



PROPRIETY

Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum

INTRODUCTION

Each Values for Living helps Civil Air Patrol members explore a virtue from multiple angles and practice that virtue through a hands-on activity. The combination of analysis and practice helps members internalize the virtue so it stays with them beyond the end of the squadron meeting. By cultivating these virtues, we align our thoughts and behaviors with the Core Values.

Propriety is habit of following standards of behavior, what we commonly call “good manners.” True, these standards can differ between cultures and settings. Nevertheless, in every case, good manners demonstrate our respect for people, places, occasions, and institutions. By becoming familiar with behavioral standards and following them faithfully, we honor the people around us, facilitate social interactions, and bring credit to ourselves and our communities.

PRECLASS CHECKLIST

Prior preparation is essential to success. Please prepare the following well ahead of time:

- All media installed and checked out
- Phase Three cadet orientation/training completed
- Participation awards such as candy or granola bar treats available
- Room arrangements complete

ATTENTION GETTER

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (5-10 MINUTES.)

Option 1: Video

The video file included with this lesson asks why we should care about the rules of courtesy and good manners. By reasoning from Civil Air Patrol's practice of customs and courtesies, we see that attending to social norms demonstrates our commitment to the Core Value of respect.

Option 2: Video Text

If your unit lacks multimedia resources, you may choose to read the video script:

If you've ever been to a banquet and wondered which one is the salad fork, you've probably also wondered why people make such a fuss about good manners.

It's easy to dismiss "good manners" as relative and therefore unimportant. You've probably heard that slurping your soup is considered polite in Japan. In China, belching shows the cook that you've enjoyed the meal. Even within our own culture, social customs vary dramatically. I can put my feet on my desk at home; why can't I do the same at school or work?

All of this begs the question: if good manners are so relative, why even bother with all the rules? Does anyone really care about the salad fork? Why can't I just do what's comfortable for me?

As a member of Civil Air Patrol, you receive regular instruction in military customs and courtesies. Yes, there are a lot of rules and you may think some of them are fussy or unnecessary. Nevertheless, these small expressions of politeness and mutual respect reinforce our Core Values and connect us to the United States Air Force.

Does anyone really care about the finer points of customs and courtesies?—ABSOLUTELY! Why can't I just do what's comfortable for me?—Because I want to be part of something bigger than myself.

Customs and courtesies are just one way CAP members cultivate the virtue of propriety. Propriety is the habit of learning and following appropriate standards of behavior—in other words, "good manners."

Like our customs and courtesies, good manners acknowledge the dignity of the people and things around us. Our good manners render to every person, place, occasion, and institution the honor they deserve. In that sense, propriety is an expression of respect, and – as you know – respect is one of our Core Values. "Good manners" may be relative to a degree, but respect is universal.

By learning and observing appropriate standards of behavior, you demonstrate your commitment to our Core Value of respect. This honor you pay to others will give you a tremendous advantage in life. It promotes goodwill and it opens doors to future cooperation everywhere you go. Your attention to propriety projects a favorable image, not only of yourself, but of everyone and everything you represent.

So maybe, just maybe, you might want to learn which one is the salad fork.

(Hint: it's on the far left).

Option 3: Personal story

The facilitator may share personal story illustrating that attention to etiquette or good manners demonstrates respect and facilitates positive social interactions. Ideally, these personal stories will also illustrate that standards of behavior differ across cultures and circumstances.

UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

ONLINE GROUP OR SMALL GROUP FACILITATED BY CADET FACILITATORS (10 MINUTES.)

Propriety is habit of following standards of behavior, what we commonly call “good manners.” Different settings call for different behavior. In your small groups, choose three or four different settings and, as a group, write a list of some of the rules governing behavior in each setting. Which behaviors are appropriate in one setting but not in another? Here are some sample settings, though you may choose your own according to the needs of your unit:

Classroom	Courtroom	Locker Room	Family Dinner
High School Prom	Museum	Wedding	Political Rally
Religious Service	Business Meeting	CAP Meeting	Funeral
First Date	Formal Debate	Football Game	Library

Having trouble thinking of behavioral rules? Here are some questions to help you get started:

- How should you dress for this situation?
- What sorts of things should you say (or not say)? Are certain topics off limits?
- What must you bring (or not bring) to this place or occasion?
- What kinds of emotional expression are appropriate here?
- Are there rules about where to sit or stand?
- How do you decide when to end and begin? How do you monitor the time?
- Does anyone have special authority here? How should you speak to that person?
- Can you use a phone in this situation? If so, how do you use it politely?
- What kind of humor, jokes, or playful teasing are appropriate, or inappropriate here?

APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (15 MINUTES)

- We have seen that propriety demonstrates respect. How can propriety help you live out the other Core Values?
- What are some of the consequences of impropriety? What happens to people who behave inappropriately?
- CAP publishes a pamphlet, *CAPP 151 Respect on Display*, to assist members in learning customs and courtesies. When you don't have the benefit of a pamphlet, how do you learn the rules of propriety for a particular setting or group? For example, if you visited a foreign country, how would you learn its standards of behavior?

- If you see something that does not look safe and think someone might get hurt, you may sound the Air Force command, “KNOCK IT OFF!” What might you say when you see inappropriate or disrespectful behavior?
- Sometimes, inappropriate behavior becomes normalized, most often in unflattering nicknames, suggestive jokes, or unwelcome touch. At first, we may not realize how disrespectful, hurtful, or inappropriate these names, comments, and gestures are. When we realize that a running joke or other behavior is inappropriate, how can we influence our peers to change their conduct?
- In many cultures, good manners render special honor to women. For example, men may be expected to hold the door for women or assist them with chairs at formal dinners. Why do you think these customs developed? Should we continue these practices?

ACTIVITY

LED BY SMALL GROUP FACILITATORS OR ONLINE INSTRUCTOR (10-15 MINUTES.)

You may conduct these activities in small groups or in a single large group according to the needs of your unit. For either activity, consider providing participants with a copy of the participant handout at the end of this lesson, featuring content from CAP's website related to progressive discipline.¹

Option 1: Norms for Online Behavior

Imagine that CAP NHQ has asked your group to participate in a special task force. Your assignment is to propose a list of suggestions and guidelines for CAP members to use in online activities, including social media, website comments, and message boards. What rules, suggestions, or guidelines would you propose? Put differently, what are the standards of propriety for CAP members engaged in online activities?

If your unit can support several groups, allow some time at the end of the activity for each group to share its suggestions.

Option 2: Encampment Etiquette

Encampment is one of the most exciting and rewarding activities in a CAP Cadet's career. Cadets participating in their first encampment may find themselves in several unfamiliar situations. Even those well versed in customs and courtesies may not know exactly what to do in the DFac (Dining Facility) or during evening social time, what to expect from a blister check, or what to do if you need to use the bathroom while your flight is in a classroom or on the drill pad.

If you have participated in encampment, share with your group one suggestion about appropriate behavior at encampment. If you haven't participated in an encampment before, share with the group one of your concerns and ask for suggestions about the most appropriate way to respond to those concerns.

¹ <https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/cadets/cpofficer/progressive-discipline>

LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (2 MINUTES)

We've seen that standards of propriety can vary dramatically. We do not expect you to know all the rules for every situation. We do expect you to care about good manners because—and this is the central point of this character forum—good manners demonstrate respect.

As leaders, you have additional opportunities to practice propriety. Consider the difference between a thermometer and a thermostat. A thermometer reflects the temperature in the room. When you are learning the standards of appropriate behavior, you need to be a thermometer: watching, assessing, and copying positive examples. As you mature and assume leadership responsibilities, you become a thermostat, setting and sometimes adjusting the “temperature” in the room. You may have to redirect conversations away from unsuitable topics, model appropriate courtesy, or even gently remind your peers to hold themselves to a higher standard of behavior.

Remember, appropriate behavior demonstrates your respect for yourself and others. By learning and practicing good manners, you can put others at ease and enjoy smoother social interactions. Your attention to propriety honors others and brings credit to you and to everyone you represent.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Show perfect courtesy toward all.” – Titus 3:2 (RSV)

“Propriety simply means concern for other people.” – Joshua Leland

“Everything should be treated according to its nature; wise people are those who best perceive the nature of the thing and therefore know how to treat it.” – Andrew Kern

“Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others. If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter what fork you use.” – Emily Post

“Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot.” – Clarence Thomas

“The test of good manners is to be patient with the bad ones.” – Solomon Ibn Gabirol

“Look not at what is contrary to propriety; listen not to what is contrary to propriety; speak not what is contrary to propriety; make no movement which is contrary to propriety.” – Confucius

“I feel a real need to observe a level of propriety in what I'm handing out. Instead of me just venting or spilling my guts, I've got to consider how it's going to affect people. How it's going to affect me, as well.” – Eric Clapton

“The pleasantness of an employment does not always evince its propriety.” – Jane Austen

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Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum

INTRODUCTION

Cadet life should be safe, fun, and meaningful. To help make that happen, CAP uses a system of progressive discipline that is positive, incremental, and seeks both accountability and behavioral change from cadets.

For the activity portion of this character development forum, you may want to refer to some of our basic expectations of cadets and appropriate interventions to different kinds of misconduct.

You can learn more about CAP’s behavioral standards and progressive discipline online: <https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/cadets/cpofficer/progressive-discipline>

2. BASIC EXPECTATIONS OF CADETS

Specifically, some of CAP’s main expectations for cadet behavior include: (Ref: CAPR 60-1 & 60-2)

Positive Behavior	Negative Behavior
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treat everyone with common courtesy and respect. 2. Be honest and take responsibility for your actions. 3. Wear your uniform properly. 4. Obey your officers and follow local rules at cadet events (e.g., off-limits areas, wingman rules, phone use, lights out, etc.). 5. Use the chain of command if you have questions, concerns, or ideas to share (with exceptions for #6 below). 6. Go to any adult leader (Senior) you trust, regardless of the normal chain of command if you need to report bullying, abuse, or violence, or to discuss sensitive topics. 7. Use the Air Force command, “KNOCK IT OFF” at any time to have everyone stop what they are doing if you think someone could soon get hurt. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don’t use profanity, racial slurs, or disrespectful language. 2. Don’t get into fights. Don’t bully, threaten, or haze anyone. 3. Don’t take property that is not yours. Don’t break or mishandle equipment lent to you. 4. Don’t touch someone inappropriately. Don’t kiss, hug, or hold hands at CAP activities. 5. Don’t bring tobacco, vapes, alcohol, marijuana (or derivatives) or illegal drugs to CAP activities. 6. Don’t share, request, or post sexually suggestive text messages or images. 7. Don’t bring firearms, air guns, paint guns, or any weapons to CAP (small knives may be allowed in the field).

5. SAMPLE MATCH-UPS OF MISCONDUCT & INTERVENTION

Each disciplinary situation is different because each cadet is a unique individual. Still, we hope that a cadet's misconduct in Maine receives a similar intervention as similar misconduct from a cadet in Hawaii. Shown below are sample misconduct and intervention match-ups. These pairings are not definitive. They are not intended to limit local leaders' options, but rather provide a starting point that helps ensure cadets are treated fairly and receive the help, correction, encouragement, or admonishment they need.

Low Level Misconduct Examples	Soft / Private Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrespect / mild insubordination • Late to class, meeting, or activity without valid reason • Public display of affection during CAP meeting or activity • Wearing unauthorized grade / award • Failure to follow order / CAP regulation • Disrupting class or activity • Failure to follow chain of command • Loss or neglect of CAP property • Failure to inform parents of important fact • Malingering to avoid PT / duty • Improper wearing of CAP uniform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal mentoring • Verbal reminders; "on the spot" corrections • Closer supervision • Praise for changed behavior • CAPF 60-90 Feedback Session • Retraining in the specific area of need
Mid-Level Misconduct Examples	Moderate / Semi-Public Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated low-level misconduct • Failure to perform staff duty that affects other cadets • Give or receive unauthorized assistance • False statement of important fact to superior • Bullying (as defined in CAPR 60-2, 1.5.5, 2.5) • Possess /use tobacco during CAP meeting or activity • Possess /use alcohol during CAP meeting or activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning • Sustaining in grade (CAPF 60-90 series required) • Exclusion from activities • Temporary suspension from staff position • Cadet Reset Agreement (CAPF 60-97) <p><i>* All moderate / semi-public interventions require verbal notice to parent or guardian</i></p>
Higher-Level Misconduct Examples	Heavy / Public Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated mid-level misconduct • Fighting during CAP meeting or activity • Cheating on CAP exam • Sexting (CAPR 60-2, 1.4.5.1, 1.5.13, 2.4.3) • Hazing (CAPR 60-2, 1.5.3) • Theft <p>Higher-level misconduct potentially warranting membership termination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal activity • Violent activity • Sales / furnishing alcohol or controlled substances during CAP meeting or activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal from staff position for cause • Membership suspension • Demotion <p><i>* All heavy / public interventions require written notice to parent or guardian</i></p> <p>Final Interventions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership suspension and termination (See CAPR 35-3)