

## LEADER AS VISIONARY, MOTIVATOR AND COMMUNICATOR

**Overview Statement:** One moment a leader must be a visionary, the next a motivator, another moment a communicator. Strong leaders are always in demand precisely because it is difficult to find people who can perform well in so many different capacities.

**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:

**Visionary** – “Full of foresight: characterized by unusually acute foresight and imagination.” Encarta Dictionary

**Motivator** – “To make somebody feel enthusiastic, interested, and committed to something.” Encarta Dictionary

**Communicator** – “To transmit or reveal a feeling or thought by speech, writing, or gesture so that it is clearly understood.” Encarta Dictionary

## INTRODUCTION

**Attention:** Leaders have many roles, like teacher or coach. What are some other roles? {Write answers on the board.}

**Motivation:** A good leader knows what role to play for a specific situation. Our discussion today will enable you to put a few key roles in your leadership toolkit, ready to use as the situation warrants.

**Overview:** Today we will discuss three different roles of a leader. We will first talk about the leader as a visionary. Next we will debate how leaders can motivate others. Finally, we will touch on how leaders should develop good communication skills.

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: LEADER AS VISIONARY

Visionary leaders paint an inspiring future picture for the whole team. A visionary leader is one who looks to the end, keeping the future picture in mind. They also need to be able adapt to the situation. They should be careful not to look too far ahead as to look like a hindrance, but they always need to be looking forward.

Think about a visionary leader in history as you answer the next series of questions.

**Question:** How did your visionary leader shape history?

**Question:** What leadership traits did your visionary leader use to accomplish the mission? {Write answers on the board.}

**Question:** Looking at these peoples' lives and their leadership traits, how do we measure their success?

Think about a specific task in the future that you want to accomplish as we discuss the next few questions.

**Question:** Starting with the end in mind (meaning your future accomplishment just happened), work backwards from there and describe the steps that you took, and the situations that you foresaw, how did you make your accomplishment happen?

**Question:** How does a leader's role in being visionary apply to cadets?

**Question:** Can this idea of being a visionary leader go too far?

Now that we have a vision for the end result, we need to spend some time motivating ourselves and others to reach the end successfully.

## MAIN POINT 2: LEADER AS MOTIVATOR

A skillful leader understands how to issue a challenge. What seems impossible becomes possible when a leader knows how to motivate. Once the leader truly believes in the end goal, they can generate enthusiasm in others.

But motivation is more than just generating enthusiasm, it comes in many forms: money, praise, a prestigious position, awards, special privileges, and more. Good leaders understand this and have a knack for knowing how to motivate each individual on their team. Because people can sometimes be blind to what is in their best interests, a motivational leader helps others to focus on the right things. Motivational leaders inspire people to achieve.

**Question:** How does a leader's role in being a motivator apply to cadets?

**Question:** Can a leader's motivational qualities ever be too much of a good thing?

**Question:** Suppose that your motivational leader leaves CAP. If the team cannot keep going on their own, were they ever truly motivated?

We now know that there is a connection between vision and motivation, but if we don't communicate our vision or voice our motivation we probably won't succeed.

### MAIN POINT 3: LEADER AS COMMUNICATOR

Communication is the key to everything. Without communication any operation will fail. A leader who can communicate with their followers well can accomplish any task. Having the ability to communicate well pays off in other ways, too. Good communicators are perceived to have orderly minds, which inspires confidence. People who speak well seem to know what they are talking about. Leaders who write convincingly show that they have a plan.

Remember when you were first learning drill, how you would stumble through an "About, FACE" or "To-the-rear, MARCH?" Now try to explain those tricky movements to a brand new cadet who seems to also stumble. Making complex ideas easy to understand is the work of a great communicator.

**Question:** Have you encountered people who were curious about CAP, only to find yourself tongue-tied in trying to explain the whole of cadet life in 25 words or less? How do you resolve to better communicate?

**Question:** Why must a leader be an effective communicator?

**Question:** How can this idea of the leader being a communicator go too far?

## CLOSING

**Summary:** Every leader has different roles and responsibilities. Knowing what role to play for a given situation is how leaders led well. We have covered a few roles in our discussion today. A leader can learn to be a better visionary, motivator and communicator.

**Remotivation:** Trying to juggle all the leadership roles at one time is difficult. You should focus on the situation at hand and ask yourself, “What leadership role would be the best for this situation?”

**Closure:** Take what you have learned here today and apply it to the leadership roles you hold.

## 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: **Vision, Motivation; Communications.**