

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE



GUIDEBOOK FOR RECRUITING, RETENTION, AND MARKETING

PREFACE

The GUIDEBOOK FOR RECRUITING, RETENTION AND MARKETING, developed for Detachments in the Marine Corps League, is a summary of some of the best practices for recruiting, retention, and marketing; received as input from across the League. The National Membership Committee is the sponsor of this Guidebook, and it is meant to be a toolbox of ideas and initiatives Detachments can use to recruit and retain members. A continuing effort will be made to update and upgrade this Guidebook so it will remain current and be more useful.

On average, the League gains about 8,000 members annually, but we lose about the same number due to death and lack of renewal. If we can increase the number of new members through more robust recruiting, while decreasing lack of renewal attrition, we can build our membership and enhance our mission accomplishment. There is no one-size-fits-all solution or process, and some things probably work better in certain geographic locations than others. Detachments should employ several of the initiatives in this Guidebook, rather than relying on a single strategy. See what works for you.

This Guidebook will hopefully provide guidance and encouragement for your Detachment to excel. It is not a manual of explicit rules, but rather a guideline and extraction of ideas for your use in developing and maintaining a dynamic and successful Detachment. Keep in mind that every Detachment differs in the make-up of its members and the nuances of their geographic location. It is important to develop and employ those capabilities and programs that will make your Detachment successful. To that end, we encourage you to ask questions and relate your success stories at Department meetings and meetings with other Detachments. If we work as a team to strengthen our existing Detachments, promote new Detachments in the right direction, and communicate constantly within the Departments, we will benefit all Marines and members within the Marine Corps League.

The National Membership Committee and others who have assembled this Guidebook hope you will benefit from the material, and that you will keep us informed as to how to improve it.

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CHAPTER 1: RECRUITING

1.1 RECRUITING TIPS

1. Always be ready with a 2-3 minute 'elevator pitch' on the importance and benefits of the Marine Corps League.
2. Procure door hangers or Detachment cards (for handing out or placing on car windshields) with your Detachment information. You're now ready to reach out to potential members even if you're not face-to-face.
3. Keep several membership applications handy.
4. Communicate through a channel that the member has said they prefer. By allowing members to specify their preferred way of communicating, then being able to tailor your communication with them in that format, you're more likely to get a level of engagement back from them. Whether it is email, text message, telephone, or letter, make sure you're communicating with them how they've requested.
5. Build and maintain a relationship with military installations.
6. Build and maintain a relationship at local college campuses with the person in charge of veteran admissions and/or veteran student organizations.
7. Build and maintain a relationship with other veteran organizations; VFW, American Legion, DAV, Mission United, Mayor's veterans Advisory Council, local VA, Reserve Centers, etc.
8. Network with first responders, civic and community organizations, as well as other veteran service organizations to expand your pool of potential members
9. Create social and networking activities that are interesting and convenient for younger people. Encourage younger members to be involved in the planning of these events.
10. Invite groups of younger people to join at the same time to make them feel more comfortable. Help them encourage their peers to get involved as well.
11. Highlight monthly opportunities to get involved in local service projects.
12. Incorporate youth-welcoming messages in all Detachment communications that begin with the assumption that younger members are important to the organization because they make valuable contributions, and they are needed at all levels of Detachment leadership.

1.2. RECRUITING IDEAS FROM AROUND THE LEAGUE.

1. Younger members are needed to help set up these fun events. you want to focus your recruiting with the highest % of success, go with 35-55. Can you get members below 35? Yes, you can but if you pick a specific matrix where your detachment can grow, get young members who can do the events like color guard and funeral honors, etc. It will provide an asset that is needed for our future as the Marine Corps League. We have over 70% or so of our members are 65 and older. That is unsustainable as an organization.

2. Use social media, newspaper announcements and other FREE options to get everyone together for some coffee and donuts (or similar). Have business cards and handouts and shake hands / be social. You could possibly get your local High School, Scout Troop or similar to help launch this event. Some HS students need volunteer hours for their college applications.

3. Take your old Semper Fi magazines, make a label with your Detachment info, and place it over the original address label to protect any private information. Then, leave them in waiting rooms around town. Medical offices, Dentist offices, automotive waiting rooms, etc. If another Marine sees it, they will more than likely pick it up to see what it is! Now, they are curious, and may just seek you out!

4. To recruit and keep younger members your Detachment has to be doing "good works". In a busy world we must make it worth the time. We can sell the "Big MCL "ideals" - but it's the action and results locally that will attract and keep members.

5. What is relevant for your members? Knowing your members and why they joined it is a big piece in detachment programming. Additionally, not being a stereotypical veteran service organization is a big player in perception.

6. Come up with methods of networking within the membership - members being able to connect and bond with each other.

7. Given the opportunity, be a significant voice and representing the membership while working legislation with your state government, supporting veterans' needs and communicating that effort statewide (as Department Commandant), creating that bond/trust with the members so they are more open to talk, helping them identify big picture needs, also known as voids, within the community. Network with other veteran service organizations in your community by hosting round table discussions with their leadership.

8. Implement a sound social media presence that is vibrant and dynamic for the public, a Facebook business page for the Detachment and the Department while also setting up a members' only Facebook for the Detachment and Department, and setting up a networking Facebook group for area Marines who are and aren't members.

9. Understand how to work the media in your favor and do activities or news stories that they will likely grab on to for stories. Work with other sources / partners for getting your word out or your message out.

10. Do not be afraid to connect with that potential member; not asking them to immediately join, but first learning about who they are and what their needs are, then align that with what the Detachment / Department does to support the mission. But, be sure to know your talking points and have your elevator speech!

11. Work the Marine for Life program to retrieve a list of Marines in your area who were at the end of their service.

12. Participate in events in your communities to attract potential members. Golf tournaments, local fairs, BBQ's, etc. Contact and participate in your local chamber of commerce, color guards at local parades and sporting events and contacting your local NPR and start exposing your Detachment to the public.

13. Adjust your thinking to a newer generation of Marines. A generation with different lifestyles, ideals, and values. Today's younger Marines are more active, more drawn to activities like silky hikes, turkey shoots, postal matches, golf tourneys.

14. Work a booth at a gun show. Lots of Marines attend them.

15. Contact your state Department of Transportation and ask if you can place in all the rest stops and welcome centers a Marine Corps League certificate of appreciation for flying the American flag. Put your website address or QR code on the bottom of the certificate. Do a special presentation at the Department of Transportation, and get them posted.

16. Sponsor events with interesting speakers/topics. By contacting military and civilian speaker's bureaus, there are a wide range of topics of interest that can be brought to a meeting to increase participation and attract new members.

17. Passion over passive: younger generations are turned off by "going-through-the-motions" Instead, they seek authenticity - It's not about style; it's about passion.

18. Relevant over boring: You don't make things relevant; it already is! But you have to show the relevancy. We need our BEST mentors with them. Mentors who know the League and the League's culture. Mentors and members who bring the mission to life. Mentors and members who know how to connect it all together.

19. Doers over talkers: Millennials and Gen Z's watch to see if talk is just talk or if we walk the talk. For example, what is leadership doing to take risks? What is the League doing to use them and develop their talents? What League work is being done by those in the current membership? Is it work they can see and become involved in?

20. Mission over money: Is the League about mission first or money first? Younger people will figure out which. Mission-minded VSOs (seeing beyond self) breed enthusiasm in all age groups. If the Mission is first, the money will be there.

21. Brotherhood over apathy: Brotherhood matters, age doesn't. How many younger members bring friends to events or meetings only to have their friends ignored? Take notice of them. Reach out to them. Connect with them. Include them. This means asking for their ideas/thoughts and implementing what you can and understanding what works.

22. It is not necessary to leave League boundaries in order to connect with younger generations. But it is necessary to be authentic, committed, and craving for connection with them.

23. Participate in as many events as possible: Swap Meets, Winterfest, Balloon Festival, car shows, stand downs, etc. Use recruiting posters, tell visitors how and why the League raises funds, have a photo album of your activities and business cards. Get the prospects' names and contact information and reach out to them after the events.

CHAPTER 2: RETENTION

2.1 RETENTION TIPS

1. Work your Detachment's nonpaid member's list or work the Member at large list that is provided by the Department.

2. Assign a current Detachment member to serve as a mentor for the first six (6) months to make a new younger member feel welcome.

3. Get younger members involved from the start. Younger members are creative and eager to generate new ideas for solving persistent Detachment problems. Ensure that the fresh ideas and knowledge of younger members have a voice and a space to grow.

4. Offer variety. Be open to the various ways that younger members can participate in your detachment. Find out about their abilities and interests and find ways to put them to good use in your detachment.

5. Communicating meetings and results to the entire membership on a regular basis along with ensuring meetings are succinct, organized, prepared, engaging. Then, ensuring fellowship takes place following all meetings.

6. Have a program, not a campaign. Retention is a year-round priority and needs to be planned. Any detachment that is, or wants to be, successful at retention must be able to identify the specific steps it takes to increase its retention rate. In addition to having a series of activities that make up a retention program, your detachment should be able to identify resources that can be allocated to help implement the program. Appendix 3 is a Risk Management Matrix that can be used to help identify action steps to address a variety of issues affecting retention.

7. Recognize members who reach milestone membership anniversaries. If members stay in The Marine Corps League for five, ten, twenty or more years, they are probably not among those who are likely to drop out. When members reach one of these membership milestones, it provides two retention opportunities for your detachment. First, it is another opportunity to recognize a member or group of members for their continuing support. Doing that solidifies their membership even more. Also, by publicly recognizing these membership milestones, you inspire other members to strive to earn the same recognition by maintaining their membership, too.

8. Start a regular column in your newsletter to thank members for their involvement. One organization featured a column in their monthly newsletter that was called "Tip of the Hat." This column's sole purpose was to say "thank you" to those members who had helped the organization in some way since the previous newsletter. The member's name and the specific service they had performed were all mentioned. It became the most popular feature in the newsletter because every month members saw their name or the name of someone they knew. (If you don't currently have a newsletter, start one.)

9. When important issues come up, call some inactive members for their opinions. It's natural for detachments to contact their leadership people when an issue of importance arises, such as a legislative crisis, a local election or the setting of a new

standard. These issues and events are also opportunities to involve some of the Detachment's least active members simply by asking their opinion. When the opportunity comes up, have a list of inactive members ready to call, fax or write and ask for their opinion on how the detachment should react. The fact that the Detachment cared enough to contact them might make the difference at renewal time.

10. Accept credit and debit cards for dues payments. Credit and Debit card payments have become the norm for almost all purchasing transactions. If your detachment does not already accept them, you should consider doing so. Credit and debit card acceptance is especially useful to detachments during difficult economic times because it allows members to renew and still be able to make installment payments when using a credit card. Your Detachment should also be able to accept dues payments on-line, which is a very popular method of payment for the younger veterans. The Paymaster must take the fee paid to the credit card company into consideration.

11. Create an annual slogan or theme for membership each year. It's often easier to get someone's attention if they have an image of the goals of the Detachment. Having an annual theme or slogan can rally the existing members around a specific program or set of objectives and create an image in the minds of those thinking about dropping. If your Detachment is celebrating a milestone year, that entire year can be dedicated to an anniversary theme.

12. Recognize your members as often as possible. Thank them for their participation in each and every program or function. Whether you do it formally or informally, it pays to express appreciation to members whenever possible. It's never too late to show gratitude to hard workers!

13. Get members involved at SOME level. Involved members don't drop. Your Detachment needs to try to find ways to get members involved in a meaningful way without taking up too much of their time. This is especially true with newer members.

14. Publish an annual report in the local media. Thank the community for their support and send a copy to members. Publishing an annual report allows your Detachment to summarize all the accomplishments from the previous year. It shows the community that your detachment is an asset to that community, and it shows your members that the detachment is run in a business-like manner and will remind any members thinking about dropping out that they would be giving up all of the benefits listed in the report.

15. Set up carpools to get people to meetings, especially new members. Carpools help raise the attendance at meetings therefore increasing the involvement of those who may not have shown up if it weren't for the carpool. Some of the drivers may have even found excuses not to attend had it not been for their assigned driving duties.

16. Set up a speaker's bureau: Speak at other organizations' meetings. Detachments are always trying to spread the word about the Marine Corps League and the Detachment's activities in that community. One of the best ways to do this is by finding speaking opportunities for your Detachment leaders. You can establish a Detachment speaker's bureau, a pre-qualified group of members who are capable both

in terms of knowledge and speaking ability to represent your organization to the media or to other civic groups. When these representatives speak, current members are instilled with a sense of pride in membership, which can make a difference at renewal time.

17. Keep members' names and addresses current and accurate; it's the best sign of a caring organization. It is common courtesy and good business practice to keep your membership records as accurate as possible. This becomes even more important because members' expectations increase as they compare your Detachment's communications to those they receive from other sources.

18. Make sure you capture e-mail addresses whenever possible. Also make sure your members know your Detachment e-mail address, so they'll accept e-mail from you. E-mail is the quickest and least expensive method of sending information and documents to your members and to receive correspondence from your members.

19. If you ask a member to do a volunteer job, make sure it's a WORTHWHILE job! Even the smallest volunteer jobs need to provide some sense of accomplishment for the members assigned to do them. Although there is a lot of pressure to get members involved in the Detachment's leadership structure, just having a title is not enough to justify the valuable time members have to give up in order to participate. Be able to pinpoint the contribution each member makes to your Detachment's success and be certain to mention that contribution when thanking the member.

20. Call your annual dues an investment rather than dues. Referring to your dues as an investment will create an image that your Detachment isn't spending the members' dues but rather investing it in programs and services that bring value to the members, to the Detachment and to the community.

21. Assign an officer to contact a certain number of inactive members each month – just a little say Hi! call. Some members believe the only time we contact them is when we need money, information, or support. This impression is strongest among the less active members. To alleviate some of these feelings ask officers and board members to make some random calls each month to your inactive members. These courtesy calls will remind these members that the Detachment knows they're still out there and that their opinion is valued. Be sure to give the callers something substantial to talk about, such as getting input on an upcoming legislative issue or proposed Detachment policy changes.

22. Bring a list of inactive members to a Detachment meeting and have members contact them. It's an important sign to members when a volunteer leader takes the time to contact a member simply to say that the Detachment misses them and to also relay to the member that the Detachment is there to assist if there's anything the member needs.

23. Get spouses active – it assures renewal. When you have multiple family members simultaneously belonging to the detachment, your chances of having them renew is much greater than the renewal rates of individual members.

24. Hold leadership-training programs – give your members the tools to be successful volunteers. It is important for members who do get involved to have a good

experience during their involvement. Leadership training is becoming one of the best services that organizations can give their members. The skills developed through leadership training are transferred back to the members' workplaces. At renewal time, members will remember where these skills were developed.

25. Create a new member welcoming committee. When a new member joins, ask someone who is already a member to call the new member. Tell the new member what a good investment membership has been for them and congratulate the new member on making a great decision to join. In as little as ten seconds the welcoming member has validated the new member's decision to join by making that person feel more welcome in the Detachment.

26. Send a New Member Newsletter to first year members during their first year. New members are special because they are the least likely to know everything that is going on in your Detachment, the least likely to be involved in a leadership position, and therefore the most likely to drop out. Several groups have developed new member newsletters that new members get throughout their first year of membership. These newsletters are basically a summary of the most important information that has been sent to them via other formats, such as newsletters and magazines, with further explanation and background. These publications usually go out three or four times during the year. New members stop receiving it as soon as they renew for the first time.

27. Send new members a letter or Detachment card saying, Here's where your \$XX.00 dues went: \$X.00 for program A; \$X.00 for program B, etc. This technique can be used effectively to show members that their dues investment is working for them. Even if the members are inactive, they can feel good that their dues are helping to support some very important programs sponsored by the Detachment. Their dues are helping to make their community a better place to live.

28. Offer plenty of member-only programs and benefits. Your Detachment needs to constantly remind members of the exclusive benefits they get as regular, dues-paying members. Depending on the legal requirements of your Detachment, there will be many services and programs that can be reserved for members. These programs and services need to be highlighted whenever possible.

29. Send a mini-survey to members about six months after they join to see how they rate your Detachment's services. One organization called this their "six-month report card." It was sent to members halfway through their first year and asked the members to grade the organization in several service areas. Any members that rated a program below an A or B was given a phone call to get more information. Then the organization used that information to try to correct that problem. The organization was also able to spot potential dropped members by noting which new members didn't even bother to return the card. These members also got a phone call.

30. Get new and inactive members to attend Department Conventions or Conferences. They are more likely to renew when they witness the importance of the business conducted at these functions. Even if they don't attend every year, the stature of the event and the impression they get by attending will help remind them of the benefits of membership.

31. Hold a new member reception at Conventions. Whenever your Detachment or Department sponsors a meeting or educational program, use that opportunity to invite new members to attend a special reception. These receptions are usually held prior to the start of the convention or educational program. In addition to talking about the MCL, and learning about the expectations of the newer members, it is also a chance to explain how to get the most out of their participation in the event.

32. Give new members a MCL member ribbon to wear. Identifying newer members does several positive things. It lets the new members feel special and it reinforces for them the fact that joining was a good idea since there are others who have the same designation.

33. Use groups of volunteers for renewal phone-a-thons. This project not only helps your renewal efforts, but it makes the callers feel more like an important part of your Detachment.

34. Make sponsors or recruiters responsible for the first renewal, too. If your Detachment has a sponsorship program where the recruiters are known, contact the recruiters at renewal time and let them know the new members they brought in during the past year are about to receive renewal notices. Ask that the recruiters call their recruits to let them know they are looking forward to having them with the Detachment again next year. It reminds the recruiter about his or her efforts and keeps those efforts from being wasted if the members they sponsored drop out a short time after joining.

35. Give discounts or perks for early renewals. One of the hard parts of retention is trying to figure out who among those who are late renewing is really a potential non-renewing member who is just putting their renewal off. One way to help resolve this problem is to give some sort of small discount or perk for members who renew early.

36. Give rebate vouchers for early renewals. Instead of giving a discount for early renewals, try giving a rebate. When you ask your members to pay the full amount at renewal time, tell them that the Detachment will send them a rebate voucher as a reward if they renew early. The voucher would have a monetary value or be in the form of a certificate good for a certain amount of credit when the member participates in a Detachment function or social activity.

37. Send a checklist entitled —What's your reason for not renewing? Send a survey that lists the most common reasons for dropping out to those people who have recently dropped their memberships and ask them to check off the reasons that apply to them. Be prepared to follow up and address each of the reasons. While a written form is not as effective as actually talking to these members, it does give the Detachment one more chance to reinforce the value of membership and to personalize the next contact.

38. Have the Commandant send a pre-renewal letter on his/her letterhead a few weeks BEFORE the renewal is sent. Tell of the great year you had, and how he/she is looking forward to working with the member again next year. This is usually done to remind members of all the value they received during the past year and to tell them what they can expect in the future. By sending the report or letter prior to the renewal notice, you alert members that the renewal is coming and raise their anticipation level and their need to respond. This usually raises the number of early renewals. Having the

letter on your Detachment stationery adds to the credibility of the message and increases the chances it will be opened promptly.

39. Have a retention committee – give it goals! There is a need for member involvement in the recruiting process and there should also be member involvement in the retention process. Your Detachment should have either a separate retention committee or a retention subcommittee of your membership committee. The retention committee needs to have goals and a plan of action with very definite steps that can be taken to raise the Detachment's retention rate. The retention committee should be assigned to develop these steps and undertake them.

40. List names of non-renewals at leadership meetings. Have a 10 Most Wanted Renewals list. Select 10 non-renewed members for each meeting and assign members at that meeting to contact those lapsed members. This shows your lapsed members that the Detachment still cares about them and it draws your current members into the membership retention process.

41. Reward renewal efforts as much as you do recruitment efforts. There is nothing wrong with building in an incentive or recognition program for retention efforts. Such a program can even be integrated into your recruitment incentives by giving the member who recruits a new member some form of appropriate recognition when the new member joins, and again when the new member renews.

42. After a couple of renewal notices, begin personal contacts. When members fail to respond to dues notices, it isn't always because they intend to drop out for a particular reason or because they are generally disappointed with your Detachment. Some members just want to know if your Detachment cares that they are out there. A personal call to let members know they are missed can make a big difference at renewal time.

43. Dig beyond the never did anything for me answer. Try to find out exactly why they chose to not renew their membership. There's always something more. Your Detachment should prepare questions that probe beyond the surface and get to the heart of why members are leaving.

44. Pay special attention to those who renew last. They are the most likely to not renew next year. As your Detachment begins identifying the non-active members it needs to contact, add these late payers to the priority list.

45. Hold a retention contest, just like a recruitment contest. If your members respond well to incentives and competitions, consider having a retention contest among your leaders. Divide the membership roster among the Detachment officers and the membership team and assign a certain number of current members to each leader. Give prizes to the leaders who renew the most members. Help them out by giving them suggestions on how they can get reluctant members to renew.

46. Offer incentives to the first 10% who renew (free dinner, etc.). Why not have a contest among your members to see who can send in their renewal dues the fastest? Give some type of incentive to those who renew before a certain date or are among the first to renew.

47. List first-time renewals in a special section of your newsletter. In addition to giving special recognition to new members, list those who are renewing for the first time in a special section of your newsletter. This will remind these members that the decision they made a year ago to join your Detachment was a good decision. It will also remind them that the Detachment is glad to have them back again for a second year.

48. Be sure to acknowledge renewal checks, just like new member applications. Your Detachment probably makes a big deal when new members join by sending them welcome letters and new member kits and by putting their names in your newsletter. Yet, few Detachments do anything to acknowledge renewals other than sending them their new membership card. Find some way to thank them for their renewal. Put a letter or a Detachment card in the return envelope with their membership card. After all, these renewing members are making the same financial commitment as first-time members and they deserve some recognition.

49. Do everything your Detachment can to be a reason a member wants to renew. For many members, it's the Detachment officers and the leadership team find. If they perceive that they have a group of dedicated, qualified staff and volunteer leaders, they'll probably be back.

2.2 RETENTION IDEAS FROM AROUND THE LEAGUE

1. Conduct social activities outside of the monthly meetings. Host a monthly/bi-monthly/weekly breakfast or coffee get-together, etc.

2. Engage with new members. Encourage them to join committees or give them a job to do.

3. Appoint members to committees that do the work (Marine Corps Birthday events, etc.). A member briefs the progress at our meetings. Keep your business meetings short giving you time to socialize before and after the business meeting.

4. Plan a coffee or social event. Get some board games around or consider hiring a "Trivia Night" host. Everyone is a prospective member, maybe Associate, but a member, nonetheless.

5. An important aspect of bringing new members and prospects to a meeting is making them feel welcome. The JVC can take charge of introducing new Marines and involving them in the meeting. The JVC can also suggest to new members areas in which they can participate, see that they are assigned to a project/committee of interest and are introduced to the chairperson.

6. The JVC and the Adjutant should assure that there is a current membership list with phone numbers and addresses available periodically (at least quarterly). The JVC should also maintain a list of potential members, Marine units and other contacts to make sure that they are welcome at meetings, events and activities of the Detachment.

7. The National by-laws states a Detachment shall meet at a date, time and frequency of its choosing. Having said this, you have the option instead of a monthly business meeting, have business meetings for two months, and the next month, have a social meeting like a dinner or family game night. Be flexible. If there is some important

business that has to be addressed, slip quickly into a business meeting, open the Bible, take minutes, close the Bible and go back to the social meeting. Detachments can make this the way that it works for you! No need to be so stuffy and regimented.

8. The most important function to be performed by the JVC is the development and maintenance of programs for enhancing Detachment and League membership. There are several methods and considerations for how this function can be carried out effectively. The JVC will need to make personal contact with prospective members and with members whose renewal dates are near or have passed. Personal letters to prospects and members may also be required. Phone calls encouraging members and prospects to attend meetings and activities are necessary. Development of marketing material and brochures to be published by the Detachment or distributed to media sources may also be required. When a new member comes in, the sponsor of that new member should take him or her in tow until the new member feels comfortable. The leadership should try to create a bond between the new members and the established members so the new members will feel accepted as part of the Detachment. It is human nature to gravitate toward kindness and to shy away from being ignored. We can all do a better job along these lines. By being more positive toward our retention efforts, we can grow and push our mission forward.

9. The JVC will need assistance from members in the Detachment. A committee or project may be one answer, in which the committee/project members take responsibility for various aspects of membership programs and share in the phone and personal contacts. The JVC needs to be adept at leading such a group, by establishing goals and objectives, and providing constant support. The JVC will also need to contact outside groups, like Marine Corps units and other Veteran organizations. In doing so, he/she must have a program to sell and generate interest in the Marine Corps League.

10. Innovation is required in developing effective programs and locating Marines in the Detachment area with which to make contact. Recruiters, Marine units and other organizations can sometimes help in providing such lists. Posters in prominent areas, recruiting at malls, flea markets, fairs, Marine Corps birthday celebrations and other events are other ways to gain notoriety. Once members are on board, the JVC needs to be interested in the participation of members -- encouraging them to attend meetings and programs. He/she also needs to determine if the Detachment is meeting the expectations of the member. Once on board, the name of the game is to keep members in the League.

11. Most Marines like to talk to other Marines about their experience. Give new members the floor at their next meeting and show sincere interest and offer questions and sincere praise and thanks.

12. Use the Member at Large (MAL) list to contact members and ask: 1. Would you like us to contact you in the future? 2. What made you chose to be a MAL? 3. What could the MCL do better that would make you become an active Detachment member?

13. Use the various unofficial USMC veterans Facebook pages to invite non-members to your meetings and events.

14. The key to retaining MCL members is to ensure that they are receiving value from their membership and that they are aware of the value they are receiving. Engaging with your members on a regular basis to communicate this value to them helps keep it fresh in their mind and reminds them of why they became members in the first place.

15. A lot of discussion revolves around 'how to' with recruitment and retention when the single largest impact falls on how we treat each other! Read these bullets but read the attached article for a better understanding of some simple approaches in relations. Six etiquette errors you must avoid in your job (classify your Detachment as also being your job)

a. Don't be overconfident. Trying to prove that "you're the smartest person in the room — even if you are," is not exactly the smartest move in today's workplace.

b. Don't ignore great advice from those who have gone before you. It's easy to dismiss the counsel of others — no matter who they are and no matter how much sense their words or advice make — and believe that we alone are the ones who know exactly how things should be done.

c. Don't dismiss seemingly "menial" tasks. It's often in the mundane and menial — especially when you're just starting out at an organization — that you pick up important clues and information about the jobs above yours, plus what it takes to be successful in the company overall.

d. Don't demean anyone. It's just not a good look, period. In other words, "Treat the janitor with the same respect as you treat the CEO."

e. Don't put down opportunities for "casual interactions" in today's workplace. In our increasingly remote or hybrid work arrangements, it's easy to snicker at the opportunity offered by leadership to mingle with other people at work in person, especially if it takes a great deal of effort to get yourself there.

f. Don't dismiss new ideas because someone younger (or a new member) came up with them. Or, because we've 'tried that before'. Just because you've tried it before, doesn't mean it won't work now. Worse that can happen is that you disenfranchise a new member by dismissing them. Things fail for all sorts of reasons and those circumstances change over time.

16. Ideas on making your Detachment attractive to younger members.

a. Made the Detachment and its activities visible within the community through social media (public Facebook business pages, not Facebook groups or individual profile pages), through broadcast media and through print media. Local radio stations and TV talk shows typically have time slots available to push and promote what you do. For higher profile activities, use local media as a partner in promoting them. Awareness within the community is a big element of success.

b. Embrace all prospective members and existing members, making them feel welcome. This is a systematic thing for all to understand - the best approach is to create the environment that encourages your membership to do the same.

- c. Most Detachment activities and events focus on traditional veteran service organization activities - Color Guards, Parades, etc. However, consider things not commonly addressed, such as homelessness, suicide awareness, job placements, etc. Initiate meetings with the elected leadership of the other veteran service organizations within your community to discuss synergies and voids with services rendered by all – it will enable each organization to communicate what each one is doing - removing fences and enhancing relationships.
- d. Encourage your members to wear their MCL uniform, with training and awareness on how to correctly wear the various configurations.
- e. Give new members an orientation of the organization to assist them in better understanding the larger impact and the local focus.
- f. Constant communication must be made to keep members informed.
- g. Empower members to make decisions within their respective position(s) - committee chairs, sub-committee chairs, elected/appointed officers. Officers should know their job description and be held accountable to it.
- h. Work with members to create future leaders -- mentoring is always an action item. Succession planning should always be on the back of each leaders' mind.
- i. Detachment Commandants should know each and every member.

CHAPTER 3: MARKETING

3.1. MARKETING TIPS

1. Ensure that your Detachment is building its brand. Send a localized version of the Detachment's Public Relations message to local media outlets in your area, and that this same information is published in the detachment newsletter (if you have one) otherwise forward by email to local veteran's support groups.

2. Make sure your Detachment is actively participating in at least three or more programs, and that they are executed WELL.

3. Make sure your Detachment is an asset to the community; inform them of your Detachment's programs, participation in parades, service activities, etc.

4. Be seen in your MCL uniform.

5. Publish a Detachment marketing booklet.

6. Don't narrow your focus to veterans in only one or two war eras. Any veteran may be eligible, but you won't know if you don't ask!

7. Tutorials for Facebook ads? Use Google.

8. Boost the ads – invite the “likes” to join your page.

9. The National Membership Committee is developing a Welcome aboard Zoom meeting for new members.

10. Have a marketing budget, based on recruiting budget, review the metrics – based on how many are engaging, start out small, around \$50, review the results, and scale it accordingly. Document what you're doing.

11. Ensure you publish advance notice for large events.

12. It's a process, not a one-time thing “this didn't work”.

13. National Public Radio (NPR), being subsidized by tax dollars, is required by Federal law to provide free airtime to non-profits like us. Reach out to them and advertise your Detachment events and use it as a recruiting tool. You can find a list of NPR stations here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_NPR_stations

14. Some areas give free billboard time to non-profits, seek them out.

15. Meetings: Don't just do monthly business meetings and service projects – you have to do social events as well.

16. Don't beat people over the head, just engage them.

17. Work to compile ideas and techniques that work – build a tool box.

18. Value proposition: reinvigorate your love for the Corps, country and community – Camaraderie – make the connection – what we do for the community.

19. Tailor your activities to younger vets – being active – broaden the range of activities.

20. Ad campaign – “Are You Ready” – ready for ceremonial guards, ready for community service, etc.
21. Subscribe to the MCL National YouTube channel. Lots of great stuff there.
22. Re-focus on retention, follow up, get them involved.
23. Everyone is a recruiter, represent yourself and the League well, refrain from negativity or derogatory comments in your social media posts (particularly political ones), carry yourself as a Marine.
24. Use social media to attract younger members – Facebook is a good platform, there are also others, if you have the expertise to use them.
25. Marketing is external, not focused on internal users.
26. Facebook ads cost money – create an audience, use the “lookalike” feature and other demographics and geographic areas.
27. Imagery needs to have strong messaging, actionable messages “Call Now”, “Contact Us Today”. Videos are better than photos.
28. Special events – promote/advertise, monthly meetings, individual events not repeating
29. When people engage, you can follow up, create a contact list and do email blasts
30. Make sure your detachment is on social media. Facebook is the strongest platform for organizations, and age groups that the MCL caters to. Facebook can also integrate with Instagram, so make sure you create an account there, and set up to share to each platform from each other.
31. Create an Event on your Facebook page for your next monthly meeting and invite marines from the public to join you (to get a feeling, but also to get them to sign up).
32. Boost the event. Make sure to create a custom audience and not just everyone. That way your money goes a lot further. You really don't have to spend a lot if you target correctly.
33. After your event is over, make sure to analyze EVERYONE who liked, commented, and/or attended. It is monotonous, but send a friend request to those you identify as potential members. Invite them to your page. Message them: "Thank you for your interest in the Marine Corps League. I'm here to answer any questions you may have....."
34. A great marketing tool is an NFC-enabled "business card." It allows you to share your contact information with a potential recruit just by tapping it on their smartphone (or they can use the QR code on the back). A great thing about these cards is it is so easy to get your contact to someone. When talking to them, just say, "Hey, I'd like to show you something cool, can you unlock your phone?" That person instinctively will do as you ask because they do not want to disappoint you. You then tap

the card on the phone, and they literally say, "Wow! That's so cool! Where did you get that." Try it out. It's really inexpensive. <https://www.mobilocard.com/>

35. What is the difference between a Facebook profile, a Facebook page and a Facebook group?

Use a Facebook Profile When:

You want your Facebook presence to represent your personal identity.

You want to keep certain information private.

You want to limit the number of friends/followers you have.

You don't plan on doing any paid Facebook advertising among your Facebook friends/followers.

Use a Facebook Page When:

You want your Facebook presence to represent your business, organization, brand, or professional identity.

You want to be found, liked, and followed by as many people as possible.

You want to share all your information publicly.

You want access to analytics to see how your fans/followers are engaging with you.

You want to be able to use paid promotions.

Use a Facebook Group When:

You want to have discussions about a particular topic.

You want to learn or achieve something and help other people learn/achieve it too.

You want to build closer relationships with other users through shared interests and goals.

36. With approval from our MCL national elected officers, the MCL National PR Committee launched a recent "Are You Ready" campaign on a nationally boosted (paid advertisement) social post. It ran for 10 days with a budget of \$300, running on Facebook and Instagram. A specific audience was established using Facebook parameters for audience demographics, likes, and activities. The results of that campaign are shared as images from the Facebook ads manager. Be advised, a significant element of any 'boosted' post is hinged on your audience demographics, how big an area for the boosted post, the amount spent, and the impervious Facebook algorithms. This ad had a \$300 budget that resulted in 3,917 post engagements and a reach of over 50,000 people - details in images. Cost was \$.08/engagement.

37. Here's a QR code that directs to a landing page for potential members to enter their contact information. It is automatically sent to members of the National Membership Committee, who will link them up with a Detachment in their local area. The respective chain of command (Detachment and Department Commandants, Division Vice Commandant) is copied on the email to the potential member to ensure

follow-up. This QR code can be copied and displayed at recruiting events, on flyers and business cards, etc.



3.2 MARKETING IDEAS FROM AROUND THE LEAGUE

1. Leave cards on fellow Marines' cars that you see in parking lots.
2. Create a postcard with all of our social media sites, and have a QR code for each. Facebook page, website, YouTube etc.
3. MCT/Navy Times – next year funding, upcoming Leatherneck, maybe NPR – free airtime to non-profits – wiki link in SF mag.
4. Leverage the find a Detachment on the National website, <https://www.mclnational.org/find-a-detachment.html>

APPENDIX 1: SUGGESTION FORM

SUGGESTION FORM TO SUBMIT BEST PRACTICES, ETC FOR INCLUSION IN THIS GUIDEBOOK		
NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
Your input is appreciated. Please forward this form to tribe@mcleague.org		

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE RECRUITING TRI-FOLDS

Sponsor's Information

Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

OATH OF MEMBERSHIP

"I, _____, In the Presence of Almighty God, do solemnly swear, that I will uphold and defend the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America and the Bylaws and Administrative Procedures of the Marine Corps League. That I take this obligation willingly and in good faith and that I will follow the directions and guidance of elected and appointed officers of the League. That I will participate and support the missions and activities of the Marine Corps League, and that I promise to govern my conduct in such a manner that I will never bring discredit upon myself, Members of the League, or the Marine Corps League, so help me God.

Signature: _____



Visit our website at:

www.mclnational.org

Call us at:

(703) 207-9588

Or contact a local detachment:



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Once a Marine, always a Marine!

Active, Reserve, Retired, and Veteran Marines continue the faithful tradition of looking out for the Marines to their left and right.

Founded in 1923 by Marine Corps Commandant then MajGen John A. Lejeune (luh-jern), and chartered in 1937 as the only Congressionally Chartered Marine Corps Veterans Service Organization.



Transitioning Marine Family Support

Legislative Support / Initiatives

Scholarships

VA Voluntary Services

Veteran Service Officers

Military Funeral Honors

Competition Pistol/Rifle Matches

Toys for Tots Support

Youth Physical Fitness Program

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE...

An organization for Active, Reserve, Retired, and Veteran U.S. Marines, FMF Corpsman and FMF Chaplains

The Marine Corps League is a veterans organization founded to perpetuate the traditions and spirit of all Marines who proudly wear or have worn the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor of the Corps.

There are over 1,000 detachments across the United States.

Membership Eligibility includes:

- Marines with honorable active or reserve service in the U.S. Marine Corps for no less than 90 days active service.
- FMF U.S. Navy Corpsman who have earned the Marine Corps Device and served no less than 90 days with an active Marine FMF Unit.
- U.S. Navy Chaplains who have earned the FMF Badge and served no less than 90 days with an active Marine FMF Unit.

The Esprit de Corps among the membership is embodied by our motto "Semper Fidelis" - "Always Faithful."



WE ARE MARINES

"Once a Marine, always a Marine" is familiar to us all. It is that feeling you get when you see a Marine Corps sticker on a car or a home proudly displaying the Marine Corps flag. We know we can knock on the door and that Marine will be there for us.

Despite our many years of service to different causes, we all have that common bond. We have all earned the privilege to wear the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor.



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Incorporated by Act of Congress

August, 4, 1937

Temporary Membership Card and Receipt

This will certify that:

Is a member in good standing of Detachment # _____

This card is good for a period of sixty days from _____

_____ \$ _____
Date Sponsor Signature Amount Paid

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP—MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Full Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Enlistment/Commissioning: _____ Date of Discharge: _____

Type of Application: New () Renewal () Member type: Regular () Associate () Dual ()

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? YES () NO () If yes is checked, I agree to waive my rights under the Privacy Act and disclose the nature of the felony conviction for consideration of membership in the Marine Corps League.

() I hereby apply for membership in Detachment # _____ MCL and enclose \$ _____ for one year's membership.

() I hereby apply for membership in the MCL as a Member At Large (MAL) and enclose \$30 for one year's membership.

Both types of membership include a free subscription to the Semper Fidelis Magazine of the Marine Corps League.

I hereby certify that I am currently serving or have served honorably in the U.S. Marine Corps on active duty for not less than 90 days, and earned the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor; or have served or am currently serving in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and have earned no less than 90 Reserve Retirement Credit Points; or that I have served or am currently serving as a U.S. Navy FMF Corpsman who has trained with Marine FMF Units in excess of 90 days and earned the Marine Corps Device or Warfare Device worn on the Service Ribbon authorized for FMF Corpsman; or FMF Chaplain. If discharged, I am in receipt of a DD Form 214 with an Honorable (or General/Under Honorable) discharge. Honorable Service will be defined by the last Form 214 the applicant received. I hereby provide proof upon request.

Sponsor (where applicable) _____ Applicant Signature _____

Upon completion, turn in to your Detachment sponsor with required payment. Applicants for Member At Large (MAL) remit form with check or money order in the amount of \$30 to: Marine Corps League, 3619 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 115, Stafford, VA 22554.



Dakota Leathernecks Detachment #1419
Marine Corps League
2333 Business Loop I-94
PO Box 583
Mandan, ND 58554

Phone: 701-516-3539
e-mail: dakotaleathernecks@gmail.com
www.dakotaleathernecks.com
FB: @dakotaleathernecks

Marine Corps League



Dakota Leathernecks
Detachment #1419

Regular Membership Meetings:
2nd Wednesday of each month
Time — 1830

Marine House
2333 Business Loop I-94 Mandan
2-miles west of Mandan
(on Old Red/Old 10 Scenic Byway)

General membership meetings are open to all
members in-good-standing.



The Marine Corps League bands together
active duty, reserve and honorably discharged
Marines, FMF Corpsman and FMF Chaplain
in continuation of service.

Dakota Leathernecks
Detachment #1419
of the
Marine Corps League



Service does not end
with your EAS



Marine Corps League



Established in 1923 by General Lejeune to reconnect fellow Marines of World War I and rejoin that camaraderie, the Marine Corps League was chartered by Congress in 1937 as the only Marine Corps specific veteran service organization.

Today, we continue to support our fellow Marines, their families and the Marine Corps community in which we, now, serve.

Membership in the Marine Corps League has its foundation in the local Detachment; the Dakota Leathernecks Detachment has served our Marine Corps community since 2014 with various events, activities and outreach—making an impact in the lives of those we serve, alongside our members.

The Dakota Leathernecks Detachment also operates the Marine House, located 2-miles west of Mandan on Old Red/Old 10 Scenic Byway. This iconic facility serves as a place of outreach for our members, their families and our community.



Why Join The Marine Corps League?

Get back a sense of purpose.

To have a mission again.

They understand me.

They speak my language.

Teams all across the country.

Healing for the family.

They can help me with the VA.

Maybe, somebody can help me.

Leadership is elected.

Relevant for all ages.

We are ALL volunteers.

I can make a difference.

The transition back to civilian life can be difficult; we are here to help!



The Marine Corps League joins its members in camaraderie & fellowship to preserve the traditions and promote the interests of the USMC; voluntarily aid and render assistance to all Marines and their spouses, widows, orphans, and parents; and, to perpetuate the history of the USMC, by fitting acts, to observe the anniversaries of historical occasions of particular interest to Marines.



MARINE CORPS LEAGUE
Incorporated by Act of Congress
August 4, 1937
Temporary Membership Card and Receipt
This will certify that

_____ is a member in good standing of the

_____ This card is good for a period of sixty days from

Sponsor's Signature

Amount



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP - MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Full Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ E-Mail: _____ Date of Discharge/Separation: _____ Service/SSN: _____

Date of Enlistment/Commissioning: _____

Type of application: NEW RENEWAL Membership Type: REGULAR ASSOCIATE DUAL Service/SSN: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? NO YES

If YES, I agree to waive my rights under the Privacy Act and disclose the nature of the felony conviction for consideration of Membership in the Marine Corps League.

I hereby apply for membership in the Dakota Leathernecks Detachment #1419 of the Marine Corps League and endorse \$35 for one year membership fee.

Candidates for Regular Membership will provide verification of Honorable service (i.e. DD-214, discharge certificate, etc.)

I hereby certify that: (a) I am currently serving, or have served, honorably in the United States Marine Corps, on active duty, for not less than ninety (90) days, or have served, or am currently serving, in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and have earned not less than ninety (90) Reserve Retirement Credit Points; or that I have served, or am currently serving, as a Navy Component member of the United States Marine Corps Reserve and have earned not less than ninety (90) Reserve Retirement Credit Points; or that I have served, or am currently serving, as a member of an Honorable Discharge (DD-214) by signature on this application; I hereby agree to provide proof of Honorable Service/Discharge upon request; I have the Service, will be defined by Part 10, DD-214 or Certificate of Discharge that the applicant received; General Discharge under Honorable Conditions is acceptable, if the date of my application is subsequent to August 10, 2007; I hereby authorize the National Executive Director, Marine Corps League, to obtain a copy of my DD-214 from the National Personnel Records Center, if deemed necessary to verify my eligibility for Regular Membership in the Marine Corps League. (Navy War Era Members, see National Rules, Article 6, Section 600).

(Sponsor - where applicable) _____ Applicant Signature _____
Please email completed form and payment to: Dakota Leathernecks Detachment #1419, PO Box 993 Mandan, ND 58554

APPENDIX 3

RISK MANAGEMENT MATRIX

RISK	HIGH	MEDIUM	ACTION
New Detachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexperienced members • No members with previous elected positions • No Bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low attendance • Late paperwork submissions • Lack of communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit Unit and Provide training ▪ Provide guidance/assistance ▪ Check on them monthly
Poor Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership Is declining • Recruiting but falling off the roles the following year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership is stagnant • Not growing • Low attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit Unit and Provide training ▪ Make members feel a part of the Det. ▪ Get members involved ▪ Exit interview ▪ What do they have that we do not? ▪ Emphasize attendance ▪ Increased contact ▪ Provide goals ▪ Assign a buddy
Detachment Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of age 65 • Majority of members are life members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit unit and assess demographics ▪ Provide Social Media Training
Chapter 9 Grievance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detachment had money embezzled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive grievances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit Unit and host a meeting for all members ▪ Send letters to members

<p>Incorporation/ROIs/990 not up to date</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detachment not incorporated • Detachment not submitting ROI's • 990's are not being filed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitting documents late • Documents filled out incorrectly • Not filing 990 on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit Unit and Provide training ▪ Mentor Board of Trustees ▪
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