

Care and Feeding of a CAP Member

DURATION: 45 Minutes

TEACHING METHOD: Discussion and Case Study (Live or Webinar)

READING: Student Guide

TEACHING AIDS/HANDOUTS: Plan of Action (From CAPP 50-4, *Level I Orientation*)

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Demonstrate knowledge of the typical needs and resources required in order to assist and guide their squadron members to enjoy the most fulfilling and professional CAP career that each individual member desires.

DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES (DLO):

1. Discuss how to orient a new member into CAP.
2. Describe ways to keep the mid-career member engaged.
3. Evaluate the concept of career transitions, including the potential reasons for retirement or for leaving the organization.

LESSON STRATEGY: This lesson is designed to equip the commander with tools necessary to keep their squadron members actively and professionally engaged in their CAP careers.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: This lesson focuses on the expected career span of an average senior member: from initial membership through retirement or mutual parting of ways. The lesson's purpose is to assist the commander in working with his/her members in planning a mutually fulfilling and beneficial membership experience for the unit's members. Students should complete the assigned reading in the pre-course before coming to the class. This allows you to spend most of your time on discussion questions and any exercises or case studies offered. Survey the students to see how well they've absorbed the materials and adjust your plan as necessary.

REVIEW: Ask the students if they have any questions about the reading. If they have questions, answer them. If not, proceed with a short review. Ask the students to share the most important points from the reading. Begin with how to bring a new member into the fold, and be sure to discuss how the Level I Orientation and Plan of Action can enhance this process. Discuss how to keep the member engaged after initial orientation and ensure that they are not forgotten about. Investigate how to blend the member's reasons for joining with the squadrons needs. Finally, discuss the special needs of the member who is thinking of moving on, who is "burning out", or for whom CAP is no longer a good fit. Encourage students to share stories from their own units. If necessary, develop cases to enhance discussion.

BRIDGE: As commander, you are in a unique position to serve each of your members and help them enjoy each phase of their CAP career/journey. You must understand that fulfilling the member's CAP needs, will empower them to help you achieve mission needs. The more they grow in CAP and the more they enjoy their time in CAP, the more productive they will be. Let's dig a little further into how to keep the positive energy going.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Feel free to add or adjust questions as necessary to meet the students' needs as well as the unique conditions for your wing.

CAP Unit Commanders Course Instructor Guide
Care and Feeding of a CAP Member Teaching Plan

Lead off question: How were you welcomed in to CAP? If you had to rate your welcome on a scale of 1-10, what would it be? Why?

Supporting Question: What is the process that your unit uses to welcome new seniors into CAP? How do you think they would rate it on the same scale? Why?

Supporting Question: Did you get what you joined CAP for? Has what you are looking to get from CAP changed since you became a member?

Supporting Question: Do you have members who might be “outgrowing” what they are doing in the unit? How do you support them through this time of transition?

Supporting Question: Have you known anyone who has retired from CAP or who is thinking about it now? Discuss.

Supporting Question: Who was the last senior member to drop from your unit’s roles? When did they go? Do you know why they left? If so, why did they go? Do you think there was a chance they could have been saved?

CASE STUDY #1:

As the squadron commander for Freedom Composite Squadron, you’ve been keeping an eye on a relatively new senior member: 1Lt Johannsen. He joined 8 months ago and really started out “on fire.” Though he was an instrument-rated pilot, he wasn’t concerned that your unit didn’t have an aircraft assigned, and was open to becoming the Operations Officer and the Assistant Logistics Officer for your growing unit. He completed Level I during his first month, and was working on his Tech ratings in Ops and Logistics and completed his SLS within the first six months.

Lately, he hasn’t been coming to every meeting and hasn’t been answering some important e-mails like he used to. When he does come, he seems out of touch.

CASE STUDY #2:

Cadet Major Smith is going to turn 21 in four months and is one achievement away from obtaining her General Ira C. Eaker Award. She’s active in the unit and well-respected by the cadets and the senior members. She is a local college student and sometimes this interferes with her CAP activities.

She is ES rated in Communications and Ground Team, and has expressed interested in becoming a ground branch director when she turns 21. She also wants to distance herself a little from the cadets as she wants to establish herself as an “adult.”

CASE STUDY #3:

Instructors, feel free to form a case study here.

CLOSELY RELATED LESSONS: Squadron Staff Responsibility, Leadership Fundamentals, Developing our Members