

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Overview Statement: What qualities make someone great; who deserves to be followed? As young people begin to find their way in the world, these questions confront them. What distinguishes CAP Cadets is their willingness to answer.

Connection to the Curriculum: Ties in with a major theme of chapter three in *Learn to Lead*, Module One on Personal Leadership.

Estimated Time: 25-30 Minutes

Resources Required: *Learn to Lead*, Module One; Whiteboard (or chalkboard, butcher paper or easel pad).

Key Terms:

Leadership – “The art and science of influencing and directing people to accomplish the assigned mission.” United States Air Force Development Doctrine 1-1, *Leadership & Force Development*

INTRODUCTION

Attention: How would you define leadership? {Write answers on the board.}

Motivation: Successful leaders share common attributes like commitment, integrity and subject matter knowledge. These are all traits that you can learn and develop, meaning everyone has the potential to become a successful leader!

Overview: Today we will discuss CAP’s definition of leadership and how you can apply this definition throughout your cadet career and life.

Your role in this discussion is to be an active participant. You are free to share your views with each other. Please be involved and considerate of one another. My role will be to take notes on what you say, and I may occasionally ask a question or two. There is no right or wrong answers to the questions. I am simply interested in what you have to say.

MAIN POINT 1: CAP’S DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

CAP has adopted the United States Air Force's definition of leadership: "The art and science of influencing and directing people to accomplish the assigned mission."

Question: Do you agree or disagree with this definition? Defend your answer.

All leaders, good or bad, lead by example. Followers emulate their leaders, and inherit the leadership traits they see. If a leader lacks integrity, those they lead will never develop it. Good traits leaders can pass on include motivation, innovation, empathy, support, commitment, and competence.

Question: What traits have you identified in leaders, good or bad, inside or outside of CAP?

Question: Why are some good traits bad for a leader?

Question: What one trait do you feel is the most important for a leader, and why? {Write answers on the board.}

MAIN POINT 2: APPLYING LEADERSHIP

As an art, leadership gives leaders freedom to express themselves. As a science, leadership demands that leaders think before they act. The main marker of leadership success rests in the results – was the assigned mission completed successfully?

The first priority of a leader is always to complete the mission. While leaders must consider their subordinates and superiors, they were given the authority and have the responsibility to successfully complete a job, and that must be foremost in their mind.

Question: What are some examples of missions in CAP?

Question: Describe how followers might react to a leader who puts his or her personal goals ahead of the mission?

Suppose that Cadet Johnson organizes a recruiting drive and pre-printed all of the membership applications with his name so that he can get the recruiting credit, even though you were the one who actually recruited a new member.

Question: How is Cadet Johnson applying leadership?

Question: In this situation, how can you apply leadership as a follower of Cadet Johnson?

Question: How can we apply CAP's definition of leadership to our everyday lives?

CLOSING

Summary: Our discussion started with CAP's definition of leadership and ended with how we can apply this definition to our lives. Learning leadership is possible – lead by example and accomplish the mission.

Remotivation: The mission is the task of the day. It is the reason why the team exists.

Closure: A leader works with people to accomplish the mission.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Note to the instructor: Every informal discussion should be followed by one or more hands-on activities that reinforce one or more of the concepts being discussed. These activities should last 25-30 minutes, giving about one hour total block of time for the leadership session at a typical CAP meeting (25-30 minutes for the informal discussion, plus 25-30 minutes for the activities).

Along with any questions found in the activities themselves, you should be sure to ask, **“How does this activity tie in with our discussion?”**

CAP recommends activities from the *Learn to Lead Activity Guide* by Rob Smith (published by the Civil Air Patrol). You are free to substitute another activity, or create your own, as long as you tie in with one or more concepts of the informal discussion.

Main concept for this lesson: **Leadership.**