

EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION

2025-2026 School of Instruction

Mentoring and Encouraging Members – A Path to a Stronger VFW Auxiliary

Good [morning/afternoon], everyone.

One of the greatest strengths of our organization lies not just in our mission, but in our people — our members. And today, I want to talk about how we can empower those people through effective mentoring, encouragement, and ongoing support.

Supporting Our Members: Getting the Basics Right

It starts with the fundamentals. We must be proactive in **assisting our members with official paperwork** — ensuring it's filled out accurately and submitted on time. Meeting deadlines and ensuring compliance may not always feel glamorous, but they are essential to our smooth operation and long-term success.

Welcoming New Auxiliaries: Building Connections Early

When new VFW Auxiliaries are formed, let's make it a point to **recognize and celebrate them** at both District and Department functions. That warm welcome can go a long way. It shows them they are not just joining an organization — they're becoming part of a family. A family that values their contributions from day one.

Maintaining Strong, Active Auxiliaries

We are fortunate to have **a wealth of resources provided by the National Organization**, all designed to help our Auxiliaries thrive. I encourage everyone to explore the tools available through **MALTA Member Resources**.

Three key programs stand out:

1. **The Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit**

This includes **seven powerful resources** to help identify and address issues. Tools like the **Healthy Auxiliary Checklist** and **Auxiliary Meeting Clinic** are simple, effective ways to stay on track.

2. **Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation**

This program helps educate members about the responsibilities of officers, the importance of chairmanships, and the “why” behind reporting. It's about understanding not just the “how,” but the purpose behind what we do.

3. **Saving an Auxiliary Starts with Membership**

If an Auxiliary isn't recruiting, it's a red flag. Partner with your **Membership Chairman** to bring in new voices. Fresh energy can breathe new life into struggling groups.

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Don't forget the additional tools at your fingertips:

- The video: **“Understanding Auxiliary Traditions”**
- The presentation: **“Why Having an Auxiliary Can Boost Your Post”**
- **Top 10 Reasons** handout
- **Good Job Certificates** – simple, but meaningful gestures of appreciation

Mentoring: The Heartbeat of Our Future

Let's talk mentoring — not just as a task, but as a mindset.

- **Mentoring and leadership go hand-in-hand.** Leadership provides guidance; mentoring nurtures potential.
- A healthy, thriving organization begins with members who feel seen, supported, and encouraged.
- Whether it's a brand-new member or someone returning after time away, **a friendly hand extended in support** can reignite engagement and purpose.

Creating **positive, respectful, and organized meeting experiences** ensures members walk away feeling fulfilled and excited to return.

And as you mentor, listen closely. You'll often hear interest from members who may want to step into leadership roles — as an officer or a chair. Work with them. Guide them. Their success is your success — and the Auxiliary's strength depends on it.

Train Your Replacement – Leave a Legacy

At the end of the day, the ultimate goal of mentoring is simple but powerful: **Train your replacement.** Equip them with the knowledge, tools, and confidence they need to succeed — so the work you've done continues, stronger than ever.

Together, we can build a future where every member feels valued, every Auxiliary is thriving, and our mission continues with passion and purpose.

Thank you.

Karen Flynn

ksf10@hotmail.com, 509-669-8144