. Only when the unfinished business has been disposed of may new business be brought forward, unless the regular order of business has been modified by vote of the members present.

New Business: Any business brought forward for the first time.

Announcements: The date of the next meeting or special event is announced. If a social hour is to follow, this should be announced at this time.

Program: The president asks the program chairman to take charge.

Closing Prayer: The president asks the chaplain to offer the closing prayer.

Charge: The president states, "Till we meet again let us remember that our obligation to our country can be fulfilled only by the faithful performance of all duties of citizenship. Let service to the community, state and nation be ever a main objective of the American Legion Auxiliary and its members. Let us ever be watchful of our organization and ourselves, that nothing shall swerve us from the path of Justice, Freedom, Loyalty and Democracy."

Adjournment: The president states, "If there is no further business to come before this meeting, the meeting is adjourned."

Retirement of the Colors: The color bearers will retire the Colors (Optional). If colors are not retired the president should say, "Colors in place, hand salute."



HOW TO LEAD A SMALL UNIT

Committee:

Leadership

Contact Information for Questions:

Leadership@ALAforVeterans.org

"History, although sometimes made up of the few acts of the great, is more often shaped by the many acts of the small." – Mark Twain

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Avoid the "burnout" syndrome. Ask members to buy into a "one" concept: mentor one member, write one article for the unit newsletter, volunteer to be a greeter at one meeting or make reminder meeting calls to members for one meeting. By not overwhelming members with large projects, they will have the opportunity to adjust to learning and helping build their unit. If an experience is enjoyable, members will be more likely to look forward to helping more.
- Develop a plan to continually develop new leadership within your unit. As members are selected to chair committees, mentor them. Offer help when needed. Be prepared to provide support when asked or assign another mentor for support. Provide training sessions. Consider that you may have seasoned unit members capable and available for help with the training. Also, other community leaders may be willing to provide leadership training.
- Communicate with members. Find those who may wish to help contact members via phone/email or personal contact for such activities as meetings and program participation. Utilize local media. Foster good relations with local newspapers, TV and radio. Issue news releases. Publish the meeting schedule at the beginning of the year in your unit newsletter, and write "TBA" (To Be Announced) for those programs still tentative. Invite a member familiar with social networking to set up and monitor an account for the unit.
- Work in groups of like-minded programs, rather than each program individually. Some units have said it is hard to work all programs when they have few active members. The grouping system is a way to simplify the programs so you need no more than five program chairmen instead of 15 or more program chairmen. Grouping allows for more combined and efficient efforts within a unit. For examples: Juniors, Education, Children & Youth, and ALA Girls State/Nation can be grouped into one "youth" program grouping.
- You are not expected to complete all action steps in the Programs Action Plan; just pick a few that fit your unit well. If unit members enjoy their work, it will create an inviting atmosphere, and others who care about veterans will want to join in.



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- Consider implementing quality programs to help invigorate meetings. Survey the interests of the membership when considering topics - a great way to reinforce information about Auxiliary programs.
 - Be positive! Unit leaders have an obligation to minimize criticism and maximize positive feedback. A small unit needs and deserves frequent kudos for each of its successes.



HOW TO GROW LEADERSHIP CAPACITY, NURTURING A CULTURE OF GOODWILL

Committee:

Leadership

Contact Information for Questions:

Leadership@ALAforVeterans.org

“The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership.”

If we fail in our efforts to cultivate leadership ability, our leadership will deteriorate and ultimately disappear. So where do we begin?

Build confidence in those you lead

- Help people learn and develop. To increase members’ confidence, you should encourage them to utilize the Auxiliary Basics course (www.ALAforVeterans.org) and the ALA Leadership Academy; and to attend ALA Mission Training or conferences held in their departments.
- A great way to build up members’ competence—and thereby their confidence—is to delegate specific tasks that will help them grow in an area they’re interested in. Just be careful that you don’t delegate too soon or too quickly. Your job is to help members set reachable goals and, if necessary, to break difficult tasks into smaller, more manageable steps.
- Focus on member’s strengths. Their confidence (and motivation) will generally grow when they’re given the chance to put their skills or expertise into practice.
- Be supportive. One of the most fundamental ways to boost people’s confidence is to actively support them and build them up emotionally. When you get to know people on a more personal level (e.g., what motivates them; what really matters to them) you’ll intuitively know how to best support them.

Treat all members with dignity and respect

- Treat everyone with respect. Each of us has a direct impact on developing future leaders by setting an example for others to emulate.
- Actively praise a member and provide positive feedback when someone does something well. We all like to feel appreciated and it takes so little to say, “Thanks, that was an awesome job you did!”
- Build members up and let them know that it’s OK to make mistakes. When you remove the fear of failure, people will be more likely to take good risks.

Challenge them

- Including others in projects or programs helps build emotional and creative capacity.



- Leaders should inspire, challenge, enable and encourage members. They should mobilize others toward transforming our values into action, our vision into reality, and potential obstacles into innovations.
- Empower members.
- Empowerment begins by painting the big-picture for those you lead. Empowerment also is all about trust.
- Leaders should give opportunities to those they lead, and then hold them accountable.
- Share with them past insecurities or challenges you faced when you first assumed a leadership role. Your openness will only make them feel more confident and inspired by your example.
- Acknowledge past mistakes. People want to work with someone who is human.

Listen and listen more

- When building a member's confidence, listening to them is crucial. Allow them to communicate openly and honestly about their strengths, weakness, fears, accomplishments, and ultimate goals.
- Actively listen to what others have to say before giving your viewpoint. Demonstrate, by your actions, that their thoughts and ideas are important to you. Remember your reaction and body language is an important indicator that you are truly listening.

Connect with your members

- Connection doesn't happen unless you invest the time to learn about someone's unique personality, perspective and motivations. Ask questions of members to uncover their interests, while observing them in action to find out their leadership strengths and potential.
- Demonstrate your commitment to their success by consistently adding value to them, providing ongoing encouragement, and making yourself available.

Be a model they can emulate

- Effective leaders should seize every opportunity to express, by their own example, their deep commitment to our organization. Leading by example makes our vision and our values tangible.
- Effective leaders do what they say they will. This builds credibility and trust among members, who realize that their leaders' promises are not empty words.
- Effective leaders are able to regroup and determine a new course when faced with adversity or an unexpected obstacle. They understand that needs and goals change over time and they must adapt to meet them.
- Leaders take initiative and responsibility for their actions.

"It takes a village to raise a child," is a popular African proverb. By the same token, it takes an organization to raise a leader. Developing leadership is a serious endeavor, but it's worth the time and effort because leaders are necessary for our organization to thrive into the future.
