

Delegating Authority

DURATION: 50 Minutes

TEACHING METHOD: Discussion (Live or Webinar)

READING: Student Reading

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Comprehend the importance of delegating authority effectively to your staff.

DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES (DLO):

1. Define delegation of authority.
2. Understand of the relationship between authority and responsibility.
3. Discuss the benefits of delegating authority.
4. Discuss the “when, what and who” of delegating authority.
5. Describe the action steps to effective delegation of authority.
6. Describe the pitfalls to avoid when delegating.

LESSON STRATEGY: This lesson is designed to provide unit commanders with the basic knowledge necessary to delegate authority effectively within their respective commands.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: This lesson focuses on the art of delegating successfully.

Students should have completed the assigned reading in the pre-course before coming to the class. This allows you to spend most of your time on discussion and application. Survey the students to see how well they’ve absorbed the material and adjust your plan as necessary.

REVIEW: Ask students if they have any questions about the reading. If they have questions, answer them. If not, proceed with a short review. Ask students to share the most important points from the reading. Start with the key definitions. Follow up with a short discussion about authority and responsibility. Ensure students understand the key aspects of delegating, as well as pitfalls that can occur. Encourage several students to participate/share.

BRIDGE: Delegating is a necessary and helpful skill for commanders. No commander can carry the load and do all the work by themselves. Delegation skills will help you be a successful commander.

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

Lead off Question: Why must commanders learn to delegate effectively?

Supporting Question: What happens when commanders fail to delegate effectively?

Supporting Question: What are some tasks a squadron commander might want to delegate? Create a list for the exercise. Try to get 10 or so different types of tasks from simple to complex.

EXERCISE: Play delegation Poker.

1. Divide the group into teams of 3 to 7 members.
2. Print out the delegation poker cards.
3. Each teammate gets a set of seven cards (that show seven levels of delegation).

CAP Unit Commanders Course Instructor Guide
Delegating Authority Teaching Plan

4. One person picks one of the items from the list the group generated.
5. Each player chooses one of his or her seven delegation cards privately that indicates how he or she would delegate in that situation.
6. When all players have decided, they reveal their cards.
7. The group discusses the highest value and lowest value chosen. The group comes to a consensus on how to handle the situation.

CLOSURE: What did we learn from this exercise? The leader who always is in the minority may be one who wants to always be in control or who does not want any authority. Delegation is not black and white--there is a lot of gray area that requires the skill of a leader to handle. Delegation is a process with several steps so it is controlled and gradual. Delegation depends on context. There is an art in not going too far but going far enough.

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