

COMMUNICATION

Overview Statement: Communication is the basis for followership, teamwork and overall success. Without effective communication, you will not be able to work as a team or become an effective leader.

Connection to the Curriculum: Ties in with a major theme of chapter two 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:

Communication – “The exchange of information between people, by means of speaking, writing, or using a common system of signs or behavior.” Encarta Dictionary

INTRODUCTION

Attention: Have you ever tried to explain something to somebody and all you got was a blank look?

Motivation: Communication is necessary to accomplishing your mission. Today, we will learn how communication works, and how you can improve your communication skills.

Overview: First we will define effective communication. Next, we will talk about the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication. By the end of the lesson, cadets will be able to show how effective communication is the foundation to becoming an effective team.

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: WHAT IS EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION?

{Draw the following on the board:



State that effective communication requires:

- A message from a sender
- At least one receiver who understands the message}

Communication is the transfer of ideas between two or more people. Often, the difference between capable teams and leaders lies in their ability to communicate well with each other. If you are not able to transfer a message effectively, then your team may run the risk of not being able to complete the task that is assigned.

Question: How can a message not be transferred effectively?

Question: Is it possible to communicate well without being effective? Defend your answer.

Question: Why is effective communication important to becoming an effective leader or team?

Great leaders are great communicators; they can get their ideas across clearly and concisely. Let's examine what these leaders have in common that make them great communicators.

Question: Think of a great communicator. What are some of the attributes that this person exhibits? {Write the answers on the board.}

Question: Think of a great leader. What are some of the attributes that this person exhibits? {Write the answers on the board and note any similarities with the previous list.}

Question: Think about how you communicate. What are some of the attributes that you exhibit?

MAIN POINT 2: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Verbal communication is how you deliver your ideas through speaking. The art of speaking involves your word choice, along with your tone of voice. Non-verbal communication consists of all the ways that you send a message without speaking. The most common form of non-verbal communication is through written word. However, non-verbal communication also includes your body language, attitude, and symbols such as pictures.

Question: Where does non-verbal communication come up in your life?

Question: Which is more important: verbal or non-verbal communication? Defend your answer.

Question: How can followers practice effective communication, both verbally and non-verbally?

CLOSING

Summary: Communication is very important to your development as a follower and in the future as a leader. If you are unable to effectively communicate then you will not be able to effectively work with or lead others in a team. I think that you now have a firm idea of what communication is and why effective communication is important.

Remotivation: If you are to be a follower or a leader you must communicate. There are many leaders in the world, but the ones that are most effective are great communicators.

Closure: You can become a great communicator with practice and study.

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 concepts for this lesson: **Effective communication; Non-verbal communication.**