CAP Culture and Its Unique Challenges

Instructor Guide

The E&T program uses the **flipped classroom format** where students read the material before class and come prepared to discuss the topics. The PowerPoint slides are used during onsite, person-to-person, and virtual classes to summarize the material and to facilitate discussions and scenarios. Instructors can modify the slides based on the audience if they support the core material. All students are required to come prepared to participate, which includes completing the reading and all assignments. While assignments may be modified, they should not be waived. For example, an item might be done in groups in class versus as homework

Lesson Objective: This lesson helps Level V students understand the challenges facing Civil Air Patrol (CAP), aspects of CAP culture, and the leader's role in organizational change.

Scheduled Lesson Time for Synchronous Onsite/ViR Classes: 60 minutes

Teaching Method: Facilitated discussion and activity

Reading Materials: Student Guide, CAP Mission Briefing, Membership Charts

Teaching Aids/Handouts: Slides

Desired Learning Objectives (DLO):

1. Analyze culture(s) in Civil Air Patrol for positive and negative aspects and determine how these aspects impact the organization.
2. Discuss the challenge of retention and explain the risk this presents to CAP.
3. Discuss the importance of our mission continuing to evolve and the impact if we don't evolve.
4. Understand how leaders set the example and influence organizational change that can impact culture and morale.
5. Understand the challenge of cadet protection, its importance, and how you can help CAP in this vital area.

6. Respond to a current organizational challenge identified by the instructor, such as airworthiness safety, aging membership, cadet protection, stakeholder experience, etc., with potential solutions for discussion and consideration.

Lesson Strategy: This lesson is designed to help leaders understand the unique challenges CAP faces and the role of the leader in facing these challenges.

Instructor Note: This lesson focuses on challenges and leadership. Students should complete the assigned exercise in the Student Guide 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 or points that most resonated with them. Encourage students to share stories from their own units. If necessary, develop cases to enhance discussion.

Bridge: We have all seen CAP's challenges related to culture, retention, mission, safety, airworthiness, cadet protection, and stakeholder experience. Let's discuss those challenges and some possible solutions.

Suggested Discussion Questions: Feel free to add or adjust questions as necessary to meet the students' needs and the unique conditions for your squadron.

[Instructor note: possible answers provided below are from the student guide, but are not exhaustive. Students may add other answers that address the question.]

Lead-off question: What challenges does Civil Air Patrol face today?

***[Possible answers:** cadet protection, airworthiness, stakeholder experience, safety, culture, retention, changing mission]*

Supporting Question: What are some of the positive and negative aspects of CAP's culture, and how do these aspects impact the organization?

***[Possible answers:** clear priorities and goals/objectives, risk tolerance, mission orientation, developing Airmen]*

Supporting Question: Why is retention a challenge?

***[Possible answers:** poor leadership, mismatched expectations, cadets "age out", personality conflicts, we don't ask (no exit surveys), competing demands for time]*

Supporting Question: Why is mission evolution a challenge?

[Possible answers: *constant change, predicting future needs, rapid technology advancements, cost of technology and training, "we've always done it that way" attitude]*

Supporting Question: What are some innovative ways that leaders can help CAP face challenges related to cadet protection?

[Encourage students to provide innovative ideas, not just the stock answers. Be prepared with a few ideas yourself in case the students need some examples.]

Supporting Question: What are some innovative ways that leaders can help CAP face challenges related to airworthiness?

[Encourage students to provide innovative ideas, not just the stock answers. Be prepared with a few ideas yourself in case the students need some examples.]

Supporting Question: What are some innovative ways leaders can help CAP address safety-related challenges?

[Encourage students to provide innovative ideas, not just the stock answers. Be prepared with a few ideas yourself in case the students need some examples.]

Supporting Question: What are some innovative ways leaders can help CAP face challenges related to stakeholder experience?

[Encourage students to provide innovative ideas, not just the stock answers. Be prepared with a few ideas yourself in case the students need some examples.]

Supporting Question: How do these challenges relate to each other?

[Possible answers: *a negative stakeholder experience can cause members to leave, emergent missions create excitement/interest, cadet protection failures violate trust, airworthiness is often related to safety incidents, and aircraft downtime for repairs reduces flying hours/impacts mission readiness/causes frustration, safety incidents have a negative impact on airworthiness/experiences/cadet protection]*

Supporting Question: What is the role of you as a leader in helping CAP overcome these challenges?

[Possible answers: *set a positive tone, encourage positive culture, define vision and goals, build a team, empower members to embrace change]*

Exercise

Make a list of challenges CAP faces as an organization. Rank the challenges in the order you would like to address them.

Instructions for Synchronous Onsite/ViR Classes

Bring your list to class to discuss with your classmates the challenges and possible solutions you can help implement. Consider the qualities of a positive culture discussed in this lesson and how these can be incorporated into the solutions. There is no written assignment to turn in.

Instructor Note: Use the lists students bring to class to make a master list of challenges facing CAP. Have students vote to identify the top three.

- *Work as a group to respond to a current organizational challenge identified by the instructor, such as airworthiness, safety, cadet protection, stakeholder experience, aging membership, etc., with potential solutions for discussion and consideration.*
- *If you have seminar groups, assign one of the top 3 challenges to each group to respond to (increasing the list, if needed, to have a different challenge for each group). Groups should evaluate the pros and cons of possible solutions and the resources needed to implement them. Each group will brief the class on their results for discussion.*
- *Alternatively, you can assign the same challenge to each group and compare/compile the different groups' responses for a master class response.*
- *For virtual classes, you can streamline voting by having students submit their lists before class. Use these lists to create a poll students can complete before or during class, then use the results to identify the top three. Different platforms offer various poll formats, and you can also use independent apps.*

Lesson Summary and Closure

We have discussed the positive and negative aspects of CAP culture and some of the organization's challenges. As leaders, each of us owns the challenges we see and helps solve them. Civil Air Patrol is a unique organization with three evolving missions. Evolving our missions is key to our success today and in the future. CAP faces several challenges: culture, retention, evolving missions, airworthiness, safety, cadet protection, and stakeholder experience. These topics relate to one another and help CAP keep its members. Leaders play a key role in ensuring followers' health and safety. The culture leaders allow to develop will impact the other challenges.

Closely Related Lessons: Level V - Strategic Leadership, Ethical Leadership

Acronyms and Abbreviations Used in this Module (including Student Guide)

- CAP: Civil Air Patrol
- CAPSIS: CAP Safety Information System
- DLO: Desired Learning Objective
- FLIR: Forward-Looking Infrared
- POD: Points of Distribution
- PPE: Personal Protective Equipment
- SG: Student Guide
- STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
- ViR: Virtual In-Residence
- VOLU: Volunteer University