

Negative Reasons for Not  
Joining the American Legion  
And Answers

1-Not Interested.

Engage the prospect in conversation, find out what they did in the service, ask questions and try to get to what interests they have. Get them away from this negative feeling and bring them back to what we do in line with what that interest is. We have programs for anyone and everyone.

2-Leave me alone.

Yes sir,(ma'am). Have a good day and remember we are here for you whenever you need us. We do need you to be with us so we can do a better job of helping veterans such as yourself. So please think about it and join the rest of 2.5 million veterans still serving America and communities. Guilt trip feeling as much as you can without insulting

3-I do not want to do it anymore

Ask them if they had a bad experience. What were they doing, what program they were involved with and talk about what they did. Try to guide them into a less demanding program that will not tire them out if that is the case. Probe into why they do not want to do it anymore. Or simply put, they do not have to work any programs but we still need you to stay on the membership rolls so that we can have the numbers to help us in Congress. No work, just be there.

4-Please cancel me

Sure I can do that, but please tell me why you no longer want to be with your fellow veterans anymore. Get them to open up on the reason then you can more effectively deal; with it. Once they start talking you can bring up reasons to convince your prospect to stay in service to their country. Sometimes when you appeal to a person's sense of responsibility and caring, they will change their minds.

5-I am moving

Where are you moving to? Advise them that they do not have to leave the Legion and talk about the many posts that are all over the country and a new location might just be a good thing in meeting new comrades with new and different ideas. Even the cooking at the new post might be different from what they are used to. New Orleans has some fine creole food that will

delight the palate. The point here is to find a way to redirect their wanting to leave, and give them things to think about and what they are giving up.

6-I want another organization

Which one are you thinking of. Do they have better programs than The American Legion? Are they as effective as The Legions? Why would you want to leave the best one there is and proceed to tell him why it is the best. We have bigger and better programs, and we also have a very loud voice with Congress. You know you can do a lot, or little, or nothing with the Legion. It depends what you want to do and you might not find that choice in any other organization.

7-I went blind, I cannot attend

I am very sorry to hear that. Have you checked any of our programs that might be of help to you? I am sure that our service officer can advise you on what help there is and you do not have to give up your membership. It can still be there for you if you need it. The Veterans Hospital in Long Beach California opened a wing dedicated to partially and or totally blind veterans. Why don't you hold off on this until we do some checking. I am sure there is something that is available for you. This section is run by comrades that suffer the same affliction that you do. Being with your fellow comrades that understand your situation should be a very good reason to stay with us.

8-I will advise, maybe

Glad to hear that you will think about it. We are always here for you but if you wait too long I am afraid that you might forget and we will be out of a good member. Just fill out this application and I will give you a call at a later time to see if you have made up your mind. I will hold on to the application until then and we can save some time that way. In the meantime here are some brochures that will explain some of the programs that you might find of interest. The idea here is to keep them interested in joining and try to keep him or her from making a decision then and there. You know they will not call you back, but you will.

9-Door shut in my face

Sorry to have bothered you, but please know that the doors of The American Legion will never be closed to you or any veteran anytime or at any location. Stop by and find out. Have a good day.

10-I am waiting to decide what to do

Maybe I can help you decide. Be of assistance in finding out what interest there is, and what they did in the service and try to match that with one of our programs. Be upbeat and

enthusiastic, talk about our comradeship and our many social functions. Fill out an application and hold it for them so they will not have much to do when they make up their mind. And hopefully you will make it up for them. And very important. Follow up

11-I am sick

Sir, I am sorry that you are not well. If I may inform you that we have service officers that are more than willing to help you get any benefits that you might not be getting. You can find a service officer at any post throughout the country. I can be of assistance in helping you in this effort if you need that help. Talk about their service and the right to medical help. At this point do not push to join and make it clear that you can help even if they are not members.

12-I am too old, forget it

In that case you would be right at home as many of us are kind of old. But that does not stop us from still serving our country and veterans. As a matter of fact it most likely helps to keep us young and active. It would be a sad situation if we all just felt too old to be of any good to anybody. In fact it is the other way around, inject a bit of humor and steer them into thinking that a bit of work might bring some of that lost youth back. In any event we do not forget your service and that is why I am here. We need you to help us mentor our younger members and who else can do that better than an older veteran. Your experience is needed. Join us.

13-The heck with the American legion. I am sorry I joined

The heck with the American legion! Well I have never heard that before. You must have had a very bad experience. What in the word happened that would cause you to have that feeling. Make them talk about it and suggest maybe a different post, Try to find out what caused this bad reaction and be ready to listen closely to see how you can reverse this. Often times it is an individual that did something to cause this. So your work is to find out and guide them into a more open view and think of us as an organization and not a one man operation. There are many fine people in the Legion for them to condemn everyone based on one bad experience.

14-I have too much to do, I am too busy

Find out what it is that keeps them too busy. Again they do not have to do anything so talk about how we need the numbers and that alone will be a great help. Talk on those terms if you find it difficult to convince them..

15-I was ignored

I apologize for your being ignored. At times I guess that happens but it certainly is not what we do. In fact we go out of our way to bring you into our organization. They have bad feelings so



you must take that away by making them aware of all the good that we do. Convince them that we do need their experience and that is why you are there. You can be a great up front example by dressing properly and being on your best while talking to your prospect.

16- I went to a meeting but no one talked to me.

That certainly was not the right thing to do. I apologize for the treatment that you received. I would like the opportunity to correct that mistake by offering you all the information that I have as to why we do need you to be a part of our Legion. Perhaps after you go through some of our material you will see that we are a great organization. We are committed and we work very hard at helping our veterans and our communities. I will personally assist you and introduce you to our post members and actually have a ceremony to welcome you to our post

17-Just a bunch of old guys sitting around drinking. Not for me.

Well you are correct, many of us are older veterans but we also have many younger veterans. And yes some of us will have a drink or two as most often you will find in any civilian neighborhood in the country during happy hour. We are no different and perhaps in a way deserve to have a drink more so than some that have not seen the horrors of war. But for sure not everyone does that. But here is what you did not see. Then go into the many good things that we do, Boys State, Boys Nation, Oratorical contest, Service officers, baseball, Auxiliary, Sons, Riders and all of the programs that we sponsor and pay for. Just steer them away from the drinking image that they alluded to.

18-I filled out an application but no one helped me.

With all of the applications that many posts process perhaps yours got lost in the shuffle. There is no excuse for that happening. So I am here to correct that and will hand carry your application to make sure that does not happen again. We do want you to be a part of The American Legion. Address any interest and offer them a choice of programs. Just talk and find out what interest there is.

Art Castro

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