

**The American Legion**  
**Department of Illinois**

**Leadership, Protocol *and***  
**Parliamentary Procedure**  
**Guidebook**



**“For God and Country”**

# **PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION**

***FOR GOD AND COUNTRY WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER FOR  
THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:***

***TO UPHOLD AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA; TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER; TO FOSTER AND  
PERPETUATE A ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICANISM; TO PRESERVE  
THE MEMORIES AND INCIDENTS OF OUR ASSOCIATIONS IN THE  
GREAT WARS; TO INCULCATE A SENSE OF INDIVIDUAL OBLIGATION  
TO THE COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION; TO COMBAT THE  
AUTOCRACY OF BOTH THE CLASSES AND THE MASSES; TO MAKE  
RIGHT THE MASTER OF MIGHT; TO PROMOTE PEACE AND GOOD-WILL  
ON EARTH; TO SAFEGUARD AND TRANSMIT TO POSTERITY THE  
PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY; TO  
CONSECRATE AND SANCTIFY OUR COMRADESHIP BY OUR DEVOTION  
TO MUTUAL HELPFULNESS.***

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# **Leadership Guidelines**

## **Part I *Protocol and Parliamentary Procedure Guidebook***



## **The American Legion**

### **Department of Illinois**

## AIDS TO LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES

**POST and DISTRICT** guidelines to aid in carrying out the Leadership Program; this outline is only a suggestion and can be changed to suit individual Posts and Districts.

1. Recommend to Posts that **every** Post Officer should have the Post Commander's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies, not only to read it, but to study it.
2. To impress the importance of studying the POST, DISTRICT, and DEPARTMENT and NATIONAL CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS.
3. To encourage Post Officers, and the membership in general, to read "The history of the American Legion" available from "emblem sales", local libraries, and on the internet.
4. Set up a program on Parliamentary procedure and the proper methods of conducting meetings. **We will need an Agenda!**
5. To encourage a program on the study of Human Relations. This is very important to good Leadership, at the Post, District, or Department Level.

**(T) THINK** before taking action!!

**(H) HOW** can we release the motivation within our members so they will have the desire to do the very best job???

**(I) IS** the member you have appointed the best qualified or the one you like a little better???

**(N) NEVER** withhold the authority necessary for the completion of a task!!!

**(K) KNOWING** the committee, and appointing the most interested and best suited, will do more to create a successful program.

The purpose of Leadership Development is to mold the basic individual elements together by providing the dynamic force, which within the framework of the American Legion, serves to stimulate the individual towards the attainment of the organization and its programs.

## SEMINAR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is leadership?
2. What causes organization failure?
3. Do different situations call for different kinds of leadership?
4. What can I do to improve things in my post?
5. Should a member be elected or appointed to a place of responsibility just because he or she is popular?
6. How do we overcome apathy and despair?
7. Is a small role in a Post, District or Department minimized?
8. Do I know how to express myself, to get good ideas into circulation?

9. How important is showing our appreciation for one another? Do you think a word of praise or a "Thank You" goes along way?

## **WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?**

Webster's definition of leadership: "That ingredient of personality which caused individuals to become a team."

Every Veteran, who is privileged to belong to the American Legion and does, is proud of our combined efforts and accomplishments of the past half century. And well should be!

It took much hard work and the dedication of many capable leaders to reach our present position in service to "GOD AND COUNTRY."

Reaching this high level is one thing--staying there is another. With all the factions that today are tearing at the AIMS AND PURPOSES of the AMERICAN LEGION, we have a bigger fight than ever to maintain our position, and only through ORGANIZATION and LEADERSHIP can we survive.

## **WHAT CAUSES ORGANIZATION FAILURE?**

Poor quality leadership; shaky leadership; the failure to motivate to seek and achieve goals. The failure to motivate members to assume LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY = no organization. We know that being in a position of great responsibility and pressure may make or break people, and possibly change their personality--sometimes for the better and on occasions their "EGO" becomes inflated, which is not good for leadership. We also know that different situations call for different kinds of leadership qualities, therefore a leader must be "flexible."

There is no such thing as a stereotyped leadership. Everyone has leadership potential to some degree. Ask yourself-- "WHAT CAN I DO?" "WHAT CAN I DO TO IMPROVE MY POST OR DISTRICT?" We can all find answers to these questions, if we try. You might try by asking capable members to run for various offices or be a chairman of one of the many committees. Don't just ELECT or APPOINT someone because they are a "GOOD GUY" or a "CLOSE FRIEND". Examine their capabilities and place them where best suited. Too many times officers, elected and appointed, only wear the American Legion Cap representing that particular office. Any assignment is an honor. When a sincere Legionnaire is named to office, knowing that their time is fully taken in other activities, it is a disservice to both the individual and the Post.

As a Commander you will find your year most gratifying if you have comrades doing their jobs well. Our organization can never be any better than the individuals leading it, or the members supporting it. A good Legion Post starts with you and will be just as good as you and others like you make it. Each member of your Post is as important as you make them. Having one program a month as outlined by the Department American Legion will arouse interest and make your meetings more interesting. We are doing less than our best if we do not speak out as we think. If we tell it like it is--dialogue may start, and some may disagree, which is good. There is strength in differences of opinions.

A good leader is devoted to the highest ideals of FRIENDSHIP, UNDERSTANDING, SERVICE, and HUMAN DIGNITY. A leader is a busy person, intellectual, confident, and an interested person. Recognize our need now. Let us dispel DESPAIR and APATHY. An , important part of our mission as members of the American Legion is to RIGHT what is WRONG, not merely SIT in JUDGMENT. The great need in almost every one of our programs is for members who will accept responsibility, not duck it. Let us encourage those with ideals and abilities to become leaders.

Set your goals HIGH and make plans accordingly. Make BIG PLANS, aim HIGH in HOPE and WORK. We will never know our capabilities if we set our sights low. No matter how small our role in our POST or DISTRICT or DEPARTMENT may seem, IT IS IMPORTANT.

Read and study the history of "The American Legion". Books and information are available from emblem sales, your local library, and from the internet.

*"We are no better than we are." "We are no better than the SERVICE we give." "We are no better than the thoughts we think." "We are no better than the lives we live." "We are in fact; only as good as we are as an organization, as leaders and individuals."*

*Take the initiative--blue prints are fine up to a point, but no good if you don't build something. Let us put your CREATIVE action to work toward building a better Post, District, and Legion by encompassing the whole picture.*



## "TAKE TIME"

Take time to think –  
thought is the source of power.

Take time to play –  
play is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take time to read –  
reading is the foundation of wisdom

Take time to pray –  
prayer can be a rock of strength in time of  
trouble.

Take time to be friendly –  
friendship gives life a delicious flavor.

Take time to laugh –  
laughter is the music of the soul.

Take time to do your work well –  
pride in your work, no matter what it is;  
nourishes the ego and the spirit.

Take time to give –  
any day of the year is too short for  
selfishness.

Take time to show appreciation –  
thanks is the frosting on the cakes of life.

## 15 WAYS TO KILL A POST

1. Don't attend meetings, but if you do, arrive late.
2. Be sure and leave before the meeting is over.
3. Never have anything to say at meetings; wait until you get outside.
4. When at meetings, vote to do everything, and then do nothing to help.
5. The next day, find fault with your officers and fellow members.
6. Take no part in the Post's affairs.
7. Be sure to sit in the back and talk with another member. Nobody will notice.
8. Get all the organization will give, but give nothing in return.
9. Talk cooperation, but never cooperate.
10. Threaten to resign at every opportunity because others are talking too much.
11. If you are asked to help, always say you haven't the time--too busy.
12. Never read anything pertaining to the organization; you might learn too much.
13. Never accept an office; it is much easier to criticize than do things.
14. If appointed to a committee, never give any time to it; let the chairman do all the work.
15. Don't do anything more than you have to, and when others willingly and unselfishly use their ability to help the cause, howl because the AMERICAN LEGION is being run by a clique.

## **"50 TIPS FOR BETTER LEADERSHIP"**

1. Lead by training others.
2. Never stop learning how.
3. Master the simple first.
4. Look for leadership in others.
5. Cultivate right climate.
6. Be faithful to principle.
7. Be buoyant.
8. Be a good follower.
9. Learn to like people.
10. Be yourself all the time.
11. Earn respect.
12. Inspire others.
13. Be exciting and enthusiastic.
14. Be confident.
15. Match people to the jobs.
16. Expect the best of people.
17. Keep your poise.
18. Be active.
19. Be humble--but not too humble.
20. Be consistent.
21. Be gracious.
22. Know your organization.
23. Be an attentive listener.
24. Follow chain of command.
25. Learn from others.
26. Seek answers together.
27. Be interested.
28. Don't show off authority.
29. Be thoughtful.
30. Criticize constructively.
31. Delegate authority.
32. Admit your own mistakes.
33. Be firm but fair to everyone
34. Plan programs in advance.
35. Study the great leaders.
36. Be affirmative and creative.
37. Give Credit.
38. Praise your people publicly.
39. Reprove tactfully.
40. Rate fairly – find a yardstick.
41. Keep people informed.
42. Respect the work of others.
43. Give reasons.
44. Talk directly, briskly.
45. Compromise, don't appease.
46. Be good to yourself.

47. Be brave not brash.

48. Cultivate a sense of humor.

49. Be dynamic.

50. Cultivate moral fiber.

## **50 TIPS FOR BETTER LEADERSHIP**

### **1. LEAD BY TRAINING OTHERS:**

The leader who doesn't fear competition and has the best interests of his organization at heart always trains capable assistants who some day will assume leadership roles. To do this, break down each job into simple operations. Review instructions and repeat operations until the trainee has learned how to perform each task properly.

### **2. NEVER STOP LEARNING HOW:**

You can improve leadership skills and techniques in several ways: Read books on leadership. Take college courses and attend institutes of leadership. Observe and talk with successful leaders. Gain practical experience in leading others in actual and simulated situations. Each new leadership role requires more information and skill. These you must acquire. There is no end to what you can learn.

### **3. MASTER THE SIMPLE FIRST:**

Much of the failure and frustration in democratic leadership stems from young people who try to start too near the top. This difficulty arises from egotism or ignorance. If you're still young you'll find it's much wiser to learn leadership in simple situations or in small groups. Then train for the more difficult roles.

### **4. LOOK FOR LEADERSHIP IN OTHERS:**

As our society becomes more complex it requires more capable leaders to manage its affairs. We can meet this need if educators, businesspersons, scientists, and other leaders will prepare rosters of gifted young people who can be trained for leadership roles in the community and nation. Youngsters who have

demonstrated high aptitude for leadership through identification tests and other screening devices are our greatest national asset.

### **5. CULTIVATE RIGHT CLIMATE:**

Aspire to leadership roles at home, school, church, party, work. Then exploit the situations that enable you to use the leadership talents and techniques you've acquired. Let your light shine so others recognize your qualifications for leadership.

### **6. BE FAITHFUL TO PRINCIPLE:**

It's trite, of course--even smacks of self-righteousness. But it was said of Lincoln that he sank himself in his cause. His humble, childlike manner was certainly superior to the egotistical, irresponsible attitudes of the boss or the dictator. You'll find that the safest path to leadership is through unselfish service for others.

### **7. BE BUOYANT:**

Keep your thinking flexible. Rules, ruts, and routine have ruined many leaders. Avoid blind-alley jobs and dead-end careers. Observe the customs of the group, but avoid becoming tied down by precedents. High vision is essential, change is inevitable, and true progress is desirable. The moss-back in business and the stand-patter in the plant will always block the road to greater productivity.

### **8. BE A GOOD FOLLOWER:**

Almost every leader is a follower of some superior. To become a leader, learn to be a loyal follower of your present superior. To learn how to give orders, learn first how to take orders and execute them. Learn how to coordinate the activities of others by cooperating with those you come in contact

with. Learn teamwork if you want to become captain of the team. Take part in competitive games and group activities in which you can learn how to follow. You'll become a better leader for it.

### **9. LEARN TO LIKE PEOPLE:**

Love for God and mankind is the basis of all true leadership. It may be enough to like your friends, but you'll have to learn to love your enemies if you want to defeat them. When Lincoln was criticized for not being tough on his enemies, he said that if he made friends of his enemies he had conquered them. To learn how to love everybody requires great patience and perseverance, but it is the only course to follow.

### **10. BE YOURSELF ALL THE TIME:**

A high personality quotient, revealed by tests or direct observation, is most desirable. But if it took no more than that to make a great leader, television and moving-picture stars would be running the nation's business. Significant individuality--or a strong personality, well-integrated--is helpful in many kinds of leadership. Ready wit, a nimble mind, a good memory for names and faces--are useful qualities for business leaders. But don't lean too heavily on personality. Strengthen your professional knowledge and technical skill.

### **11. EARN RESPECT:**

Position-holders and those who inherit wealth or office are not necessarily leaders. The mere fact that you have been appointed to some position doesn't insure your success as a leader. But it is an opportunity to prove that you are one. Don't stand heavily on your title, your dignity, or your authority.

### **12. INSPIRE OTHERS:**

A leader knows how to get things done

through others. To get results find the person who wants to do the job and has the ability to do it. The reluctant follower isn't much help to the leader. The better way is to appeal to your follower's self-respect, arouse his ambition, stimulate his imagination and encourage his initiative. Leaders should read the new books on the media of communication and the methods of motivation. Some authorities say that the best way to move people to action is to make them laugh, make them mad, or make them cry.

### **13. BE EXCITING AND ENTHUSIASTIC:**

A merry heart, sparkling eyes, a warm handshake, lively interest and emotional stability are modes of behavior that you can consciously cultivate through training and practice. The stiff-as-a-poker, cool-as-a-cucumber, aloof-as-the-Sphinx individual can't lead anything well. Anybody who wants to ignite the fires of civic conscience must throw off a few sparks. To be exciting, let your enthusiasm overflow and your light shine.

### **14. BE CONFIDENT:**

A confident air inspires the respect you need to control others. Be sure of your facts, understand the issues raised and the principles involved in the situation that confronts you. Then you'll feel confident and act the way you feel. This confidence will convey conviction to others. Bluffing, braggadocio, and bombast don't beget confidence.

### **15. MATCH PEOPLE TO THE JOB:**

Interest is as vital as intelligence and skill. So try to discover the basic interests of people through interest tests and other devices. Influence those you work with by discovering what they want or what pleases them. Where two plans of equal merit are presented for your consideration, select the plan developed by the person who will be chosen to carry it out. Interest in the plan

is the seed you sow to help insure its successful completion.

**16. EXPECT THE BEST OF PEOPLE:**

If your subordinates and assistants are carefully selected, trained, and supervised, you (their leader) will know what to expect of them, and you'll feel you can place full confidence in their abilities. They'll respond by turning out a first-rate job or a high-grade product. Most people seek to win and deserve the confidence that is reposed in them.

**17. KEEP YOUR POISE:**

Lack of poise is due to careless mental habits. If you lack poise, work to deliberately and studiously acquire it through religion, psychology, or practical experience. You can conquer a sense of failure and frustration, or doubt, dismay, and defeat through conscientious study and self-analysis. Inner tranquility produces outward calm, grace and charm. The simplest way to achieve assurance is to think about others instead of about yourself. Systematically avoid being a head-scratcher, a fingernail biter, a table tapper, or a ceiling gazer. These mannerisms invariably reveal a lack of poise and self-assurance.

**18. BE ACTIVE:**

The dynamic leader is their own self-starter. Always open to inspiration and intuition, and translates thought into action. They learn how to dramatize action through salesmanship, and sportsmanship. So be active without being aggressive. Start things--but be sure you finish them. Follow through with verve and enthusiasm. You can conquer apathy and lethargy by cultivating habits of mental and physical activity.

**19. BE HUMBLE--BUT NOT TOO HUMBLE:**

Never belittle anyone--openly or secretly.

See others as they are in reality. Neither underestimate nor overestimate your own or another's ability. Don't belittle yourself, your present position, or your future possibilities. Personal vanity, executive conceit, and family pride are mild forms of self-delusion in which no leader can afford to indulge. Be as careful of what you say to yourself as you are about what you say to others.

**20. BE CONSISTENT:**

Nobody can follow the leader who gyrates wildly. The person who is a firebrand one moment and an iceberg the next, who is cordial one day and crusty the next, or who flatters one week and frightens the next, bewilders his followers. The better way is to be even tempered, consistent in attitudes, and predictable in reactions. These traits attract followers and harmonize human relations.

**21. BE GRACIOUS:**

Courtesy and kindness pave the way to progress in leadership and pay big dividends in terms of good will and loyal support to those who unfailingly practice these rules. The true leader is as courteous to his opponents as he is considerate of his supporters. Catty, curt, and condescending attitudes have ruined the careers of many men who were otherwise qualified for responsible executive positions.

**22. KNOW YOUR ORGANIZATION:**

Some authorities maintain that leadership is a phase of organization. To be most effective the leader should know thoroughly the details of organization--its policies, procedures, personnel, methods, and functions. This rule holds true whether one is leading a political, civic, religious, business, professional, or military organization. Be sure you know what your group stands for. Give people goals--a sense of direction.

**23. BE AN ATTENTIVE LISTENER:**

Superiors, equals and subordinates deserve the keenest interest and closest attention during personal conversation and group discussion. The adroit leader asks for opinions and pays careful attention to what is said. The person who asks for opinions and does not evaluate what is said is merely waiting to tell people what to do.

**24. FOLLOW CHAIN OF COMMAND:**

The supervisor who ignores their superior and takes his ideas directly to the Commander usually defeats their own purpose by attempts at slicing off their superior's prestige or authority. In making suggestions or giving orders it's wiser to follow the lines of authority downward and the lines of responsibility upward. The wisest person who ever lived said: "No person can serve two masters."

**25. LEARN FROM OTHERS:**

There are few all-around geniuses who are experts on everything. Every specialist has limitations. The great leader learns how to make use of experts and specialists in many fields.

**26. BE COOPERATIVE IN SEEKING ANSWERS:**

There's no leadership in a social vacuum. Leadership is a process whereby one person influences social or democratic leadership always related to an organization, group, or movement that presents issues, questions, or problems for which the leader helps find acceptable solutions for workable answers.

**27. BE INTERESTED:**

A sincere interest in the welfare of others and a warm-hearted appreciation of what they stand for and are doing for the organization is of the utmost importance to successful leadership. You can show

this by use of first names, inquiry about family news, mention of hobbies, and other approaches. Show respect for others by avoiding gossip. Don't discuss race, religion, politics, and other things that are strictly personal. These little things help to strengthen the leader's position.

**28. DON'T SHOW OFF AUTHORITY:**

Assume others are working with you but for the organization. Ask people to help you. Make suggestions but issue few orders. Attitudes of dictation and domination breed lackeys, not leaders. Exercise influence through regulation, training conferences, staff meetings, and personal interviews in which you can display your technical knowledge and professional skill, and seldom through a direct show of authority.

**29. BE THOUGHTFUL:**

When you're conducting personal interviews or group meetings, plan in advance what you're going to say and how you're going to say it. Choose your words with care, watch the inflection in your voice, and be sure you've made your meaning clear. Many people use an interview checklist to make sure they've forgotten no vital point.

**30. CRITICIZE CONSTRUCTIVELY:**

The best way is by correcting errors, reviewing regulations, issuing new instructions, or restraining employees or followers who are making mistakes. Smart people take a hint without offense if you use such methods. Before criticizing be sure you have all the facts, see all angles of the situation, and know how performance or production can be improved by correct practice. Where possible, criticize methods and techniques instead of persons. If personal criticism seems necessary, soften it with a little praise.

### **31. DELEGATE AUTHORITY:**

One of the principles of executiveship is to delegate authority and hold subordinates accountable for results. The wise leader selects and supervises subordinates, delegates to them the details of management, then evaluates the results.

### **32. ADMIT YOUR OWN MISTAKES:**

The wise leader honestly admits mistakes and corrects them in humility. Never gives alibis--or blames others for failures. Many great leaders have assumed responsibility for the mistakes of subordinates. If you assume an air of omniscience, you lose esteem when you're found to be fallible.

### **33. BE FIRM BUT FAIR TO EVERYBODY:**

The deft leader avoids public extortion of his followers. They use threats and rebukes only as a last resort to bring people into line. It is not good leadership techniques to slight, scold, or ignore others. You can usually avoid the need for any kind of disciplinary measures through proper training, supervision, and the use of modern grievance procedures. Lead and coach. Don't club and coax.

### **34. PLAN PROGRAMS IN ADVANCE:**

Planning is a blueprint for action. It's essential for short-term and long-range leadership. Good timing is as necessary as wise planning. Conference, committee, and group leaders should always plan programs, schedule meetings, and select those people who are to participate in them well in advance. It's the duty of the leader to select subjects for discussion, assemble materials, develop outlines, prepare reports, and thus help the group to arrive at decision and carry out directions.

### **35. STUDY THE GREAT LEADERS:**

Scientists who have specialized in

leadership research and training have used over 250 terms to describe and classify the various kinds of leaders. Study the literature on leadership to determine the specific qualifications and techniques that are necessary for the proper performance of the leadership role you either now occupy or aspire to in the future. Reading biographies and autobiographies of leaders in your field will help you learn valuable things from their experiences and avoid costly errors.

### **36. BE AFFIRMATIVE AND CREATIVE:**

The greatest leaders are positive, affirmative, constructive, creative, and cooperative in their outlook on things. But the boss, despot, dictator, and demagogue tend to be negative, opinionative, abusive, abrasive, and destructive in their attitudes toward others. Chronic complaining, grumbling, and criticizing are not conducive to leadership and should be avoided at all costs.

### **37. GIVE CREDIT:**

It's always wiser to turn the spotlight on the other person in the case of special achievement. To take undeserved credit *for* another's work and try to hang a halo on oneself are two fatal errors that inevitably result in loss of respect. These practices will deaden initiative, dull ambition, and completely destroy group morale. Give proper recognition for what others have done to promote the success of a project. This will pay double dividends to both the leader and follower.

### **38. PRAISE YOUR PEOPLE PUBLICLY:**

Normal people thrive on appreciation and praise. To praise privately, smacks of flattery. Proper recognition in a public meeting usually inspires people to achieve greater effectiveness. For work well done judicious praise by the appropriate official through a letter of commendation or by the award of some fitting emblem boosts

the recipient's morale and raises the prestige of the group.

### **39. REPROVE TACTFULLY:**

If your subordinates make errors or break rules, it's always better to reprove privately and informally. Reprimands in front of others cause resentment and defeat their real purpose. In taking disciplinary measures, avoid hurting the feelings of others if possible-- especially where innocent mistakes are made.

### **40. RATE FAIRLY--FIND A YARDSTICK:**

All modern industrial organizations use some kind of efficiency rating system that helps executives size up employees objectively. Every group needs a yardstick or rating scale to evaluate the performance of its officers or leaders. The 50 rules of leadership listed in this article may be used as a self-rating scale to compel leaders to face up to their own performance, improve leadership techniques.

### **41. KEEP PEOPLE INFORMED:**

Don't try to put things over on people or keep them in the dark about matters of vital interest to them. If you expect teamwork treat people as members of the team, entitled to know what's going on. This builds confidence, avoids suspicion, and strengthens morale by cultivating a sense of belonging.

### **42. RESPECT THE WORK OF OTHERS:**

Perhaps even better than making an individual feel important is showing them how they fit into the general plan. Get them to see that his well-done work is what makes a success of the organization. If they feel that they are a mere cog in a machine they may feel frustrated and lose ambition. For this reason you'll often need orientation, indoctrination, and morale building programs to help each member

see the importance of his job, however modest it may be. We all need to see our own place in the scheme of things before we start clicking.

### **43. GIVE REASONS:**

It's always well to explain the whys and wherefores of policies and decisions. This way, you'll avoid bickering and backbiting. People want to know why. They want to know what they're doing, how to do it the best way and why it's the correct way to do it. So wherever possible give the reasons for everything. People will risk their lives and fortunes on a righteous cause they understand.

### **44. TALK DIRECTLY, BRISKLY:**

Be clear in thought and direct in manner without being blunt in speech. Look intently at people and speak directly to them. Stick to the subject and draw out the other person to find out what he's thinking. Otherwise you'll have difficulty in influencing his action. Be brisk without being brusque. Briskness in speech, glances, gestures, and responses can be cultivated and made habitual modes of thought and action through patient practice. Incisive thinking promotes decisive action.

### **45. COMPROMISE, DON'T APPEASE:**

The radical and the reactionary are usually in a rut. The best leaders occupy the middle ground between those who lag behind and those who rush ahead of the group. Learn to compose differences and make concessions when this doesn't endanger the ultimate success of the cause and involves no departure from principle. Don't make a fighting issue of trivial matters. Preserve your neutrality between small cliques in the organization by enabling them to see the common goal. In making compromises, you'll be safer to please others than to please yourself.



**46. BE GOOD TO YOURSELF:**

Avoid any suggestions of self-punishment, self-destruction, or the temptation to kill yourself with overwork in order to succeed. Rid yourself of all irrational beliefs that you are unworthy, unkind, or unable to succeed. Such suggestions have only a self-defeating purpose. You should root them out of your consciousness. Failure is as often due to imaginary deficiencies as it is to real ones. You can avoid such faults if you spend as much time improving your leadership techniques as you previously spent worrying about your shortcomings. Be good to yourself by helping others.

**47. BE BRAVE, NOT BRASH:**

Cowardice in the leader can never inspire courageous followers. Overcome fear and cowardice by developing courage in the group. Take courage together. Cowardice and fear arise mostly from a sense of inferiority, which you can overcome through study and experience. A simple method of overcoming cowardice is to face it squarely--first with brave thoughts, then with brave words and finally with brave deeds. Learn to do the thing you seem afraid to do. Fear is faith in evil.

**48. CULTIVATE A SENSE OF HUMOR:**

Learn to be diplomatic by cultivating tact and a sense of humor. There are few if any born diplomats. Tact, or a sense of proportion, is the ability to be diplomatic in difficult situations. This objective attitude prevents one from becoming ruffled at rebuffs. It's a priceless leadership trait that can be cultivated. Learn to display tact by a pleasant word, a friendly glance, or a show of patience. A sense of humor is the ability to see things out of proportion. It's best expressed in ready repartee, a funny story, or a hearty laugh at jokes on yourself or others. It relieves strain, lightens heavy burdens, breaks down barriers, softens antagonisms, and

helps the leader to glide over the rough spots and avoid awkward breaks in personal relations. Although these two attitudes view life from different angles, they travel well together and always attract followers.

**49. BE DYNAMIC:**

Democracy demands dynamic leaders who have the driving energy and dogged determination to protect the nation from enemies within and without. Leaders with this dynamic ability to incite people to heroic action and unselfish service must be discovered and developed or this nation will go the way of a dozen democracies since the days of ancient Athens.

**50. CULTIVATE MORAL FIBER:**

Most important is the need for spiritual force and moral fiber in statesmen and other kinds of leaders. These qualities are often strong in poets, prophets, and saints. They were dominant in the lives of such statesmen as Washington, Lincoln, Gandhi, and others. Absence of these qualities contributed to the decline and eclipse of Napoleon, Hitler and Mussolini. The study of the characters and careers of the world's great leaders shows that when they were loyal to principle they seldom lost the support of the people they served. In like manner our own ability to understand, and our willingness to follow the established rules of leadership without hesitation or reservation, will determine in large measure our capacity to lead others.

## TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

As a Commander or Chairman, your prime responsibility is to get things done through people. Communication, therefore, is your most vital management tool. On the job you communicate not only with words but through your apparent attitudes and your actions. For communication encompasses all human behavior that results in an exchange of meaning. How well you lead depends upon how well you communicate in this broad sense. These ten commandments are designed to help you improve your skills as a Commander or Chairman by improving your skills of communication--with superiors, subordinates, and associates when writing, speaking to a large group, or only a few persons.

### **1. Seek planning to clarify your ideas before communicating:**

Good planning must consider the goals and attitudes of those who will receive the communications and those who will be affected by them. The more systematically we analyze the problem or idea to be communicated, the clearer it becomes. This is the step toward effective communication. Many communications fail because of inadequate planning.

### **2. Examine the true purpose of each communication:**

The sharper the focus of your message the greater its chances of success. Before you communicate, ask yourself what you really want to accomplish with your message and then obtain information, initiate action, and change another person's attitude? Identify your most important goal and then adapt your language, tone, and total approach to serve that specific objective. Don't try to accomplish too much with each communication.

### **3. Consider the total physical and human setting whenever you communicate:**

Meaning and intent are conveyed by more than words alone. Many other factors influence the over-all impact of a communication, and the manager must be sensitive to the total setting in which he communicates. Consider, for example, your sense of timing--i.e., the circumstances under which you make an announcement or render a decision; the physical setting--whether you communicate in private, for example, or otherwise; the social climate that pervades work relationships within the company or a department and sets the tone of its communications; custom and past practice--the degree to which your communication conforms to, or departs from, the expectations of your audience. Be constantly aware of the total setting in which you communicate. Like all living things, communications must be capable of adapting to its environment.

### **4. Consult with others, where appropriate, in planning communications:**

Frequently it is desirable or necessary to seek the participation of others in planning a communication or developing the facts on which to base it. Such consultation often helps to lend additional insight and objectivity to your message. Moreover, those who have helped you plan your communication will give it their active support.

### **5. Be mindful, while you communicate, of the overtones as well as the basic**

### **content of your message:**

Your tone of voice, your expression, your apparent reactions to the responses of others, all have tremendous impact on those you wish to reach. Frequently, these subtleties of communication often affect a listener's reaction to a message even more than its basic content. Similarly, your choice of language, particularly your awareness of the fine shades of meaning and emotion in the words you use, predetermines in a large part the reactions of your listeners.

### **6. Take the opportunity, when it arises, to convey something of help or value to the receiver:**

Consideration of the other person's interests and needs; the habit of trying to look at things from their point of view; will frequently point out opportunities to convey something of immediate benefit or long-range value to them. People on the job are most responsive to the Commander or Chairman whose message takes their own interests into account.

### **7. Follow up your communication:**

Our best efforts at communication may be wasted, and we may never know whether we have succeeded in expressing our true meaning and intent, if we do not follow up to see how well we have put our message across. This you can do by asking questions, by encouraging the receiver to express reactions, by follow-up contacts, by subsequent review of performance. Make certain that every important communication has a "feed-back" so that complete understanding and appropriate action result.

### **8. Communicate for tomorrow as well as today:**

While communications may be aimed primarily at meeting the demands of an immediate situation, they must be planned with the past in mind if they are to maintain consistency in the receiver's view; but, more important of all, they must be consistent with long-range interests and goals. For example, it is not easy to communicate with such matters as poor performance or the shortcomings of a loyal subordinate. Postponing disagreeable communications makes it more difficult in the long run and is actually unfair to your subordinates and your post or organization.

### **9. Be sure your actions support your communications:**

In the final analysis, the most persuasive kind of communication is not what you say but what you do. When a person's actions or attitudes contradict their words, we tend to discount what they have said. For every Commander or Chairman this means that good supervisory practices such as clear assignment of responsibility and authority, fair rewards for effort, and sound policy enforcement serves to communicate more than all the gifts of oratory.

### **10. Last, but by no means least:**

Seek not only to be understood but to understand; be a good listener. When we start talking we often cease to listen--in that larger sense of being attuned to the other person's unspoken reactions, and attitudes. Even more serious is the fact that we are all guilty, at times, of inattentiveness when others "are attempting to communicate to us. Listening is one of the most important, most difficult and most neglected skills in communication. It demands that we concentrate not only on the explicit meanings another person is expressing, but on the implicit meanings, unspoken words, and undertones that may be far more significant. Thus we must learn to listen with the inner ear if we are to know the inner person.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Be Honest:**

Honesty covers many virtues. An honest person is sincere, truthful, dependable and "IS FAIR." Put yourself in the other person's place. How do you feel about the person who tells you a lie; says one thing to your face and another behind your back; promises you something with no intention of following through; won't listen to your side of the story before passing judgment; and starts rumors? Do you want to be like that person?

"This above all--  
To thine own self be, true;  
And it will follow as the night the day  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

### **2. Be Ambitious:**

Without ambition we would have nothing. We would desire nothing better than our lot, no matter how bad that might be. Ambition is not walking roughshod over people and taking what we want. Ambition has nothing in common with Greed and Selfishness. An ambitious person wants to improve things that can and should be improved; himself, their organization, and their community. Ambition merely wants better things for everyone.

### **3. Be Enthusiastic:**

Everyone likes a happy person. This doesn't mean you must go around wearing a 24-hour grin. Enjoyment of life goes deeper than that. If our reason for taking a program or office is for glory or to show someone else up; we are to be pitied, indeed. There are so many things to do, and so little time in which to do them, that we should never do anything we cannot be enthusiastic about. There are so many programs in the American Legion that everyone can find something they enjoy doing. An enthusiastic person is a happy, cheerful person. They enjoy life.

### **4. Be Curious:**

A person with curiosity will grow emotionally and intellectually. Such progress is not possible without an innate desire to learn. The quest for knowledge goes beyond the act of reading a book. It calls for true participation in life. Curiosity develops understanding and tolerance. A curious member will not accept hearsay. They will wonder why we do things a certain way, even though they do not produce the desired results. He will ask why new ideas are not

adopted. He may even start others thinking for themselves. He is not a trouble-maker, and he is distinguished to tell right from wrong.

## **5. Be Poised:**

Poise is not as many people believe, the ability to step into a room and become the center of attention. It is not the ability to pose. It is the ability to think fast, and adapt to the situation. It is the ability to put others at ease. A poised man is tactful, kind, and considerate; he is dignified without being stuffy and remains natural without being common and loud. If you are poised, you are friendly and never lose your temper (in public). The poised man is polite and courteous. Egotism and conceit can rob you of your poise. An ignorant person may think that sarcasm and snobbishness are substitutes for sophistication and poise. They have failed, among other things, to look these words up in the dictionary. Cultivate a sense of humor, and be able to accept criticism graciously.

## **6. Be Self-Confident:**

This is a necessity where leadership is concerned. Self-confidence is not to be confused with self-importance or egotism. The self-confident man is proud. He is kind, warm, honest, emotional, interested, forgiving, curious, enthusiastic, and logical. He never intentionally does anything that will hurt, embarrass, or humiliate another person. The easiest way I know to lose your self-confidence is to GO something of which you are ashamed. Tell a lie, gossip, blame someone else for your mistakes. You may never be found out, but you alone can keep it. A man might accept an appointment he knows will be a challenge, but never with an idea that he would give it less than his best. A self-confident man leads a good life as far as he can. He does the best with what he has; and he is proud of it. He is an individual, not a carbon copy, but he does not go out of his way to be a non-conformist. He is reasonable and tolerant.

## **7. Know Your Organization and Its Programs:**

We do not make full use of the leaders we do have, nor do we adequately publicize our most successful training technique--the actual participation by potential leaders themselves in the programs. Not only do the leaders themselves benefit by developing and practicing effective leadership skills, but the programs, the organization, and the community as a whole benefit. The ability to plan ahead is another requirement of a leader, but if he has never had to do this in actual experience, all the theory in the world will not help him when he meets a situation not in the book. Some leaders are born, it is said, but a little practice never hurt even these, (and they are too few and far between). After all, the aim of this organization is not the training of leaders; it is the successful carrying out of the programs. When we find men and women with skill and know-how, they should be used to the advantage of the programs, not to build individual ego. Let's use the leaders we have.

# **Protocol Guidelines**

## **Part II** ***Protocol and*** ***Parliamentary Procedure*** ***Guidebook***



## **The American Legion**

**Department of Illinois**

## **DUTIES OF A DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHAIRMAN AND PROTOCOL**

### **FOREWORD:**

This guide has been prepared with the thought that it could prove to be a helpful guide to you in all functions planned by a Post, District, County Council, Area, Department, or even on the National level. When guests and/or high ranking officers of the American Legion or Auxiliary are invited to these functions you should offer your personal services for this assignment. If you will follow the suggestions in this guide you'll acquire the necessary finesse to enable you to put on a smooth running banquet, dinner, luncheon, or some other special ceremony, including installation of officers.

**Note:** The following subjects are not necessarily in chronological order and are written for both organizations to use. Titles of both organizations are used interchangeably in this guide.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The duties and responsibilities of a Distinguished Guest Chairman are many. A dull introduction does not create in the listener's mind a commanding image of the one making the presentation; neither does it lend prestige to the organization represented; nor will it elicit proper respect for the one who deserves public recognition.

In the event a Master of Ceremonies is not appointed by the local organization committee, then the Chairman of the Distinguished Guest Committee should prepare for the necessary introductions to be made. It is on occasions such as banquets, dinners, luncheons, or special events that a Distinguished Guest Chairman is called on to serve; it is on these occasions that you are judged by the public and the members of the organization.

### **POINTS TO REMEMBER:**

Before we presume to present our guest (s), there is a positive need for us to do some research work concerning the guest speaker's background: that is, the kind of experience he or she has had in professional life; offices held in the American Legion or other groups; also his or her "official" standing in the community in which they live. This applies also to all dignitaries to be introduced.

When the biographical material is obtained we should carefully evaluate it in order to bring out the most important features of their career and background. Then you should prepare a brief, interest-catching account of the guest you are to introduce.

The principal speaker should be given the kind of introduction that will allow the audience to anticipate the subject the guest is to cover and to anticipate with interest what the speaker has to say. Never, under any circumstances, "steal the speaker's thunder" by going into details of

the significant points to be covered in their address.

### **PREPARATION OF MATERIAL:**

In the event the guest of honor or principal speaker is an officer in The American Legion it is suggested that you obtain a copy of his or her biographical sketch. This can usually be obtained from the Department Headquarters or you may search through former Department Rosters. If the information is not available through these sources you should contact the prospective guest personally to obtain the information.

You should prepare careful notes, and then organize the introduction in such a way that it will have continuity. You should have the material before you on the podium, perhaps typed on a 3" X 5" card for convenience, depicting the guest's prominence, their background, and most assuredly the absolutely correct title which they currently hold. His or her name should **Never** be mispronounced.

### **WHO IS TO BE INTRODUCED?**

**All persons present who are not members of your organization are guests.** They should be treated as guests and accorded all courtesy. Let them know that you appreciate their visit. This includes any visiting member of another Post, District, and Area. Any Department officer, and any member of an important Department Committee or Commission; these people must be recognized.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

In accordance with Protocol, strict adherence should be observed in order to give due order of preference and recognition in the introduction and presentation of guest. Note the following definitions:

- ⇒ **To Introduce:** To lead and to make known formally. To present formally. To present formally as at convention. A formal preliminary treatise. To act as a guide.
- ⇒ **To Present:** To put before a person for acceptance. To make – or present a gift.
- ⇒ **Presentation:** A formal introduction - where the background is fully gone into.
- ⇒ **Distinguished:** Identifies and individual for outstanding service to mankind and to The American Legion in general.
- ⇒ **Famous:** Eminent; illustrious (meaning known far and wide among people everywhere) such as - "He is widely and popularly known..." "His or Her excellence or superiority is renowned in his or her chosen profession in the field of \_\_\_\_\_."
- ⇒ **Eminent:** Implies even greater conspicuousness for an outstanding quality or character. Such as "He is famous...Renowned..." "She is a celebrated personage who has distinguished himself or herself, etc."



### **THOSE INVITATIONS:**

If the Distinguished Guest Chairman is to send written invitations the official letterhead stationery and envelope of the organization should be used Nothing else. Obtain the list of those to be invited as guests from your organization's committee. You should carefully check their initial, full name, title, and correct address. Keep a duplicate copy of each letter, always state in your letter that the courtesy of a reply would be greatly appreciated. This will allow the Arrangement Committee for the affair to plan seating of guests in accordance with protocol. This should be done, whether or not dining is involved.

If no reply has been received a week before the event, you should follow another letter, or a telephone call, stating who you are, and ask "may we expect his attendance as an invited guest - we desire to know this information for the Arrangement Committee".

The Chairman of the Distinguished Guest Committee should appoint a committee of not more than five personable representatives to serve on the Reception Committee, if the affair is to be a large one. YOU should greet every guest upon arrival, and see that they are properly escorted by a member of the Reception Committee to his seat, to be designated by a place card if the occasion is a dinner, banquet, or luncheon.

### **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**

If the affair is one Where special ceremonies are conducted, the Chairman of the Distinguished Guest Committee and members of the Reception Committee should greet guests at the entrance of the hall, auditorium, etc., and someone should stay with them if they are to be escorted to the platform. The Sergeant-at-Arms should be alerted to his task for escort but, only when the command has been given by the presiding officer.

The Distinguished Guest Chairman should be in charge of seating guests at the head table. The chairman is responsible for preparing place cards to be put on the table in front of the place setting, according to protocol.

If the guest of honor or speaker for the occasion is from another city, the Distinguished Guest Chairman, at the request of the organization's committee, should make arrangements for hotel accommodations and transportation, unless the guest prefers otherwise. If the hotel bill, meals, and transportation are to be paid for by the organization, the Distinguished Guest Chairman should arrange for this in advance. (This, of course, must have the approval of the organization).

The Distinguished Guest Chairman should have fully prepared their introductions by this time. Everything should be in readiness for the presentation and introduction of guests. Advance planning and careful preparation will eliminate confusion, and create a most favorable impression of your organization and of you particularly.

At all meetings, special events, etc., the Distinguished Guest Chairman should see that a decanter of water, with glass, is placed directly in front of the main speaker, or guest of honor. This is a must!

## **POINTERS ON PROTOCOL:**

At a large gathering where a number of guests are to be seated at the head table, the guest of honor, or the principal speaker should be seated at the center of the table, to the right of the Master of Ceremonies (if one has been appointed) or, next to the Distinguished Guest Chairman. Should the guest speaker be the National Commander of the American Legion, then members of his official family should sit to their right. If the Commander's personal Aide is present, they should be seated to the right of the National Commander. The Department Commander, then the Department Adjutant should be seated to the right of the Aide. If the Aide is not present the Department Commander and Department Adjutant should be seated to the right of the National Commander. Next should be to their right the Department Vice Commander Representing Women: to her right, the Area Commander (also known as Department Vice Commander) of whatever Area the affair is being held. To their right should be the Department Judge Advocate; then the Department Chaplain; Department Historian; and the District Commander of the locale in which the affair is held – if space at the table permits.

To the left of the Master of Ceremonies, or the Distinguished Guest Chairman, should be the Honorable Governor of the State; the Honorable Mayor of the City; the highest ranking military officer; United States Senators; Representatives of Congress; State Senators; State Assemblymen; Chamber of Commerce Representatives; Service Club representatives; etc.

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## **SEATING**

### **FACING THE AUDIENCE**

#### **To the RIGHT of the Distinguished Guest Chairman:**

1. The Guest of Honor, or Principal Speaker
2. National Commander's Aide
3. The Department Commander's Aide
4. The Department Adjutant
5. The National Executive Committeeman
6. Department Vice Commander (Representing Women)
7. The Area Commander
8. Department Judge Advocate
9. Department Chaplain
10. Department Historian
11. District Commander

#### **To the LEFT of the Distinguished Guest Chairman:**

1. The Honorable Governor
2. The Honorable Mayor of the City
3. The Highest Ranking Military Officer
4. United States Senators
5. Representatives of Congress
6. State Senators
7. State Assemblymen
8. Chamber of Commerce Representatives
9. Service Club Representatives
10. Other Organizations
11. Etc.

## **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND SPEAKERS**

### **INVITATION:**

1. Write or call your guest or speaker as soon as you have decided on your program. If you call, follow-up with a written confirmation. Tell them something about your group and its objectives; how many you expect at the meeting; and if Juniors, Post members or the Public will also be present. Tell them why the group appreciates having them as a guest or speaker.
2. Tell them if there are to be other guests or speakers on the same program and if so, whom.
3. Let them know the time allotted for their speech or remarks, the time the meeting will start, and the probable time of adjournment.
4. Find out if your guests would like to be excused early. They may have other commitments, and not wish to stay for the business or entertainment part of the meeting.
5. Request confirmation, and ask for material that may be used for advance publicity, or in introducing them. Ask if they object to being interviewed by the Press, or photographed.
6. Tell them whether or not a question and answer period is planned following their talk.
7. Give your guest or speaker some idea of what you would like to have them talk about.
8. Let your guest know the type of meeting; formal, semi-formal, street clothes, or if it is the custom to wear hats in your area.
9. Let them know in writing, the place of the meeting, including the address and directions of how to get there.
10. If the trip necessitates an overnight stay, suggest the type of accommodations available, and make reservations if the guest so desires and informs you. Find out if they need transportation. Ask if they are traveling alone and if not, who will accompany them.
11. Let your guests know who their escort will be, and for whom to ask upon arrival. If possible, tell them who will introduce them, and send them a copy of your program.
12. A day or two before the meeting; call or write your guests reminding them of the upcoming meeting.
13. If tickets are needed for your guests, see that complimentary ones are provided in advance.

## **PRELIMINARY PLANNING:**

1. Check to see that your meeting place is well--lighted and ventilated.
2. Check to see that the podium light works; your guest may wish to use notes.
3. Check to see that sufficient chairs are available, and that there are seats reserved for your guests, both on the platform and in the audience.
4. Check the public – address system, and be sure it is working properly.
5. If your speaker has asked for special equipment such as a projector, screen, blackboard, etc., see that it is set up and in working order.
6. Have a container- of water and a glass available.
7. Arrange for distribution of programs in an orderly manner.
8. Be sure the kitchen or refreshment committee is seated near an exit, so that they may leave at a pre-arranged signal without-a lot of fuss and confusion.
9. If you have made arrangements for overnight accommodations for your Guests, allow them some time to be alone and relax. Be sure to consult them before arranging parties or other outside activities.
10. If you cannot meet your guests yourself, be sure to appoint someone to escort them to all meetings and to their train or plane when departing.
11. Arrange to have guests met at the door. In some instances a Door Committee meets them and directs them to the Distinguished Guest Chairman, who pins on a corsage and seats them. If they are to be escorted at the beginning of the meeting, they are seated in a group at the rear of the room. See that they are introduced to the persons seated on either side of them. If the Guests arrive early enough, the Escort or Distinguished Guest Chairman will see that the Guests meet the Chairman, President and other members before the meeting.
12. Instruct your Sgt.-at-Arms to notify the Presiding Officer immediately of the arrival of a guest.
13. If a gift or corsage is to be presented, arrange for the bill to be submitted at another meeting and not when the guest is present. If a corsage or corsages are to be presented, one person should be designated to present and pin them. Arrange to have this done before the meeting starts, and before the guest is presented to the Presiding Officer.
14. The Presiding Officer may accept a corsage, but he or she does not wear it unless the guest also wears one. In the case your guest is a man, he should be pinned with a boutonniere. White is a safe color for a corsage, since it will blend with any color your guests may wear.

15. If your guest brings a companion be sure they are introduced to the persons on either side of them, asserting their correct name and title if applicable. Be sure that they are also introduced to the assembly.
16. If the speaker or guests wish to leave at the end of their part of the program, thank them on behalf of your group, and have the "escort" conduct them to their transportation.
17. If you are giving your speaker a fee, expense money, or a gratuity, present it in an envelope before they leave the meeting.
18. Guests should never be expected to participate in drawings or raffles.

### **ESCORTING DISTINGUISHED GUESTS OR SPEAKERS:**

1. The Sgt.-at-Arms or the Distinguished Guest Chairman, when escorting, will keep the guest on his/her right. If he takes hold of the guest's arm, it will be the left arm.
2. Never walk between the Chair and the assembly.
3. The highest ranking group of guests being presented to the Chair are brought up the RIGHT side of the room and presented to the RIGHT OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER. If necessary to get to LEFT side of the room, take the guests to the rear of the room and then up the left side, not across in front of the Chair. If space dictates that lesser ranking guests must be seated to the left of the Chair; reverse the escort procedure. THE GUEST OF HONOR IS ALWAYS PRESENTED TO THE RIGHT of the Presiding Officer. Your Distinguished Guest takes precedence over any other dignitaries, regardless of title.
4. There are two methods of escorting guests, both are correct:  
DOUBLE LINE: Sgt.-at-Arms and Marshal lead, Sgt.-at-Arms on the right, Marshal on the left. Distinguished Guest Chairman behind the Marshal, with the Distinguished Guest on her right.  
SINGLE LINE Sgt.-at-Arms leads Distinguished Guest Chairman second, Guest third, and Marshal last.
5. If the guests to be escorted are American Legion Officers, escort in the following order with the lowest ranking group first:
  - a. District Chairman
  - b. District Officers (Not including District President).
  - c. Past Department Presidents or Commanders
  - d. Hospital Representatives & Poppy Productions Managers
  - e. Current Department Chairmen
  - f. District Presidents
  - g. Current Department Officers
  - h. Current National Officers or Chairmen
  - i. National Executive Committee person
  - j. Department President
  - k. National President

6. When there are two or more guests in any of the above groups, the Distinguished Guest Chairman escorts the Chairman or Senior member of the group, and asks the other members of the group to follow right behind.
7. The Distinguished Guest (or Guest of Honor) is always escorted alone. The assembly rises in recognition, of the Officer when the National Officer is escorted, in the Unit; they rise when the District President is escorted.
8. Upon reaching the Presiding Officer's station, the Sgt.-at-Arms and Marshal step aside and wait while the Distinguished Guest Chairman presents the guests to the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer shakes the hand of each guest as presented, and seats them before the next guest is presented. After the complete group has been presented and seated, the Sgt.-at-Arms and Marshal do an about-face and followed by the Distinguished Guest Chairman, return to the rear of the room to await the next group of guests.

The Presiding Officer does not present any guest to the assembly until all the guests have been escorted and seated.

9. When the guest is not a member of the organization, the Distinguished Guest is escorted FIRST and ALONE.
10. Be sure to check Organizational Protocol Rank, i.e. Congressional Medal of Honor Holder, Gold Star Mothers, etc.
11. The Presiding Officer, Distinguished Guest Chairman, Musician, Sgt.-at-Arms and Marshal should work out a system of signals, so that they know what is expected of them at all times.

### **CORRECT INTRODUCTIONS OR PRESENTATIONS BY DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHAIRMAN:**

1. INTRODUCE one not known to the assembly.
2. PRESENT one already known to the group.
3. When you introduce or present Guests of Honor, they rise. You introduce the highest ranking guest first and then go down the list. If your guests are each to say a few words of greeting or congratulation, then start with the lowest rank and go up the list, thus the last expression comes from the top ranking officer or guest.
4. Introduction or presentation of honored guests should be gracious, but short. The higher the officer, the shorter the introduction.
5. When introducing or presenting a speaker, be sure you have the name and title correct. Stimulate the audience interest, but do not give the speaker's talk. Identify the Speaker and give their qualifications thru a brief history or biography. Announce the subject, and last of all give the speaker's complete name while you are still facing the audience, then

turn to the person you are introducing, repeat the name only (this will be the speaker's cue to rise). You lead in the applause and then be seated.

6. The Auxiliary President always introduces or presents National, Department or District Officers and Chairmen when they are visiting a meeting.
7. The membership always rises in recognition of the National, Department or District Officers when they are introduced.
8. When Department Officers or Chairmen are present at their own Unit or District meeting they should be escorted at the first meeting after election or appointment and upon the occasion of official visits of other Department Officers or Chairmen, special meetings, installations, or when there are distinguished outside guests. At all other times they take their place in the audience as a member of the Unit or District. They should, however, be introduced from their place in the audience. When visiting Units other than their own, they should be escorted.
9. Remember that an error in protocol is not a major crime. If you are the Officer or Chairman offended, be gracious.
10. When the speaker concludes, you rise and thank him or her. If a gift is to be presented, do it at this time.
11. If newspaper or newsletter publicity appears following your guest's appearance, or if photos or informal pictures are taken by members during the meeting, it is a nice gesture to send these to your guest.
12. A letter of appreciation from you is a must; and an informal note from the President or Chairman is a nice gesture. Remember your organization is indebted to any guest, speaker or entertainer who has taken the time, trouble, and expense to attend your meeting.
13. When there are distinguished guests present, Chairman and Officers making reports address the chair only – "MADAM PRESIDENT." The only exception given by Robert's Rules of Order is that the speaker may address the chair – "MADAM PRESIDENT, Ladies and Gentlemen."

### **INSPIRATIONS, INVOCATIONS, CLOSING THOUGHTS AND GRACE:**

1. All should be short and should be generalized. Poems are acceptable if well chosen and well delivered.
2. INVOCATION - The assembly rises at the direction of the Chair, who waits for complete silence before stating the name of the person who will give the invocation. An invocation is an earnest entreaty or prayer calling for assistance, and guidance. It is given at the beginning of the meeting, concluding with "Amen."
3. GRACE - The assembly remains seated. Grace is a blessing asked or thanks offered before a meal, and technically becomes a benediction if offered after a meal. If "Blessing" is used rather than "Grace", it must conform to religious precedent. Conclude with "Amen."

4. INSPIRATION - The assembly may remain seated or be requested to stand if offered at the beginning of the meeting, but should remain seated if used at the close. An inspiration is an expression along spiritual or ethical lines. "Amen" is not used at the conclusion.

**RECEIVING LINE – RECEPTION – LEGION AUXILIARY – SPECIAL 10:**

A reception line should consist of those selected for the occasion, including Family, Government, and other Official Organization Groups.

1. Member states name to the RECEPTION CHAIRMAN who is at the head of the line.
2. Reception Chairman states member's name to DISTINGUISHED GUEST CHAIRMAN.
3. Distinguished Guest Chairman presents member to PRESIDENT.
4. President introduces member to HONORED GUEST.
5. Member continues down line shaking hands with each member of the line.



## WHEN YOU ARE THE SPEAKER OR GUEST

1. Be sure to answer all invitations in writing, so there will be no chance of your showing up on the wrong date, or at the wrong hour. Reaffirm the topic of your speech. Send a small card with your title and a short history of yourself, or your reason for making the appearance. This will help the person introducing you.
2. Always be on time. The organization may have other speakers or business to take care of at the same meeting, and will not appreciate your making them late. It is not a good idea to arrive too early, either, since you may interrupt preparations and spoil the effect the unit or organization may wish to present to you.
3. Carefully prepare your speech. Organize it, practice it, and time it. Organize notes rather than take a verbatim speech. However, if the press wished a copy, you might have one to give them, but never try to give one that you carry verbatim and never, never read one. Work out a good introduction and a strong closing. Remember your last words will be remembered by your audience the longest. Use a bit of humor and imagination, but leave the entertaining to the entertainers. Use stories and quotations with color. Ask questions that can be answered with yes or no. Watch the time limit, and summarize your remarks. Avoid references to any controversial issue such as politics, religions, labor disputes, personal conflicts, or any remark that may be objectionable to any member of the audience. Remember you are a guest, and you should act as though you were in a friend's home.
4. If you use notes, keep them on small cards. Mark your copy with a line between words or phrases, indicating where to breathe. Underline important words or thoughts you wish to emphasize. The last word of the sentence is important; don't lose it by running out of breath. After you have written your speech; read it aloud and change it around for better emphasis. You may rewrite it many times, and then practice it before a mirror. After you are satisfied with it, make your notes and then practice some more. When you stand up to give your speech at the meeting you will be self-confident and your audience will know it.
5. Dress carefully if you are a woman. Avoid tight short skirts, hats that hide your face, and/or noisy inappropriate jewelry. Plain colors are better than prints when appearing before an audience; they are not distracting. Never wear a new outfit before an audience. Try it out first until it feels comfortable. Dresses that ride up, hats that slip, shoes that hurt, etc., take your mind off of your subject; and the audience will react the same way. Don't wear dangling earrings, and rhinestones are not worn before five.
6. Before speaking, avoid if possible, such foods as lettuce, starches, ice cream and milk. Alcohol will not make you a better speaker; it will only leave a bad impression with the audience.
7. Remove your top coat before being escorted, but leave your hat and gloves on.
8. Watch your posture while you are seated. This is where so many well-groomed and otherwise proper women fail. Sit tall, with the calf of the leg against the chair. Never cross your legs, and don't sit so far back in the chair that your legs stick out like a doll in front. Cross your ankles or sit with one foot touched behind the other, or with your feet

flat with one foot slightly ahead of the other, (but be careful to keep your knees together).

9. When you are speaking, if you are wearing a suit keep the coat buttoned, your top coat off, your hat on, and your gloves off.
10. When you rise to speak, rise slowly. Don't jump to your feet. Relax, and then stand tall. Posture and body position are important. Step away from support so you do not lean. Stand firmly on both feet with one foot slightly behind the other. Take a deep breath and pause until you have the complete attention of the audience. Use eye contact, and you will find that they are friendly, interested people.
11. When you start to speak, you address only the person who introduced you or called upon you to speak; not all the VIPs present. The only exception would be "Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen."
12. Speak slowly and loud enough to be heard throughout the room. If you are using a microphone, speak naturally and directly into it. Vary your pitch. By beginning a sentence on a low pitch; you can raise it when you need emphasis. Don't fuss with papers, jewelry, glasses, etc. This distracts the audience; but do use gestures for emphasis and description. Learn to pause. This gives the audience time to catch up, and gives you time to glance at your notes, as well as a chance to control your breathing. Use words that the audience will understand, but do not talk down to them. Avoid using monotone.
13. Always be yourself. The audience can feel when you are sincere and when you are acting. Be enthusiastic. This will take some advance preparation, since you can be sincere only about the things you find interesting and like. Get to know your subject beforehand through personal contact and participation. Never try to speak about a subject you are not familiar with or that you are not enthusiastic about.
14. Upon concluding return to your seat slowly and gracefully. If you are presented with a gift be sure to open it before making an acceptance speech. Always thank the group if you have received flowers, corsage, hospitality, or a gift. Then, when you get home, write a note of thanks to the group for their courtesies, and for the privilege of addressing them.
15. If you must leave early, notify the Chairman ahead of time, and then pick a break in the meeting and leave as quietly as possible. If there is no break in the meeting, the President will be glad to have you escorted out early.
16. If action is necessary or desired as a result of your report or presentation, YOU move the action at the conclusion of your report. (If you are a member of the group)

# **Parliamentary Procedure Reference**

## **Part III *Protocol and Parliamentary Procedure Guidebook***



**The American Legion**

**Department of Illinois**

## **OBJECT:**

The object of all procedure is to get things accomplished in an orderly manner – to take things up one at a time, and dispose of them in the shortest time possible, at the same time in a democratic fashion.

When only the Chairman knows Parliamentary Procedure, he can use it to his advantage, but when most of the body also understands the rules, the "Floor" actually controls the meeting, and the "Chair" simply directs it.

If You get in the habit of using the right terms, everybody will understand matters more readily. Note the expressions which appear in boldface type throughout this text.

## **THE AGENDA:**

When a meeting is called to order by the CHAIR, AN AGENDA, OR ORDER OF BUSINESS, is offered for approval, or should be offered. Once the Agenda is approved, the meeting is technically limited to the POINTS included. We usually take care of other matters and "beefs" under the "GOOD OF THE LEGION." If no Agenda is offered, ask for it. If certain points you are interested in do not appear to be included, rise and either inquire about them or MOVE to add them to the Agenda.

## **MOTIONS:**

The business of a meeting is carried forward by MOTIONS. The object of all Motions is to get things done in an orderly manner, and democratically. A Motion is MADE from the DEBATE ON THE QUESTION.

In actual practice, there is usually some Debate before the Motion. Debate without a Motion often becomes aimless, and should be limited.

In Debating, or SPEAKING ON A MOTION, no member should be allowed to speak twice before others have had it once. Speaking on a Motion is also called TAKING THE FLOOR.

Motions must be made on the subject involved, or the POINT ON THE AGENDA, which is being taken up. If a Motion is made on some other subject, the Chair is obliged to rule the MAKE OF THE MOTION out of Order and REFER THE QUESTION to the proper place on the Agenda.

## **SECONDING:**

Motions must be seconded to be entitled to Debate. If the Motion is not Seconded, the Chair is obliged to point out that there has been no Second, and proceed with the meeting.

The Chair is not supposed to "Milk" the Membership for a Second because he wants one, but it is proper to allow enough time for a Second, when required.

Debate before a Motion has been made can always be stopped by someone MAKING A MOTION. Once a Motion has been Made and Seconded, it must be DISPOSED OF, either by

being DEFEATED, PASSED, TABLED, REFERRED, or PLACE IN COMMITTEE. All of these are covered further in the text.

Except for certain PRIVILEGED MOTIONS, which will be explained later also, a Motion cannot be place while there is a PREVIOUS MOTION on the Floor.

### **RECOGNITION:**

In "Making a Motion" or "Moving," the member should rise, face the Chair and signal or call for attention in a manner which will not disrupt the meeting. Once RECOGNIZED by the Chair, the SPEAKER should first state his or her name and department, so such information can be RECORDED IN THE MINUTES.

In other democratic bodies, it is proper to say "Mr. Chairman," "Madame Chairman," etc., but in the American Legion, it is more proper to say "My Comrade(s) or Fellow Legionnaire(s)," since equality is more of a fact in the American Legion.

Once a Motion has been MADE, it is the duty of the Chair to repeat it in order that everyone hears it, and also to CLARIFY it, if it was made in confused language.

Before we proceed further with Motions, let us remove some of the misunderstanding concerning WITHDRAWING A MOTION.

### **WITHDRAWING:**

Before a Motion has been STATED BY THE CHAIR, its' maker has the right to WITHDRAW it, or modify the language. But after it has been stated by the Chair, the maker cannot withdraw or modify his Motion without the CONSENT OF THE ASSEMBLY. After a Motion has been Stated by the Chair, it belongs to the Assembly.

It is also Out of Order to ask for the consent of the SECONDER to the withdrawal of a Motion. The Secunder can only withdraw his Second if the Motion has been changed informally after he seconded it.

It is IN ORDER for anyone to ask the Maker of a Motion to withdraw it, through the Chair. But the Maker does not have to comply. In brief, once a Motion is Made, Seconded and Stated by the Chair, it cannot be withdrawn without the Chair getting the consent of the Assembly (usually by asking if there are any objections to the withdrawal). When a Motion has gone that far, it must be disposed of by being Tabled, Referred, Defeated, Passed, etc., by vote.

When a Motion has been withdrawn, it is treated as though it had never been made, and is not recorded in the minutes. Further, anyone can make the same motion again. The object of withdrawing a Motion is to prevent it from being voted on and appearing in the minutes.

### **AMENDMENTS:**

Once a Motion has been duly made, seconded and is on the Floor, it is subject to AMENDMENT. (Note Certain Motions are not amendable and will be covered later on).

The object of an Amendment is to change or modify the original Motion, without destroying the sense of it. For instance, if there was a Motion on the Floor to hold a picnic, it could be amended to add a date or a place, but it could not be amended to change the affair from a picnic to a bowling match.

Amendments should take the form of: Inserting or adding words to the Motion; striking out words; substituting words or sentences. The Chair is obliged to rule Out of Order any proposed Amendment which would do more than the above, and change the sense of the Motion entirely.

In some cases, where a poorly worded Motion is made, even the Amendment does not make it a complete Motion in some of the members' eyes. In such cases, an Amendment can be made to the first Amendment. This SECOND DEGREE AMENDMENT method is sometimes confusing, but it is legitimate, and it is up to the Chair to clarify the Motion and its Amendments.

If it is too complicated for this, the Chair can call for or recommend a SUBSTITUTE MOTION, with the consent of the Assembly, which will tie the loose ends together so that an intelligent vote may be taken. A Substitute Motion is itself a form of Amendment.

Amendments to Motions are DEBATABLE (that is, can be discussed). Like Motions, Amendments also require Seconding. Discussion on an Amendment must be confined to the Amendment itself.

In TAKING THE VOTE after Debate, the Amendment is first voted upon, and then the Motion itself is voted upon. Sometimes, the nature of the Amendment is such that passing or defeating the Amendment CARRIES or DEFEATS the motion also. In that event, it is not necessary to take a vote on the Motion.

Before proceeding into further study on Motions, it might be well to give some attention to the MINUTES.

### **MINUTES:**

The MINUTES OF A MEETING are simply a record of the proceedings of that particular meeting. As such, they can only be ACCEPTED BY THE BODY whose Minutes they are. In short, the General Membership can only ACCEPT Minutes of the Membership Meetings, the Executive Board can only Accept its own minutes, etc. Upon reading of the Minutes of a given meeting, they are subject to a Motion to Accept. Sometimes, CORRECTIONS are raised and then the Minutes are ACCEPTED AS CORRECTED.

Being simply the record of proceedings, Minutes may be corrected at any time, including subsequent meetings.

Minutes shall record all Main Motions which were not withdrawn, all Points of Order, all Appeals and whether lost or sustained. The Makers of Motions should be recorded, but not necessarily the Seconders.

The date, time, and place of the meeting, as well as the time of Adjournment should be in the



Minutes to include the results of any ROLL CALL votes, and full report of TELLERS. (Tellers are members elected or appointed to tally ballot). Minutes cannot be REJECTED, but they can be RETURNED FOR CORRECTION. When the Minutes of an Executive Board meeting are read at a Membership meeting, it is only for general information, not Acceptance or Correction.

However, having been thus advised, the Membership can take action at the Meeting to censure or approve their Board. This, of course, is done through Motions at the proper time on the Agenda. The Membership should be alert to do this, and be certain not to allow any top body to exercise undemocratic control.

In connection with Minutes, it is important to know that ACCEPTING A REPORT is the same as adopting it. RECEIVING A REPORT merely allows it to be read to the Assembly. Receiving does not mean approving or adopting. Accepting does! In making Motions on Reports, the Assembly should understand the distinction in the above two words.

### **DEFERRING:**

Once a matter has been duly placed on the Floor through Motion and Seconded, it may become necessary to defer or postpone action. This can be done democratically by the Assembly in several ways, in addition to withdrawing the Motion, which we have already covered.

**TABLING:** A Motion to TABLE is a Motion to lay aside business in such a manner that it can be RENEWED at a later time--either at the same meeting or a later one. A Motion to Table requires a Second. Once Seconded, the Motion to Table cannot be either Debated or Amended, but MUST BE PUT TO IMMEDIATE VOTE WITHOUT DISCUSSION.

When it is desired to resume the matter which was Tabled, the correct Motion is to "TAKE FROM THE TABLE." This Motion must be seconded, and is also not subject to Debate or Amendment. When a matter is "TAKE FROM THE TABLE," it is taken with all previous actions, amendments, etc., and resumed just as it was when tabled. Tabling a Motion or matter does not carry a time limit. That kind of postponement is handled as follows:

**POSTPONE TO A SET TIME:** When the object is to set a future time at which a matter or motion must be considered, do not move to Table. Instead, move to POSTPONE to a set time, date, or meeting. A Motion to so POSTPONE CONSIDERATION requires a Second. It CAN BE DEBATED before being voted on, and can be amended as to the time.

**PLACE IN COMMITTEE:** When it is desired to let a few handle a given matter, instead of tying up the whole meeting needlessly, this is done by COMMITTING, or PLACING IN COMMITTEE through a properly worded Motion.

**POSTPONE INDEFINITELY:** A Motion to POSTPONE INDEFINITELY is really a Motion to KILL the subject. It must be Seconded and can be Debated, but cannot be amended.

These Motions are dangerous, and must be watched with care when they come up. For they can not only help to carry the meeting along, but they can also wreck consideration of important subjects.

### **APPEALS TO OVERRULE CHAIR:**

The Chairman of a Meeting or the Chair has certain rights, but they do not include engineering the meeting or "railroading" certain matters through. A decision of the Chair can always be subjected to change through APPEAL.

When a member rises to Appeal a decision of the Chair, his Motion can be either to APPEAL THE DECISION, or to OVERRULE THE CHAIR; they both have the same meaning.

Under such circumstances, the member should state carefully and in understandable language why he is making the Motion. The Motion requires a second.

If Seconded, the Chair should yield the gavel to the next in rank at the meeting, and then state his reasons for the decision. Without further Debate, the Acting Chairman then puts the issue up for vote with the following words: "SHALL THE CHAIR BE SUSTAINED?" (Meaning upheld.)

After the vote the Chair resumes the gavel, whether he was sustained or not in his past decision.

Technically, the Motion to Appeal the Decision of the Chair is Debatable when the question involved is the BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE, and not debatable otherwise. It is simplest, and perfectly fair, to always handle an appeal without a Debate. The decision of the Chair stands, until reversed by a majority vote. A tie vote SUSTAINS THE CHAIR. FURTHER, since the Chair does not hold the gavel at the time, the Chair can vote.

Members should not rise to criticize the Chair. If they have an objection to a RULING, it should always be handled through an Appeal.

A sensible Chairman should not take an Appeal personally, but should welcome it, since it relieves him of the responsibility and places it upon the Assemblage. Sustained, he is that much more confident in his Chairmanship.

The Chair is supposed to be the "servant of the Assembly," and as such should refrain from discussing questions before the Assembly, thus maintaining an impartial attitude.

The Chair cannot authorize anyone to act in his place if he is absent from the Meeting. If the By-Laws do not cover that contingency, the Assembly has the duty to elect an Acting Chairman.

### **THE QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE:**

The QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE is often interpreted to mean "I am a privileged guy, and have the right to the floor again."

The only privilege involved is the privilege of getting the attention of the Chair at once to ASK A QUESTION, MAKE A POINT OF ORDER, or draw attention to the pressing business which cannot wait.



When rising on a Question of Privilege, you do not wait for recognition from the Chair., you INTERRUPT by stating" I rise to a Point of Inquiry. (or Order, or Procedure}." The Chair is OBLIGED to recognize you, answering: "State your Question."

Rising to a "Point of Procedure" means that you question the procedure the Chair is following--you feel he is off the track, acting contrary to REGULAR PROCEDURE.

Rising to a "Point of Order" usually means that you feel some member of the. Assembly, rather than the Chair, is off the track, and you want the Chair to take action.

Rising on other "Questions of Privilege" usually involves drawing attention to conduct or misconduct of members, comfort of members, conduct of press or guests, etc. All such interruptions are loosely included in the term "Question of Privilege."

If the Chair sees the point you are making he states, "The point is well taken," and follows it. If the Chair does not, he states his reason, and the way is open for an Appeal to be taken, if necessary.

AND THIS IS IMPORTANT! Even though the Chair is obliged to recognize the above Questions of Privilege, the Assembly is not. As the book states it, "Privilege of Assembly out-ranks personal privilege." A chronic interrupter can thus be silenced by a proper motion.

While a Question of Privilege requires no second, gets no debate, and is not amendable, the action desired may be deferred until the speaker is finished and may also be Tabled or Postponed indefinitely. In the latter case, the question interrupted is not carried with a Tabling or Postponement motion.

### **RENEWAL AND RECONSIDERATION:**

Much confusion exists as to bringing up a point again, or trying to get a matter reconsidered. There are simple rules covering these things.

### **RENEW A MOTION:**

The object of this action would be to bring up a Motion again after it has been defeated. The rule is:

A rejection motion cannot be renewed at the same session by the same maker at a future session.

Further, no motion can be introduced that is so nearly like a rejected motion that it would PLACE THE SAME QUESTION BEFORE THE HOUSE a second time. Also, no motion can be introduced which interferes with a motion which has been Tabled, Postponed, or Placed in Committee.

### **RECONSIDER A MOTION:**

The object of this action would be to bring back a question for more discussion, and obtain a new vote. Such a motion can only be made by a member WHO VOTED WITH THE PREVAILING SIDE on the previous vote! Such a motion must receive a Second, and can be Debated, but not Amended.

If Reconsideration carries, the result is just as though the original vote had not been taken.

Should such motions be brought up, and you feel the reason is a bad one, don't forget to use the "Question of Privilege."

It is a good thing for the most sincere members of the American Legion to know the rules, and thus be prepared to keep the meeting on a true course.

**VOTING:**

The person occupying the Chair when a vote is taken does not vote except to break a tie. Voting is normally by voice. If the result is not clear, the Chair should ask for a standing vote.

Other methods of voting are: DIVISION OF THE HOUSE, SECRET BALLOT, or ROLL CALL of the Assembly.

This Short Course was specifically designed to acquaint members with only the rudiments of Parliamentary Procedure, and is therefore, brief in coverage.