



Post Commander's

Keys to a Successful Post

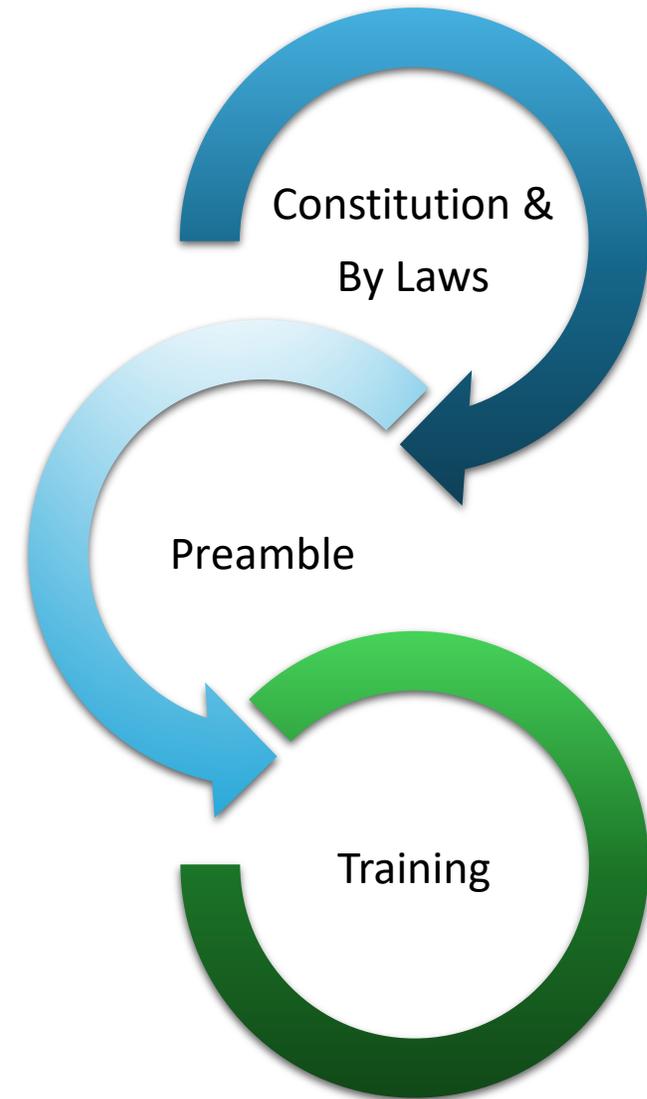
- ✓ **Why Are We Here**
- ✓ **Foundation**
- ✓ **Facts to be Recognized**
- ✓ **Essential Tools**
- ✓ **Guides and Manuals**
- ✓ **Post Commander's roles**
- ✓ **Post Officers Roles**
- ✓ **Running effective meetings**
- ✓ **Now what?**

Why are we here

- ✓ **To help new Post Commanders have knowledge and confidence**
- ✓ **Provide some tools to be effective**
- ✓ **Share ideas and suggestions of successful Post Commanders**
- ✓ **Provide a “lifeline” of information and support during your tenure**
- ✓ **Guide your path for future roles**

Solid Footing

- ✓ Constitution & By Laws provide the rules of our Organization
- ✓ Preamble is our true mission statement
- ✓ Training provides guidance and direction for all levels National, Department, District-County, and Post



- ✓ **There are over 12,600 AL Posts NO TWO ARE ALIKE**
- ✓ **Differences in size, wealth, assets, history, location, member attitudes, community support, personalities**
- ✓ **There is no one-size-fits all checklist for how to be the Commander of a particular Post**

- ✓ **Officer's Guide & Manual of Ceremonies**
- ✓ **Post Adjutant's Guide**
- ✓ **District Commanders Guide**
- ✓ **Four Pillars booklet**

- ✓ **Published annually**
- ✓ **Each Department receives copies to distribute to the Posts**
- ✓ **Post Operations**
- ✓ **Manual of Ceremonies**
- ✓ **The Commander's first source for guidance**

- ✓ **Find/read Post Constitution and By-Laws**
 - **They set main operating policies of the Post**
- ✓ **If no copy is on file at Department, use the template in the Officers Guide to write and approve these documents**



The Commander's Role

What is it and what should it be?

Commander's Role

- ✓ **Leadership**
- ✓ **Positive attitude**
- ✓ **Energy**
- ✓ **Enthusiasm**
- ✓ **Passion**
- ✓ **Knowledge**

Take Care of the People

- ✓ **Just as in the military, a good commander takes care of their people**
- ✓ **Recognize those who do good things**
- ✓ **Submit people for the **MANY** awards at district and department levels**
 - **Use the Administrative Manual for awards opportunities**
- ✓ **Submit the Post for awards**

- ✓ **Founded 1932 as a program of The American Legion**
- ✓ **Eligible to all males whose parents or grandparents served in the military and became eligible to join the Legion**
- ✓ **Department counterpart is the Detachment**
- ✓ **Post counterpart is the Squadron**
- ✓ **Integrate the Squadron into Post activities**

- ✓ **Supports The American Legion**
- ✓ **Educates the community, mentors youth, promotes patriotism, citizenship, peace, and security**
- ✓ **Strong Posts almost always have a strong Auxiliary**
- ✓ **Treat them as a partner – work together**

They Matter

- 🏛️ Community Impact
 - - Showcase American Legion's relevance
 - - Highlight community contributions
- 📣 Communication
 - - Share updates with members
 - - Spread information beyond membership
- 📄 Reporting
 - - Key reports include:
 - - Finance
 - - CPR (Consolidated Post Reports)
 - - Forms for National, Department, District, and County



Post Reports-National

CPR-Consolidated Post Report

- ✓ Each Post Submit CPR by 1st Week in June by either Post CMDR or Post ADJ
- ✓ Department Adjutant must submit to National no later than July 1st or the CPR is late.
- ✓ CPR is great organizational tool for Post to use to help align their Posts programs to the Four Pillars and other programs.
- ✓ <https://mylegion.org/personifyebusiness/Home/state/d44c8105-d2d1-4c84-85b0-9b102f891a02>

Four Pillars

THE AMERICAN LEGION | CONSOLIDATED POST REPORT
2023 - 2024

Department of (1) _____ Post No. (2) _____ District No. (3) _____
 Final 2022-2023 Membership (4) _____ City (5) _____ State (6) _____

VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REHABILITATION

7 no. of cases handled by service officer(s) 8 \$ emergency aid given to veterans from post funds
 9 no. of volunteer hours recorded at VA hospitals 10 \$ contributions to VA Voluntary Service program
 11 has a VA Voluntary Service coordinator 12 no. of VA Voluntary Service volunteers

NATIONAL SECURITY

13 Blood Donor program - no. of units donated 14 Blood Donor program: no. of blood donors
 15 ROTC medals - no. presented by post 16 has a National Security chairperson
 17 has a Crime Prevention/Law and Order program 18 has a Fire Prevention/Protection program
 19 participates in Homeland Sec./Disaster Relief 20 has a POW/MIA chairperson
 21 has Law Enforcement of the Year program 22 has Fire Fighter of the Year program
 23 post has color guard / rifle team 24 wake services honors provided for veterans
 25 no. of funeral honors provided for veterans 26 \$ funeral cost to post
 27 post has ceremonial rifles or static display 28 number of static displays (guns, cannons, etc.)

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

29 has media relations/PR officer 30 produces a post publication
 31 maintains a website 32 distributes a post e-newsletter
 33 has post social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc) 34 no. of times post mentioned on radio
 35 no. of times post mentioned on TV 36 no. of times post mentioned in newspaper (stories)

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

37 has employment chairperson 38 has Homeless Veterans chairperson
 39 participates in career fairs 40 no. of veterans referred to LVER or DVOP
 41 no. placed in employment 42 no. placed in job training program
 43 promotes programs such as Employer of the Year 44 post submitted award: Homeless Veterans Outreach
 45 post submitted award: Employer of the disabled 46 post submitted award: Employer of Older Workers
 47 award to Local Veteran Employer Representative (LVER) 48 award to Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)
 49 award to local office 50 award for Employer of veterans, large cat/+200 employees
 51 award to Employer of veterans, med cat/50-200 employees 52 award for Employer of veterans, small cat/less than 50 emp

AMERICANISM

53 Boys State: no. of boys sponsored 54 \$ Boys State: cost to post
 55 \$ American Legion Legacy Scholarship: amt donated 56 participates in citizenship/naturalization activities
 57 Baseball: American Legion Baseball team sponsored 58 \$ cost of baseball team sponsorship
 59 other athletic teams sponsored 60 \$ cost of other teams
 61 Scouting: sponsors scout unit(s) 62 no. of youths in Legion Scouting
 63 \$ donated to scouting activities 64 Oratorical Contest: sponsored local contest
 65 no. of local Oratorical contestants 66 \$ Oratorical cost to post
 67 participates in School Award program 68 no. of awards presented
 69 participates in American Education Week 70 \$ cost of American Education Week
 71 no. of scholarships awarded 72 \$ cost of scholarship awards
 73 participates in Vets in the Classroom 74 \$ Vets in the Classroom cost to post
 75 participates in Flag Day 76 participates in Get Out The Vote
 77 participates in Veterans Day 78 participates in Memorial Day
 79 participates in American Legion Birthday 80 participates in Four Chaplains Sunday
 81 Community Service: Estimated no. of hours of service 82 \$ Community Service cost to post
 83 Jr Shooting Sports Prog Club: no. of clubs 84 Jr Shooting Sports Prog Club: no. of youth involved
 85 \$ Jr Shooting Sports Prog cost to post 86 Youth Cadet Law Enforcement
 87 Youth Cadet: no. of youth involved 88 \$ Youth Cadet: cost to post
 89 participates in National Day of Prayer

CHILDREN & YOUTH (C&Y)

90 no. of C&Y activities held 91 \$ cash aid given to benefit children
 92 \$ value of goods given to children (reasonable estimate) 93 no. of children given aid (cash or goods)
 94 no. of volunteer hours for C&Y programs and activities 95 participates in Halloween Safety
 96 participates in Health & Child Safety 97 participates in April is C&Y Month
 98 participates in National Family Week 99 \$ parties, dinners, prizes and gifts
 100 participates in Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) 101 \$ TFA: cost to post
 102 \$ administrative costs (paper, equipment, etc.) 103 \$ cost of all other child service charities
 104 American Legion Veteran & Children Foundation 105 \$ Veteran & Children Foundation: cost to post

INTERNAL AFFAIRS & MEMBERSHIP

106 American Legion Riders: has Riders group 107 no. of Legion family members in Riders group
 108 participate in Legion Riders Legacy Run 109 \$ Legacy Run: cost to post
 110 Sons of American Legion: has squadron 111 Sons of American Legion: no of Sons in squadron
 112 participate in National Emergency Fund 113 \$ National Emergency Fund: cost to post
 114 American Legion Amateur Radio Club: has radio club 115 \$ American Legion Amateur Radio Club: cost to post
 116 Participated in Buddy Check 117 Number of members contacted
 118 Participated in Veterans Service Days 119 Number of events hosted
 120 participates in Operation Comfort Warriors 121 \$ all other fund raising not captured above
 122 Volunteer hours not captured above

Annual Post Data Report

- ✓ Incredibly Important-Reading is Fundamental
- ✓ This form is the information that Department and National uses for Post dues, address, contact, and other relevant information. Information cannot get to a Post if the Department or National has the wrong contact information. **This form must be turned in every year even if no changes.**
- ✓ Due to Department by April 1st or earlier.
- ✓ Due to National by April 15th. If not sent to National by Department. Post dues will be set the same as previous year.


ANNUAL POST DATA REPORT
2025 Membership Year

AMERICAN LEGION POST _____ District _____ Data as of 1/8/2024
Post's Legal Name (as shown on Post Charter): _____ Post Location (as shown on Post Charter): _____

(Contact your Department Headquarters immediately if any of the information above is incorrect.)
Please type or print in ink and forward to the Department by **April 15, 2024**

CURRENTLY ON FILE:	CHANGE OR CORRECTION:
1) Post's Home (Physical) Address: _____	_____
2) Post's Mailing Address: _____	_____
3) Post's Dues Mailing Address: _____	_____
<small>Note: If the above address contains a member's name or is Being Sent to a member's home address as the contact, please provide The member's ID: _____</small>	
4) Current Annual Post Dues: \$ _____	2025 Dues will be \$ _____
<small>Note: All new dues rates will be effective July 1st (1st renewal notice) unless an alternate Effective Date is entered.</small>	Effective Date: ____/____/____ <small>Month Day Year</small>
5) Post Telephone Number: _____	_____
6) Post Fax Number: _____	_____
<small>Note: Please DO NOT use personal phone number of members.</small>	
7) Post's Email Address: _____	_____
8) Post's Internet Website: _____	_____
9) Post's Meeting Date & Time: _____	_____
10) <input type="checkbox"/> Post sponsors an ALR Chapter	11) <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking permitted <input type="checkbox"/> No Smoking
12) <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities are available to rent for events	13) <input type="checkbox"/> Post has a Club Room (food/drink)

Post Adjutant or Commander Signature Date

★ **IMPORTANT NOTICE** ★

Complete and return this form to your Department Headquarters no later than **April 15, 2024**. Failure to meet this deadline may cause the first 2025 Renewal Notices to be mailed with incorrect information.
(Detailed instructions on the reverse side)



Post Officers

Roles and Responsibilities

Post Officers

Role	Responsibility
Post Commander	Leader, Mentor, and Face of the Post
Sr. Vice Commander	Membership, assists the Post Commander
Jr. Vice Commander	Fundraising, Special Projects, Public Relations
Adjutant	Records (Minutes, Forms), Backbone
SGT At Arms	Meeting Setup, Flag Etiquette, Keeps Decorum during Meetings
Finance Officer	Keeper of the Post Finances
Service Officer	Helps and directs for those in need of services
Judge Advocate	Expert on Parliamentary Procedures, Constitution, and By-Laws
Historian	Records Post History, may produce Post History Books
Chaplain	Moral and Spiritual Leader of the Post



HOW TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE REGULAR POST MEETING

Ninzel Rasmuson, PDC, NALC 2018

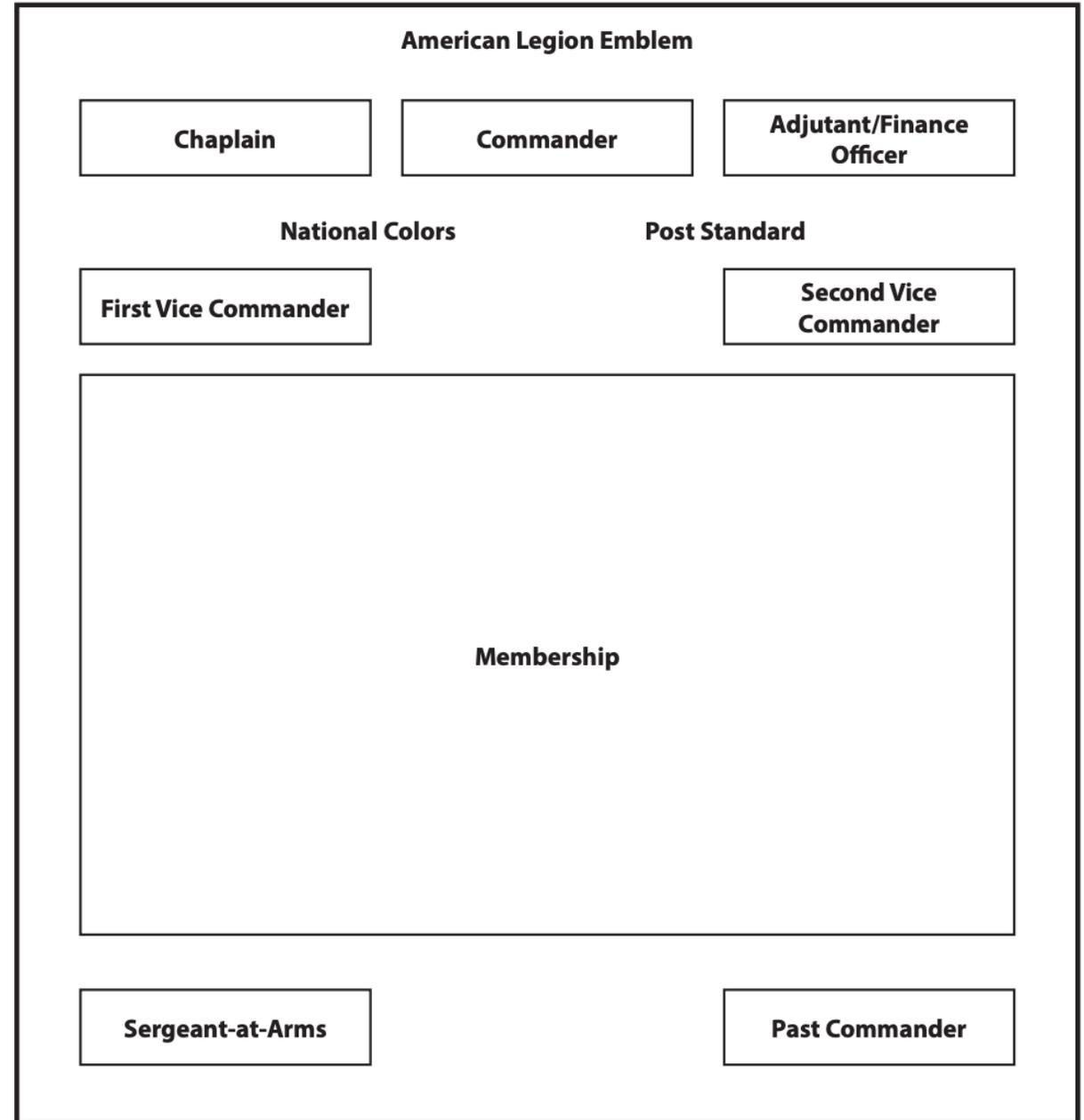
- ✓ **If possible, publish the agenda prior to the meeting**
 - **Website**
 - **Email to membership, depending on size of Post**
 - **Post a paper copy at the meeting site for review prior to the meeting**

- ✓ **Minutes from the prior meeting can also be posted prior to the next meeting**

- ✓ **Most posts have a standard meeting agenda**
 - **Start with that – alter as needed**
- ✓ **Have a prescribed order of business so members know what to expect from meeting to meeting**
- ✓ **Let the agenda help you keep on track when members want to stray into new topics**
 - **Save new topics for the end**

PLAN OF POST MEETING ROOM

This arrangement of a post meeting room is practical for the conduct of regular post meetings, permitting the post a great deal of flexibility in arrangement to its



- ✓ Understand the basics of the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order. Have a copy available during post meetings.
- ✓ Have a copy of the post Constitution and Bylaws available during post meetings.
- ✓ Commander, be mindful of time and run the post meeting efficiently.
- ✓ Utilize Sgt-At-Arms to maintain order during the post meeting.
- ✓ Stay focused on the mission and values of The American Legion.



POST LEADERSHIP ROLES

COMMANDER

POST ADJUTANT / FINANCE OFFICER

1st VICE COMMANDER

2nd VICE COMMANDER

CHAPLAIN

SGT-AT-ARMS

JUDGE ADVOCATE

OTHER APPOINTED POSITIONS



What to Wear and How To Begin

- ✓ All officers should be in uniform, each wearing an official Legion cap and the official badge of office. The Legion cap is also called a Garrison cap.
- ✓ The commander shall announce the meeting is about to open. Officers shall take their stations.
- ✓ The commander shall seat those present with one rap of the gavel, and the sergeant-at-arms shall close the doors of the meeting hall.
- ✓ The commander shall then give three raps of the gavel, and all who are present shall stand at attention.

Post Meeting Agenda Script (page 41 in the 2024 Officer's Guide)

- **Post commander:** “The color bearers will advance the colors.” As the color bearers start to advance, the commander gives the command to salute.
- **Post commander:** “Hand salute.” If a bugler is available, sound “To the Colors.” At its conclusion, the commander gives the command, “Two.” If no bugler is present, the command “Two” is given immediately after the colors have been posted.
- **Post commander:** “The chaplain will offer prayer.”
- **Post commander:** “All members/guests in attendance shall remain standing with their cap removed and placed over the heart from the opening prayer, through the POW/MIA ceremony, and concluding with the Pledge of Allegiance.”
- *In place of the following prayer, the chaplain may deliver one appropriate for the setting.*
- **Chaplain:** “Almighty God, Father of all mankind and Judge over nations, we pray Thee to guide our work in this meeting and in all our days. Send Thy peace to our nation and to all nations. Hasten the fulfillment of Thy promise of peace that shall have no end.
- “We pray for those who serve the people and guard the public welfare, that by Thy blessing they may be enabled to discharge their duties honestly and well. We pray that by Thy help they may observe the strictest justice, keep alight the fires of freedom, strive earnestly for the spirit of democracy, and preserve untarnished our loyalty to our country and to Thee. Finally, O God of mercy, we ask Thy blessing and comfort for those who are suffering mental and physical disability. Cheer them and bring them the blessings of health and happiness. Amen.”

Post Meeting Agenda Script, Cont' (page 42 in the 2024 Officer's Guide)

- **Post commander:** “A POW/MIA empty chair is placed at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of many American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America. This is a reminder for all of us to spare no effort to secure the release of any American prisoners from captivity, the repatriation of the remains of those who died bravely in defense of liberty, and a full accounting of those missing. Let us rededicate ourselves to this vital endeavor!”
- **Post commander:** “Place the POW/MIA flag on the empty chair.”
- *The first and second vice commanders, or other designated individuals, approach the empty chair carrying a folded POW/MIA flag. Upon reaching the chair, they reverently unfold the flag and drape it over the chair with the crest facing the membership. After the meeting is concluded, the POW/MIA flag should be refolded and stored for future use.*
- *The commander (or appropriate official) leads the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Legionnaires will remove their caps. The commander may also direct the singing of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”*
- **Post Commander or Designee:** “I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”
- *Regular meeting opening resumes after the Pledge of Allegiance.*
- **Post commander:** “Everyone will re-cover.”

Post Meeting Agenda Script, Cont' (page 42 in the 2024 Officer's Guide)

- *The commander and membership recite the **preamble of the Constitution of The American Legion** slowly and in unison, as follows:*
- **“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 all 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.”**
- *The commander seats members with one rap of the gavel.*
- **Post commander:** “I now declare _____ Post No. _____, Department of _____, regularly convened.”

Post Meeting Agenda Script, Cont' (page 43 in the 2024 Officer's Guide)

- a. Roll call to determine if quorum is present
 - b. Reading of minutes of previous meeting
 - c. Introduction of guests and prospective and new members
 - d. Committee reports
 - e. Balloting on applications
 - f. Sick call, relief and employment
 - g. Post service officer's report
 - h. Unfinished business
 - i. Initiation of candidates
 - j. New business and correspondence
 - k. Memorial to a departed post member
 - l. The good of The American Legion
- *The membership shall be permitted to make suggestions of any kind, character or description, save religion or partisan politics.*

Commander's Role

- ✓ **Take charge and stay in charge**
- ✓ **Ensure everyone is allowed to speak**
- ✓ **Keep the discussions on track**
- ✓ **Save new or unrelated issues for the final part of the meeting – For the Good of the Legion**
- ✓ **The goal is to conduct the required business in the most effective time frame...NOT “get done as fast as possible”**

Realities of Being Commander

- ✓ **You can't do it all; delegate and empower**
- ✓ **No one is indispensable**
- ✓ **We are all volunteering time and talents**
- ✓ **Everyone in the group must be involved**
- ✓ **Encourage, teach, mentor, and develop**
- ✓ **Believe in yourself**

- ✓ **This course provides a starting point for success**
- ✓ **Not everything is covered for what a successful Post Commander should know**
- ✓ **There is much more you NEED to learn**
- ✓ **There is much more you should WANT to learn**

Helpful Sites

Kansas Legion Website

<https://kansaslegion.org/>

American Legion Website

<https://www.legion.org>

My Legion Website

<https://mylegion.org/personifyebusiness/>

Commander

