

MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP

2022-2023

A leader is defined as the person who leads or commands a group, while a mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor. Given this, we can understand how, while different, they often go hand in hand.

Mentoring

Mentors are often the silent majority. They are the person rarely seeking the limelight, yet always willing to lend an ear or a helping hand. They lead by their example and diligence.

Mentors are mindful of the newer members and without a second thought utilize the CARE concept:

- **C**atch the member when they first join.
- **A**sk them to participate
- **R**emember what it felt like to be new
- **E**ngage them in a program that fits them

If you see a new member who has recently joined your ranks, ask them to sit with you. The meeting may seem foreign to them, so sitting with a friendly face may make that first meeting less uncomfortable.

When projects are presented, ask them to be a part of things. Ask for their input. Who knows, with all the recent changes in technology, a new member may be able to offer guidance to make things more efficient.

Remember your first meeting. Were you anxious? Or did you have someone that recruited you, and invited you? Guess what? They were *your* mentor. 😊



Engage the new member in a program that you may think fits them, and ask for input.

Mentoring our new members will most likely enhance their



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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Ensure a positive member experience
- ✓ Remember to C.A.R.E.
- ✓ Engage in learning and training opportunities
- ✓ T.E.A.M.W.O.R.K. to be an outstanding leader
- ✓ Develop and empower members for leadership roles

experience, and encourage them to come back. New friendships can be made and a mutual respect can be formed between newer members and seasoned older members.



Given time, and having been properly mentored, these members will often go on to having such a boost in their confidence that they wish to move through our ranks.

Are you a mentor? Yes, by virtue of reading through this program, I believe you are. You are a vital and needed member of your Auxiliary and beyond. If you need help in your mentoring endeavors, please utilize the resources available on the National Auxiliary website. “Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation” is a great place to start.

Remember to report your mentoring activities and share your experiences!

Leadership

Leaders are often the result of great mentoring, and continued mentoring by trusted advisors.

Leadership can be difficult at any level, but surely made easier by following the guidelines set by past leaders and sound organizational principles.

The “Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual” and “Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation” are both key resources to a successful leader in a VFW Auxiliary at any level.

As mentoring uses a “CARE” concept, leaders could perhaps use a “TEAMWORK” concept:

- **T**ake the time to communicate
- **E**mpower your members
- **A**nswer questions appropriately
- **M**entor
- **W**ork out future plans
- **O**utsource tasks
- **R**emember “why” you lead
- **K**now your strengths & weaknesses



Taking the time to communicate with your members is imperative to maintaining successful leadership. Without hearing your voice, members can be left doubtful as to where they stand, or as to the overall health of the organization.

Empower your members to stay involved by accepting new thoughts and ideas. We all know that even though some methods are tried and true, there may well be a more efficient way on the horizon.

Answering questions appropriately will give others a clearer idea of who you are. Listen to the question, and if it's not something you want to hear? Well, you are still the leader, and looked to for sound and rational answers and guidance. If a decision you have made is being questioned, thoughtful answers will reach a greater audience than defensiveness.

Mentoring your peers who will follow in your leadership role is one of the standards by which your leadership will be remembered. Your decisions will be carefully weighed by those following you, so always take enough time to weigh out all options to better serve the Auxiliary now and in the future.

Work out future plans to avoid unnecessary confusion. Make sure during times of uncertainty you have a plan "B" on the back burner.

Outsource tasks that may fall outside of your proverbial box. Leaders are frequently known to try and "take on the world" but essentially don't really need to. You have a team.

Remembering "why" we lead is sometimes difficult. The glare of the limelight gets in our eyes and we sometimes lose focus. Think of the Veteran who led you to your position and ask yourself if the way you're fulfilling your role is honoring them.

Lastly, know your individual strengths and weaknesses. Remember no one is perfect but acknowledging our weaknesses is also an example of strength.

Keep in mind your mentors and peers are always there to guide you as is the VFW National Auxiliary website wrought with tremendous resources





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Program Awards

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

Auxiliary Awards

1. A citation to each Auxiliary that is reported in the Mentoring for Leadership Program by December 31, 2022.
2. An award to the Auxiliary that hosts the most outstanding activity or training to show members how to find and train mentees. A required entry form and criteria can be found at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. The entry form is due to the Department Chairman by March 31, 2023.
3. An award to one Auxiliary Chairman with the best presentation of the Mentoring for Leadership Program. To qualify, the Auxiliary chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman within 60 days of the presentation but not later than April 15, 2023.

District Awards

1. A citation to each District with 100% of the Auxiliaries in the District reported in Mentoring for Leadership by December 31, 2022.
2. An award to the District Chairman with the best presentation of the Mentoring for Leadership Program. To qualify, the District Chairman must submit a report to the Department Chairman within 60 days of the presentation but not later than April 15, 2023.

National Awards

Auxiliary Awards

1. Most unique activity or training in the Auxiliary to show members how to find and train mentees.
 - Citation to every Auxiliary that has an activity or training in the Auxiliary to show members how to find and train mentees. Criteria and entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman by March 31, 2023.

The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman must send a copy of all submitted entry forms to National Headquarters by April 30, 2023.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding activity or training in the Auxiliary to show members how to find and train mentees. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2023 National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador by April 30, 2023 for judging.