

- **VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
DEPARTMENT OF PACIFIC AREAS**

POST COMMANDER



Leadership is
about vision
and
responsibility,
not power



Congratulations

Congratulations on your election as Post Commander!

This is an important position, one that requires hard work, dedication, and trustworthiness. (Vision, Plan, Monitor)

Your Post is counting on you to fulfill your duties to the benefit of the organization, your members and your community.

Remember at all times: You are not alone, you have help to be successful.



Vision, Plan, Monitor

You were elected for a reason.

What is your **vision** for your post, members, community?

Choose your team?

Get prepared, organize, and **plan**

Stay informed, **monitor**, be sure to acknowledge work done (good or bad)

Vision

VFW Vision: **Ensure that veterans are respected for their service**, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

In simple terms, a vision statement is **a written document that describes where (the Post) is going and what it will look like when it gets there.**

A vision statement describes the Post's purpose, what the Post is striving for, and what it wants to achieve.

Set Goals – what do you want to accomplish within the Post.

Plan

Setting goals gives you long-term vision and short-term motivation.

It **focuses your acquisition of knowledge** and helps you to organize your time and your resources.

Acquisition of knowledge – Review bylaws, program guides, leadership manuals, Roberts rules, and membership (All-State and All-American requirements).

Organize and plan – Identify and list goals, review deadlines (bylaws, program, membership), create calendar (checklist)

Remember: You have help. Don't try and do this alone. Build a team (Past officers, mentors, etc.)

Monitor

Each week (you should ask yourself)

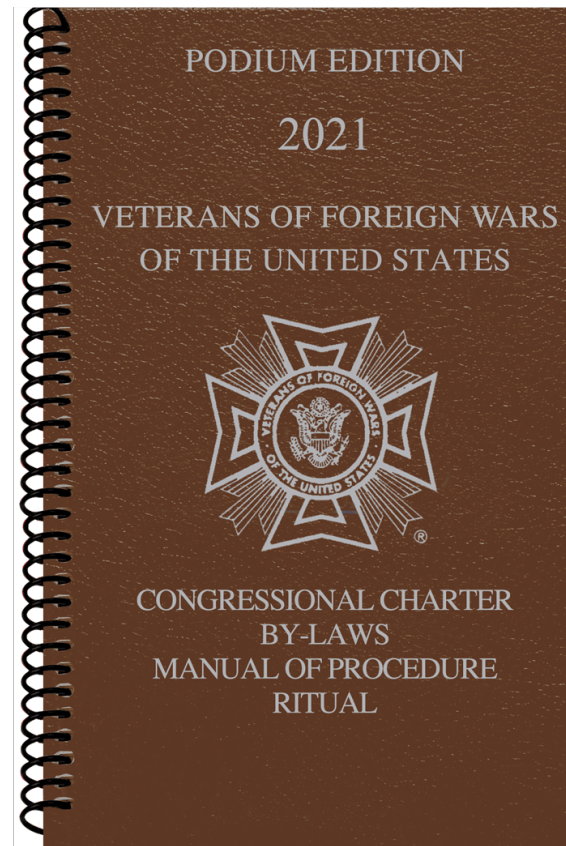
Are goals and objectives being achieved or not? If they are, then acknowledge, reward and communicate the progress. If not, then consider the following.

- Review calendar, checklist, outline – Are you still on schedule? review deadlines. (this is very important) Do you still have time to complete your goals?
- Do your members (team) have adequate resources (money, equipment, facilities, training, etc.) to achieve the goals?
- Are the goals and objectives still realistic - should priorities be changed to put more focus on achieving the goals?

Summary

- **Creating goals without a plan is just a wish (daydreaming)**
- In order to achieve your **goals**, you must be committed. that means never losing sight of what you want to achieve. Establish your **vision** early (set your goals), **plan** (stay informed, review materials, calendar, checklists) and **monitor** frequently (progress reports)
- Why is **planning** important? It helps to identify goals clearly. It helps make sure that everyone understands the goals and what each needs to do to reach it.
- (important to involve everyone in the planning process – don't work in a silo)
- It is important to **monitor frequently**. It allows you to review progress, make adjustments, and reward and acknowledge success.

Post Commander – VFW Duties and Obligations



National Bylaw's, Sec. 218 - Officers and Chairmen, Duties and Obligations.

Post officers, elected and appointed, and chairmen, shall have such duties as are prescribed in these bylaws and in the Manual of Procedure.

If every Post Officer were familiar with their duties and responsibilities and their limitations - and carried out their duties to the best of their ability - there would be very few squabbles within a Post and none which would require outside intervention.





The National Manual of Procedure specifically lists certain duties for each officer, and in the normal course of events, this would be sufficient. However, the complex nature of the operation of many Posts makes it necessary we look beyond a mere listing of duties and fully understand the reasons for the division of authority. In this way we can apply them to the unusual situations which are bound to crop up from time to time.

National Bylaw's, Sec. 218 - Officers and Chairmen, Duties and Obligations.

- **Post Commander**
- Among the duties of a Post Commander, the Commander shall:
 - Preside at all meetings of the Post, conducting such meetings in accordance with Article X of the Bylaws and Manual of Procedure and other applicable parliamentary rules.
 - Enforce strict observance of the laws and usages of this organization, including Post, County Council (if applicable), District and Department Bylaws and the Congressional Charter, National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual and all lawful orders from proper authorities.

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- Insist that Post business and activities be conducted in such a manner that they do not violate any applicable governmental law, ordinance or regulation nor bring or tend to bring dishonor or embarrassment upon the Post, its members or the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.
 - Decide all questions of law and usage in the Post, subject to appeal pursuant to the Bylaws.
 - *Upon entering into office, appoint all other officers, committee chairmen and committees not otherwise provided for. The Commander may remove such appointed officers, committee chairmen and committees at their pleasure.*

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- Approve all disbursements of funds properly authorized by the Post.
 - Assure that the office of Quartermaster is bonded according to Section 703 of the Bylaws.
 - Assure that all dues and other monies due the National Headquarters and Department are forwarded promptly together with accurate reports and returns pertaining thereto.
 - Assure that all reports are correctly prepared and promptly forwarded, that all the business of the Post is handled with dispatch and that all necessary licenses and permits are obtained for proper operation.

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- Ensure that a properly completed Report of Election of Officers for the ensuing year is submitted to Department and National Headquarters by June 1.
 - Assure that the Post Trustees have examined the books and records of the Post and prepared the Post Trustees Quarterly Report of Audit no later than the end of the month following the last day of each quarterly period.
 - Assure that the Commander or their representative attend all properly called District Conventions or meetings and County Council meetings (if applicable).

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- Comply with and perform all of the duties required by the laws and usages of this organization, the provisions of these bylaws, the Manual of Procedure and Ritual and Department, District, County Council (if applicable) or Post Bylaws pertaining to the duties and obligations of a Post Commander and lawful orders from proper authority and perform such other duties as are usually incident to the office.
 - *Be an ex-officio member of all committees.*

Post Commander Summary

- The **Post Commander** is the key officer of the Post. They, alone, represent the **judicial** branch of the organization and also have some of the responsibilities of the **executive** branch.
- They preside at all meetings, enforce the rules, appoint committees not otherwise provided for, and make certain that the other officers and committeemen perform their duties.
- Their authority extends to the Post Home or Club to the extent of enforcing the rules of the Post and the National and Department VFW and public laws.
- They represent the authority of the Post between meetings, and their voice is that of the Post membership.

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- Their authority also is limited according to the rules of the organization and the bounds of common sense. **They are in no sense a dictator.**
 - They cannot order nor permit the breaking of laws, nor can they supersede the recognized authority of other officers or committees. They cannot, for instance, order the Club Manager to keep the clubrooms open after hours, nor can they direct the Post Quartermaster to pay an unauthorized bill.
 - The Commander should be familiar with all activities of the Post.

Post Commander Summary

- They should sit in with the Trustees at their audits or, at least, have a sufficient knowledge of their procedure to know whether they are doing their job.
- They should attend the meetings of the House Committee, calling to their attention any discrepancies he/she may have observed or complaints they may have received.
- The Commander is the arbitrator of arguments and the judge in disputes. As a general rule, their decisions are considered correct until over-ruled by the Post meeting, the District, Department Commander or Commander-in-Chief.

Trainings and Resources

- National VFW Training and Support - many tools and resources designed to help you to help lead - <https://www.vfw.org/my-vfw/vfw-training-and-support>
- Department Reports - <https://vfwpacific.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp>
- 21-22 Commanders Guide - https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/MY_VFW/Training-and-Support/Member-and-Officer-Training/CDR-Guide.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20210604T135619Z

Summary & Questions
