



TRAINING LEADERS of CADETS
INTERMEDIATE COURSE
LESSON PLAN

2.2 Feedback & Mentoring

VERSION:	December 2016 <i>please verify this is the latest version by visiting capmembers.com/TLC</i>
DURATION:	50 minutes approximately, and subtopic times shown in margins below are also approximate
INSTRUCTOR:	A master-rated cadet programs officer or highly experienced CC or DCC is suggested
KEY QUESTION:	What is the cadet program officer's role in providing feedback, and specifically how are leadership feedback meetings supposed to work?
OBJECTIVES:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Defend the principle that by listening to our friends' and colleagues' feedback, cadets can increase their performance2. Describe the Johari Window and explain why its blind spots are relevant to young leaders3. Describe basic concepts that should govern feedback meetings4. Describe basic processes that should govern how feedback meetings are actually run; explain the STIR-IN process5. Describe effective methods for keeping a cadet focused upon his or her being sustained in grade
SIMPLE OUTLINE:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Starter: "Maverick" from <i>Top Gun</i>2. Feedback: Breakfast of Champions3. Feedback Meetings - Concepts4. Leadership Expectations as Performance Goals5. Feedback Meetings - Process6. Exercise7. Summary
CLASS ACTIVITIES:	Group discussion, followed by an activity where given realistic scenarios affecting cadets \ participants will complete CAPF 60-90 leadership feedback forms and role-play a feedback meeting.
EQUIPMENT:	Butcher paper (or whiteboard) and markers; 1 copy of exercise handout and annotated CAPF 60-90's per student; 1 copy of blank CAPF 60-91 or 60-92 per student.



Welcome & Starter

1 min

"You are dangerous!"

In the classic 80's movie about fighter pilots, *Top Gun*, Maverick, played by Tom Cruise, was dangerous to be around because he was so undisciplined. His rules-be-damned attitude even got his friend, Goose, killed.

Top Gun looks like an action movie, but in reality it's a drama about a cocky, immature man who, at long last, listens to his friends and colleagues, sees himself in a new light, and decides to change his behavior.

At the end of the movie, a colleague who had earlier been critical of Maverick's lack of discipline proclaims, "You *are* dangerous." Because of Maverick's newfound habit of self-reflection and discernment, he had grown into a true professional and therefore a lethal fighter pilot.

In short, *Top Gun* is a movie about mentoring and feedback, and that's our subject for this hour.



Overview

1 min

Cadet life is marked by lots of adult feedback and ongoing mentoring because you can't realize your full potential without help, especially if you're an awkward fifteen year old. We'll discuss the importance of feedback, understand how the CAP cadet leadership expectations chart provides a benchmark for looking at cadet performance, consider some guiding principles for the leadership feedback meeting program, dive into the details of feedback meeting processes and methods, and conclude with a role-playing exercise.

This next hour is so important because strong adult leadership, with seniors like us serving as leadership coaches and mentors to cadets, makes the difference between a "Maverick's" potential stagnating and a "Maverick" growing into a mature, thoughtful, responsible young adult. Plus, if you've been around cadets for a while, you know that half the fun of supporting them is helping them grow and witnessing them start to "get it."



Johari Window

6 min

Everyone is the same, and yet everyone is unique. We're human. Each of us has strengths and shortcomings, but how those pan-out differs from one person to the next. How can we master leadership when we can't fully understand ourselves and one another? Human personality makes leadership a real challenge.

The Johari Window is a tool for exploring self-perception and how others perceive us. Accordingly, it's a good resource for beginning our conversation about mentoring cadets.

Shown on the slide, we see a 2x2 table. The two columns are marked "Known to Self" and "Known to Others." The rows are marked "Not Known to Self" and "Not Known to Others." This gives us four quadrants, and each quadrant has a name: Public, Blind, Private, and Unknown.

Q1: *Public*. What do you suppose is indicative of the "Public" quadrant? And can you give an example that illustrates a Public personality trait in action?

A1: Public features of your personality are those that you are aware of and that others see, too. They're public thanks to good self-perception and good communication. **Example:** The Fonz. He's cool, he knows it, and so does everyone else on *Happy Days*.

Q2: *Blind*. What do you suppose is indicative of the "Blind" quadrant? And can you give an example that illustrates a Blind personality trait in action?

A2: Blind features are those you don't see, but others do. They're the result of poor self-perception. **Example:** Michael Scott. Everyone on the *The Office* knows that Steve Carrell's character is a buffoon, but he doesn't.

Q3: *Private*. What do you suppose is indicative of the "Private" quadrant? And can you give an example that illustrates a Private personality trait in action?

A3: Private features are those you see, but that others don't, either because you've chosen not to share that feature with others, or you have poor communication, or your friends have poor perception. **Example:** Bruce Wayne. As Batman, Bruce Wayne is courageous, but he keeps that feature hidden from others as part of his disguise.

Q4: *Unknown*. What do you suppose is indicative of the "Unknown" quadrant? And can you give an example that illustrates an Unknown personality trait in action?

A4: Unknown features are hidden from yourself and your friends. Unconscious and subconscious thoughts inhabit the Unknown quadrant. **Example:** Elle Woods. In *Legally Blonde*, the hero (Reese Witherspoon) doesn't realize she's actually very intelligent and has the aptitude to be succeed at Harvard Law School. Plus, her friends and adversaries wrongly

presume she's a "dumb blonde." Her intelligence and potential for professional success are unknown to all.

Q5: The Johari Window is perhaps an interesting theory or way to describe aspects of personality, but how does it relate to a Cadet Programs Officer trying to mentor a cadet? What are the take-aways?

A5: *Answers may vary, but try to ensure the group addresses most of these points:*

- We all have blind spots; a thoughtful leader tries to become aware of them and overcome them
- People learn about you through self-disclosure; it's healthy and useful to "open up" at least to some extent; the better people know you, the easier you'll be to work with
- Other people (wingmen and mentors) view your actions from a different vantage point and therefore they may see things you don't, so you should welcome their feedback
- As much as we know the people in our lives, we don't know them fully - people keep certain thoughts, feelings, experiences, and dreams to themselves, so we don't always know "what's really going on"
- If your self-image matches how others describe you, you can be confident about that self image (I think I'm a good speaker; people say I am, so it's likely true in reality)



Feedback: Breakfast of Champions

4 min

Feedback makes cadets stronger. How can we help them develop a healthy, resilient attitude toward feedback? Here are a few thoughts, and perhaps you'll have other ideas to add.

This part of the lesson plan does not include specific prompts for students to contribute to the discussion, but in your own way you should encourage them to do so. And, it's not necessary that you cover every bulleted item; consider them as background context to help facilitate the discussion.

(1) Encourage a Habit of Reflection. One of the best life skills we can encourage in cadets is a habit of self-reflection. They need to appreciate that thinking about their own performance, re-playing their day or an event in their mind in search of lessons, is a good habit.

- Reflection can prevent or reduce blind spots.
- The CAPF 60-90 series Leadership Feedback form encourages reflection by prompting the cadet to identify a couple personal strengths and areas for improvement.
- If we continually chat with cadets as an informal mentoring effort, those conversations about performance, goals, growth, etc., help inculcate the habit of reflection.
- The more we reflect on our own performance, the better we're able to help others do the same, so the cadet can become a better leader. The reverse is just as true. When a cadet starts thinking of how to mentor a junior, he'll naturally begin to think more about his own performance.

(2) Encourage the Responsible Exercise of Freedom. To give or receive feedback presupposes that the other person possesses the freedom to make choices about that advice.

- Therefore, feedback helps cadets see themselves as young adults who possess a degree of autonomy and are authors of their own lives.
- By offering feedback in a positive tone, we demonstrate that in CAP cadets are free to fail and learn from mistakes.
- Further, feedback and the ongoing relationship with seniors signals to cadets that they're free to ask questions and go to seniors for counsel.

(3) Understand Feedback as an Ongoing Process.

- If feedback is an ongoing, routine aspect of leadership development, cadets will feel (relatively) free from anxiety about scheduled feedback meetings and promotion boards.
- Feedback meetings will be non-threatening conversations, not high-stakes tests or adversarial battles.
- This point is made doubly effective when you offer impromptu feedback and not limit yourself to scheduled promotion boards.

Emphasis: As mentors to cadets, we need to keep our eyes and ears open so that we accumulate observations to inform our feedback. Further, good observations allow us to provide feedback that is specific, i.e.: grounded in real events instead of vague generalities.



Feedback Meetings – Concepts

4-6 min

Q1: In CAP, we want feedback meetings to be guided by a few key principles. Who wants to suggest a guiding principle?

A1: Answers may vary but should be consistent with the themes discussed below.

Talk, Don't Test. Feedback meetings are discussions about performance. They are not tests of knowledge or skill. In the case of feedback meetings coinciding with promotion eligibility, the cadet will have already passed written leadership and aerospace tests, so there's no need to revisit those areas.

Two-Way Conversation. Feedback meetings are dialogues. That means the people on both sides of the table – the cadet and the staff – should share in the back and forth of discussion. It's important that the cadet has opportunities to speak for at least three reasons. (1) By listening to the cadet, we can check that he or she understands our point of view. (2) It allows the cadet to bring problems or challenges to our attention, including a 360° opportunity to tell us what we can do differently as mentors and supervisors. (3) It reaffirms the cadet's dignity and status as a free and responsible young adult who is empowered to take charge of his or her own growth.

No Sneak Attacks. Feedback meetings are not ambushes. If feedback is truly ongoing and not just an event that happens at promotion time, there shouldn't be any big surprises in your discussion. Don't take the NIGYYSOB approach, "Now I've got you, you SOB!" Feedback meetings are not weapons expressing a frustrated leader's vengeance.

Focus on Future. Feedback meetings focus on the future. While our observations about the cadet's recent behaviors provide content for the discussion, our focus is on what we want the cadet to do in the future. A future focus helps keep the discussion positive. After all, nobody can control what already happened.

Be Specific. Feedback meetings include advice that is specific. This is especially important because most cadets are only beginning to think abstractly, so if you want their behavior to change, they'll do better if your counsel is fairly detailed and specific. Better yet, prompt the cadet to identify those details on his own, and help lead him toward the solution.

WEAK: Pay more attention to your flight's appearance.

GOOD: Next time, I want to see you doing uniform spot checks of the cadets in your flight during the time between your arrival and opening formation.

BETTER: Tell me, specifically, what you can do to help your flight improve on its uniform inspections?

Be Helpful. Feedback meetings are supposed to be helpful experiences, with the cadet walking away with some ideas on how to improve her performance and grow. The staff should connect the cadet with resources like tutors, regulations, explanations of new methods, etc. "Who in our squadron has a great command voice? Do you want to ask her for

help?" "Where could you find rules about proper wear of the uniform? Do you know where to find that on the website?"

Be Consistent. Feedback meetings are run according to set rules and procedures that are applied equally to all. (You can make your rules flexible, accommodating a schedule change for a cadet's excused absence, so long as all similarly situated cadets have that same privilege, but don't exempt a cadet from any requirements just because she's the commander's daughter.)

Use the Cadet Staff. Feedback meetings are learning opportunities for cadet staff to develop their evaluation and mentoring skills. Cadet officers may complete a leadership feedback form on a cadet lower in grade than themselves, but a senior member must review and approve it before it is shared with the cadet. Cadet staff can assume an ownership role in the feedback process, but the ultimate responsibility for feedback remains with the senior staff.

Transition. We're still talking about feedback meetings conceptually. Before we get into specific processes and methods, let's take a moment to review a key concept - the cadet program's leadership expectations, found on the Cadet Super Chart.



Leadership Expectations as Performance Goals

3 min

Everyone should be familiar with the leadership expectations chart, discussed during TLC Basic's class on cadet advancement. Still, we should do a little review here. *You need not go through each of these questions verbatim; the goal is to do a brief review of important information the students learned in TLC Basic.*

Time Warning

Students will have already completed a lesson on the Leadership Expectations during the TLC Basic Course. Therefore, be careful to control the discussion and do not allow the class to dwell on this topic.

Q1: Someone please explain the purpose of the leadership expectations?

A1: We judge leaders by how they lead. Behavior or performance counts. The expectations identify goals for leadership performance in a number of areas including communication skills, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, etc.

Q2: Are the expectations static, or do they get higher or lower as the cadet progresses?

A2: The expectations are progressive, growing more challenging as the cadet advances.

Q3: Who can provide an example?

A3: The expectations regarding attitude are modest for Phase I. It's enough for a cadet airman to display a fairly positive attitude. But in Phase II, the cadet NCO faces the bigger challenge of being expected to encourage good attitudes in others.

Q4: What role do the expectations play in the promotion process?

A4: They're the performance standards by which cadets' behavior as leaders is judged. A cadet who is fulfilling the expectations is ready for promotion; the cadet who is struggling to perform at that level needs more time to mature before being promoted.

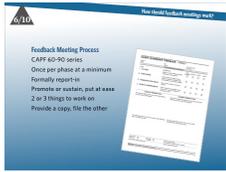
Q5: So, determining promotion readiness is a simple matter of tallying a scorecard?

A5: No. While the expectations themselves are specific and measurable, a cadet's success or struggle against a given objective is measured qualitatively. There's still a need for discretion and prudence.

Q6: Do you need a working knowledge of the expectations for each phase, or is it sufficient to know where you can look them up?

A6: If a senior possesses a working knowledge of the expectations, he or she can weave that detailed information into on the spot mentoring conversations with cadets. Just as you want to know what content cadets study in their textbooks so you can be an effective mentor, you'll want to know what leadership expectations they're supposed to be striving toward.

Transition. Now, with all that context, we're ready to get into the nitty-gritty of process and discuss best practices for actually running feedback meetings or promotion boards.



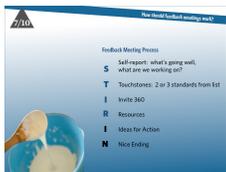
Feedback Meetings – Process

4 min

Q1: What's the best way to conduct the actual feedback meeting? Someone please tell me how the meeting starts, and then we'll go from there, one step at a time.

A1: *Answers may vary, but should generally follow this sequence.*

1. Meet in a location that offers some privacy, but avoid situations that place a senior and cadet alone together.
2. Have the cadet formally report to the officer(s) who will be providing the feedback.
3. Put the cadet at ease so he may focus on the officers' constructive comments. If meeting as part of a promotion board, state whether the cadet will be promoted or not.
4. Ask the cadet to describe some recent successes he's had in the Cadet Program.
5. Ask the cadet to describe some leadership skills he is trying to improve.
6. Review the ratings in the top portion of the Leadership Feedback form. For each item, provide the cadet with constructive and positive feedback.
7. Identify some of the cadet's recent successes. Let the cadet know what he's doing well.
8. Identify 2 or 3 leadership skills that the cadet should focus on. Give specific suggestions on what they should do to improve in those areas, but do not overwhelm them with feedback.
9. Congratulate the cadet for their efforts and encourage him to remain active in CAP. If retaining the cadet in grade, set a date for a subsequent review. Be sure to re-enforce the positive.
10. Dismiss the cadet and return his salute.



Another way to remind yourself of this basic process is through the mnemonic **STIR-IN**.

S. Self-Report. Have the cadet tell you what's been going well and what skills or personal goals they're working on.

T. Touchstones. Identify 2 or 3 of the standards on their leadership expectations chart and use those phrases as touchstones for your discussion about their performance.

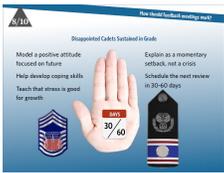
I. Invite 360o. Invite the cadet to tell you what the staff / squadron leadership can do differently in support of the cadet's success.

R. Resources. Connect the cadet with resources relating to his goal areas (tutors, publications, web resources, etc.)

I. Ideas for Action. Ensure the cadet has some ideas about specific tasks he can do in the near future to be more successful.

N. Nice Ending. Thank the cadet for his continued hard work and participation. Reaffirm the positive.

Transition. We've discussed some specific processes to use to make your feedback meetings effective. Yet, sometimes we'll need to sustain a cadet in grade, doing that well requires skill. Let's consider the special case of delayed promotions before moving on.



When Cadets Are Sustained in Grade

3-5 min

Sometimes a cadet will have struggled to fulfill the leadership expectations, in which case we'll need to sustain the cadet in grade. This news has to be delivered in a pitch-perfect tone. Here are a few key points for keeping the cadet focused on the positive, and in a moment, I'll ask you to add your own recommendations to this list.

Model a Positive Attitude. How you handle the news of a delayed promotion will affect how the cadet reacts to that news. Do not present a punitive attitude. Do not dwell on past mistakes. Rather, be positive, congratulating the cadet for successes, and focus on the future and how you'll provide extra mentoring to help the cadet achieve his or her goals.

Help Develop Coping Skills. The cadet may need help coping in two regards. First, the delayed promotion may trigger an emotional reaction, so we'll need to help the cadet deal with those emotions. That can be done by focusing on the short-term nature of this momentary setback, and by reassuring the cadet that just about every cadet is sustained in grade at least once. Second, the cadet may feel overwhelmed by the performance challenges, asking himself, How am I supposed to do better when I'm already trying so hard? Extra mentoring, with closer supervision and coaching will provide extra resources so the cadet can solve the performance challenge.

Teach That Stress Can Be Good. When sustaining a cadet in grade, we're probably creating anxiety in the cadet's mind, and that's okay because stress can trigger subtle changes to brain chemistry that makes it possible for the cadet to perform at a higher level than he or she otherwise would, absent the stress. World records get set in high stress environments like the Olympics more than in low stress environments like routine, low-level competitions.

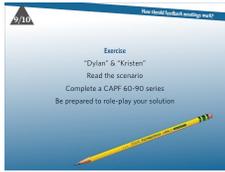
Momentary Setback. While CAP sometimes sustains a cadet in grade when more time is needed to fulfill leadership expectations, we don't sentence cadets to an indeterminate term before their next evaluation. These setbacks are short-term.

Schedule the Next Review. To reinforce the preceding point, don't end the feedback meeting until you have scheduled a follow-up review in 30 to 60 days.

Q1: What other principles should guide our mentoring approach when sustaining a cadet in grade?

A1: *Answers may vary, so long as they do not conflict with the above.*

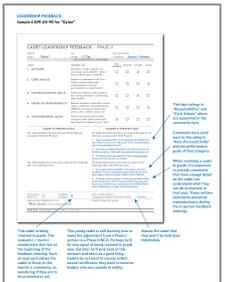
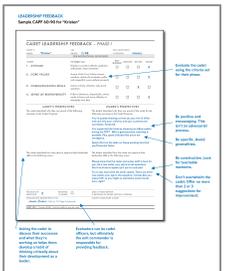
Transition. We've discussed why feedback is valuable to personal growth, learned a bit about the Johari Window and our natural propensity for blind spots, and discussed key concepts for feedback meetings as well as key processes to follow to implement them well. Now, let's put all that learning together via an exercise.



Exercise

15-20 min

1. Distribute the handout and a blank CAPF 60-90 series form to the students.
2. Assign half the students the "Kristen" case; the other half the "Dylan" case. The Kristen group needs the CAPF 60-91; the Dylan group the CAPF 60-92.
3. Working independently, allow students 10 minutes to read the case study and complete a CAPF 60-90 series (this is not a group project).
4. Regroup. Have someone briefly summarize the "facts" or observations in each case.
5. Have one student share their completed CAPF 60-90 series and explain how they would handle the feedback meeting. If you like, try role-playing the feedback meeting with one student acting as the cadet and the other acting as the evaluator / mentor. Invite the rest of the class to share their thoughts about the case.
6. Use the annotated feedback forms on the next pages as an answer key. It is not critical that the students' CAPF 60-90s look exactly like the "answers" shown on those annotated documents. What matters most is that the students compare the observations about the cadets' performance against the performance goals. Also, the students should show concern for following a "positive, constructive, and specific" approach in conducting their feedback meeting. At the conclusion of the lesson, you may provide students with a hard copy of the sample annotated feedback forms for their reference.



LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK

Sample CAPF 60-90 for "Kristen"

CADET LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK - PHASE I					
CADET'S NAME:	"Kristen"	CAP GRADE:	C/AB	INCLUSIVE DATES OF REVIEW:	January
FOR INSTRUCTIONS, SEE REVERSE					
CATEGORY	PERFORMANCE GOALS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
1. ATTITUDE	Displays a positive attitude; optimistic; enthusiastic; team-orientated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. CORE VALUES	Aware of the Core Values; honest; practices customs & courtesies; polite and respectful; wears uniform properly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Listens actively; attentive; asks good questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY	Follows directions; dependable; arrives ready to learn and serve; effective in managing own time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CADET'S PERSPECTIVES	LEADER'S PERSPECTIVES
The cadet described why they are proud of the following successes in the Cadet Program:	The leader described why they are proud of the cadet for the following successes in the Cadet Program: You're quietly showing us that you put a lot of effort and care into your uniform, and your customs and courtesies. Great job. You supported the team by cheering on fellow cadets during the CPFT. With a good attitude, anything is possible. Plus, good attitudes like yours are contagious. Good effort on the mile run. Keep working hard and you'll become faster.
The cadet described how they plan to improve their leadership skills in the following areas:	The leader described how the cadet can improve their leadership skills in the following areas: Please know that the cadet and senior staff is here for you. As a new cadet, your job is to ask questions. Don't be afraid to speak up if you're confused. Try to mix more with the other cadets. There are other new cadets your age in the squadron. It looks like you enjoy CAP, so you might as well make some friends here, right?

PROMOTION APPROVED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	RETAINED IN GRADE	<input type="checkbox"/>	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW, IF RETAINED IN GRADE (WITHIN 6 WEEKS):	
EVALUATOR'S SIGNATURE & TITLE	<i>Audilia Earhart, C/2d Lt, "B" Flight Commander</i>		CADET'S SIGNATURE & DATE		

CAPF 50-1 October 2006 Previous editions may be used

Evaluate the cadet using the criteria set for their phase.

Be positive and encouraging. This isn't an adversarial process.

Be specific. Avoid generalities.

Be constructive. Look for teachable moments.

Don't overwhelm the cadet. Offer no more than 2 or 3 suggestions for improvement.

Asking the cadet to discuss their successes and what they're working on helps them develop a habit of thinking critically about their development as a leader.

Evaluators can be cadet officers, but ultimately the unit commander is responsible for providing feedback.

LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK
Sample CAPF 60-90 for "Dylan"

CADET LEADERSHIP FEEDBACK - PHASE II					
CADET'S NAME:	"Dylan"	CAP GRADE:	C/TSgt	INCLUSIVE DATES OF REVIEW:	January - February
FOR INSTRUCTIONS, SEE REVERSE					
CATEGORY	PERFORMANCE GOALS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	SATISFACTORY	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
1. ATTITUDE	Maintains a positive attitude and encourages good attitudes in others; does not flaunt rank or authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. CORE VALUES	Displays a commitment to the Core Values; promotes team spirit, professionalism, and good sportsmanship as a team leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. COMMUNICATION SKILLS	Proficient in informal public speaking (ie: in giving directions to and training junior cadets)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY	Enforces standards; trustworthy in supervising a small team and leading them in fulfillment of a series of simple tasks; given a plan, is able to carry it out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. INTER-PERSONAL SKILLS	Guides and coaches junior cadets; recognizes when junior cadets need help; leads by example; is not a "boss"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CADET'S PERSPECTIVES			LEADER'S PERSPECTIVES		
The cadet described why they are proud of the following successes in the Cadet Program:			The leader described why they are proud of the cadet for the following successes in the Cadet Program:		
The cadet described how they plan to improve their leadership skills in the following areas:			The leader described how the cadet can improve their leadership skills in the following areas:		
PROMOTION APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> RETAINED IN GRADE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			DATE OF NEXT REVIEW, IF RETAINED IN GRADE (WITHIN 6 WEEKS): (30 DAYS)		
EVALUATOR'S SIGNATURE & TITLE <i>Maria Sanchez, C/Capt, Cadet Commander</i>			CADET'S SIGNATURE & DATE		
CAPF 50-2 October 2006 Previous editions may be used					

The high ratings in "Responsibility" and "Core Values" above are supported in the comments here.

Comments here point back to the rating in "Inter-Personal Skills" and the performance goals of that category.

When retaining a cadet in grade, it's important to provide comments that have enough detail so the cadet can understand what they can do to improve in that area. These written comments should be expanded upon during the in-person feedback meeting.

This cadet is being retained in grade. The evaluator / mentor should state that fact at the beginning of the feedback meeting. Such an approach allows the cadet to focus on the mentor's comments, vs. wondering if they are to be promoted or not.

This young cadet is still learning how to make the adjustment from a Phase I airman to a Phase II NCO. Perhaps he'll be very upset at being retained in grade now, but later he'll look back at this moment and see it as a good thing. Cadets do not want to merely collect award certificates; they want to become leaders who are capable in reality.

Assure the cadet that they won't be held back indefinitely.



Summary

2 min

Let's wrap-up by summarizing what we've discussed.

Good leaders fight for feedback. In *Top Gun*, Maverick didn't become truly "dangerous" (in a good way) until he learned to listen to his friends and colleagues.

Feedback should be ongoing. As mentors to cadets, we should always be on the lookout for teachable moments.

In CAP, we want every cadet to receive a formal feedback meeting at least once per Phase.

Feedback meetings are not chit-chat sessions, but are supposed to be grounded upon the Leadership Expectations. Use the CAPF 60-90 series form corresponding to the cadet's Phase.

Finally, we're not in an adversarial relationship. We want our cadets to succeed, so we take a positive, helpful, caring approach when leading or supervising feedback meetings.