

**MARINE CORPS LEAGUE  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM  
MEETINGS  
LESSON PLAN 6**



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# THE STAFF MEETING

- On a detachment level, there should be a Staff Meeting held once a month. The meeting should be open to any member that would like to attend, but that member should not take part in the meeting unless asked by the Commandant.
- The Commandant will set the agenda for the Staff Meeting and bring up any information that concerns the Detachment and any and all items that he/she feels needs to be discussed.
- The meeting should stay on the agenda as much as possible and the Commandant maintains control of the meeting. The Commandant should insure that everyone is included in the discussions and keep the meeting moving.
- This is where the agenda for the General Meeting is set.
- You can also cut through the unimportant items that are sometimes brought up at a General Meeting and cause unnecessary delays.

## **The Staff Meeting: Importance of...**

- If the detachment is having problems with a member or some other difficulties this is a better setting to address the issue with the member or discuss the issue so that thought out options are available to membership.

Note:

The staff meeting is an informal meeting and the taking of notes is not necessary unless you chose to do so.

# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Detachments are required to hold a General Membership Meeting once a month. The meeting date and time should be part of the detachment By-Laws and should be strictly adhered to.

The Commandant should have a prepared agenda and keep the meeting on course as much as possible. See Staff Meeting.

# The 10 Worst Meeting Offenses

1. Being Unprepared:
  - a. Includes Staff Officers or anyone designated to report.
  - b. Make sure that all technical aides being used are operational.
  - c. Always provide an agenda and support material in advance.
  
2. Starting on Time:
  - a. Insist on starting the meeting at the scheduled time.
  - b. Whether your meetings are attended by, 12 or 200 members, showing up late or starting late will damage the image that you should be trying to project.
  - c. A Meeting Hog is a person that talks just to hear themselves speak. You should encourage your Officers and Staff to have a written Report to present to the membership. There is nothing worse than an Elected or Appointed Officer standing and saying "Nothing to report sir." What have you done for the Detachment during the time between the monthly meetings? If you have nothing to report, it's self-explanatory...
  
3. Take Part in the Meeting:
  - a. Don't just sit there if you have something to offer...Many times a member will not rise to address the body but waits until the meeting is over and then approaches the Commandant or one of the Staff and offer something that is beneficial to the Detachment.
  
4. Expressing Rude Body Language:
  - a. Avoid making facial gestures and rude comments during presentation because you disagree with what is being said...You will get your chance to address the body if you so desire. Never get up and leave the room in disagreement. If you show the speaker the lack of respect to at least listen, then you have lost the battle.
  - b. It is the duty of the Commandant to manage those being disrespectful in a tactful way and do not ever put a member down by trying to humiliate him.
  
5. Sitting Silently during the Meeting:

The extreme opposite of not taking part is the member that has nothing to offer during the meeting except idle chatter. You should refrain from private meetings because it is not only rude, but you may also miss something important being considered.

6. Sidebar conversations are a NO-NO: Sidebar conversations are possibly the rudest thing that can happen during the meeting...This should be stopped immediately and refocus on the subject at hand.
7. Arguing or putting others down: Disagreements are Healthy and Fine, but never get into personal attacks. Don't make others look bad for the sake of making you look good! Never be condescending or avoid the opinions of the membership. Always be professional in your choice to disagree.
8. Cells Phones: When the Commandant orders the Sgt-at-Arms to open the meeting, The Sgt at Arms will open the meeting according to the ritual and the following: "The smoking lamp is out and please turn off all Cell Phones".

Additionally, there should be NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN THE MEETING ROOM, while meeting is session. This is a common sense ruling because we all know that alcohol changes your perspective.

9. Chewing Gum or Eating:
  - a. While chairing a meeting, the membership does not want to hear you chewing gum...A bottle of water is permissible.
  - b. The staff or Board of Trustees should not be indulging either.
10. Shutting Down the Meeting:
  - a. We all know that if a meeting runs too long, you are probably going to have some disgruntled members...If you are in the process of conducting some important business and it needs to be settled then and there, you should ask for a motion to extend the meeting an additional fifteen minutes...This shows the membership that you care about them and are trying to be as expeditious as possible.

### **BEFORE THE MEETING:**

Have the meeting room set up, bible, flags, nameplates, gavel, Sgt at Arms Table, etc. The ritual book illustrates how to arrange quarters, but you may have to adapt according to the physical setting of your meeting location.

### **START ON TIME**

Conduct a meeting properly:

### **Follow the MCL Ritual**

1. Opening Ceremony – Use the MCL Ritual Book

2. **Roll Call of Officers** – Adjutant should take a verbal Roll Call, Officers present should each respond. If someone is absent the Commandant can either excuse them or have them marked absent. (If an officer is excused it is not counted as absent for the purposes of fulfilling the 60% attendance clause in many by-laws) Therefore the Commandant should use some discretion.
3. Recognize Dignitaries: This is a good rule of thumb

### **Who is a dignitary?**

Use the “Rule of Thumb” anyone in a higher office than I am. I am now the Detachment Commandant, therefore, I would recognize National officers, Department officers and your past Detachment Commandants. You may also wish to recognize any visitors, such as someone from another detachment.

4. **Applications for Membership** - After the application and all necessary paperwork has been reviewed and deemed to be in order. (i.e. DD214, Discharge) Look at the paperwork, taking some ones word at this point, even the sponsors, is not acceptable.

Have the Adjutant read the application (name, address, dates of service and who recommended them). Have the Sergeant at Arms escort the applicant from the room. The Commandant should ask if any member knows of any reason why this Marine or FMF Corpsman and FMF Navy Chaplains should not be a member of the detachment...then vote an their acceptance.

Speakers addressing the floor making recommendations should have a time limit (2-3 min.) or until they begin to repeat points. Thank them, call for discussion staying within the time limit. Keep the meeting moving and try to accomplish all business in 50 min.

### **5. Conducting Proper and Efficient Meetings (10 Principles)**

- Start the meeting on time.
- Keep the meeting moving.
- Prepare and use an agenda for the meeting.
- Do not linger on one subject for an unreasonable amount of time.
- Do not let members address one another instead of the body.
- Do not let a member hog the microphone. Before a member can speak a second time on a subject, insure that all others wishing to speak have been heard.
- Insist that members who wish to be recognized raise their hand.
- Once they are called on, they are to rise, give their name for the record and state their business. They are to keep their statements short and to the point.

- The meeting should last between 50 min and 1 hour. If you start extending your meetings past this time, you will start losing attendance.
- If you need additional time, ask someone to make a motion that the meeting be extended an additional 15 min. This shows that you respect the time of the members and keeps them involved in finishing the meeting.

# MEETING GUIDE

## ORDER OF BUSINESS AGENDA

1. OPENING CEREMONY:

- Sgt-at-Arms to Post the Colors
- Chaplain to lead in opening prayer

2. ACKNOWLEDGE PRESENCE OF DIGNITARIES:

3. ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS:

4. APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Balloting on Applications for Membership  
Ceremony of Initiation for New Members

5. READING OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

- Any corrections
- Accepted as read

Motions to Accept are only necessary if corrections are made, then the motion is to accept the minutes with corrections.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

7. REPORT OF PAYMASTER:

- Opening Balance: \_\_\_\_\_
- Income: \_\_\_\_\_
- Expense: \_\_\_\_\_
- Closing Balance: \_\_\_\_\_

8. REPORT OF ANY MEMBER OR MEMBER'S FAMILY SICK OR IN DISTRESS:

9. REPORT OF OFFICERS:

- a. COMMANDANT: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. SR VICE: \_\_\_\_\_
- c. JR VICE: \_\_\_\_\_
- d. JUDGE ADVOCATE: \_\_\_\_\_
- e. ADJUTANT: \_\_\_\_\_
- f. PAYMASTER: \_\_\_\_\_
- g. CHAPLAIN: \_\_\_\_\_
- h. SGT-AT-ARMS \_\_\_\_\_

i. QUARTERMASTER: \_\_\_\_\_

10.REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

a. Toys for Tots \_\_\_\_\_

b. Young Marines \_\_\_\_\_

11.REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

12.UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

13.NEW BUSINESS:

14.CEREMONY OF INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

- (At proper Time of year according to the National Bylaws)

15.GOOD OF THE LEAGUE:

16.ANNOUNCEMENTS:

17.CLOSING CEREMONY:

- Sgt-At-Arms retires the Colors
- Chaplain says closing prayer
- Sr. Vice Commandant performs the last duties of his post.

# Minutes of Meeting

**Detachment's Name**  
**Marine Corps League**  
Commandant's Name

## **Minutes of Meeting**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location:**

Call to Order: Commandant \_\_\_\_\_ called the meeting to order at (\_\_\_\_\_), and ordered Sgt at Arms \_\_\_\_\_ to Advance and Post the Colors, and to lead the membership in The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. Chaplain \_\_\_\_\_ led us in the opening prayer.

Commandant \_\_\_\_\_ asks Sgt at Arms to declare the meeting open for the transaction of official business.

### **Roll Call of Officers:**

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** Adjutant read the minutes or motion to accept as posted by: \_\_\_\_\_ seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

Corrections/comments: \_\_\_\_\_. Motion to accept minutes as read by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Marine \_\_\_\_\_. Motion passed \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Correspondence:**

### **Report of Paymaster:**

### **Reports of any members or family members in distress:**

### **Reports of Officers:**

### **Reports of Standing Committees:**

### **Reports of Special Committees:**

### **Unfinished Business:**

### **New Business:**

### **Good of the League:**

### **Announcements:**

**End of Meeting:** Sgt at Arms retired the colors. Chaplain led us in the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Detachment Adjutant

**Minutes of meetings, once approved by the membership, become the official record of a detachment's business and should be filed in chronological order and referred to as proof of what took place at a meeting.**

# CONFERENCES/CONVENTIONS

- Explain value of holding a conference or convention, what goes on and why all members should attend.
- A chance to attend Leadership Training.
- Interact with Marines and FMF Corpsmen from other Detachments, Departments, discover a long lost friend, or find a new one.
- Input your opinion about Department, Division or National Direction.

## **So why is it important?**

The Marine Corps League is about the membership. All of us “red hats” are the league. As Delegates we vote on the direction we think the League should take, as well as the projects and programs we support.

Expressing your opinions and casting your votes helps make the League stronger. Having the opportunity to hear why decisions are made and the arguments for and against strengthens your knowledge. The more informed the membership is, the better their choices for a better League.

## **FUND RAISING**

- Scholarship Programs
- Toys for Tots
- Young Marines
- Veteran Services Volunteering
- Marines Helping Marines

These are just some of the programs The Marine Corps League supports. These are the items that provide the reason the League qualifies as a 501 c (4). We are a charitable organization that supports Marines, FMF Corpsmen and FMF Navy Chaplain and their families.

## END OF LESSON PLAN 6

