

## Squadron Staff and Responsibilities

**DURATION:** 50 Minutes

**TEACHING METHOD:** Discussion (Live or Webinar)

**READING:** Student Guide

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Understand the role of the squadron staff officers, their selection, training and responsibilities.

**DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES (DLO):**

1. Describe the importance of selecting staff officers.
2. Explain the roles and responsibilities of staff officers.
3. Explain the importance of training and mentoring staff officers.

**LESSON STRATEGY:** This lesson is designed to define staff responsibilities within CAP squadrons.

Squadron staffs are critical to the success of Civil Air Patrol and to CAP squadron commanders. Successful commanders spend time determining how to staff their units, which positions are critical and matching members to positions. It is an ongoing and sometimes challenging process; but when done successfully, the squadron performs at incredible levels of efficiency, competence and teamwork.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** This lesson focuses on discussing best practices in selecting and developing unit staffs. The instructor recognizes that units usually don't staff all positions available and that it's standard practice for all staff members to hold more than one staff position (including the commander).

The instructor should also take care to discuss how to best mentor members in staff positions and how beneficial it can be to import help from squadrons with stronger staffs and from group and/or wing to "help the staff along." Mentoring in this context can be face to face (preferred), or by other means. Mentoring doesn't have to occur during unit meeting times.

**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. Ensure that students can explain why it's important to take time in selecting "as right a person for the job" as possible as well as how to approach members when asking them to fill staff positions. Ask them to discuss how they use (or should use) neighboring squadrons, the groups and the wing as well as the regulations and specialty tracks to train their staff.

**BRIDGE:** No commander can be successful without a dedicated, hardworking staff to help. Getting the right person in the right position (or positions) takes some expertise and knowledge. This is also a challenge for the members, both veteran and new; as they often struggle to find a position that they want to hold.

**SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Feel free to add or adjust questions as necessary to meet students' needs as well as the unique conditions of your wing.

CAP Unit Commanders Course Instructor Guide  
Squadron Staff and Responsibilities Teaching Plan

**Lead off question:** How do we pair members with appropriate positions that engage them while also supporting the unit?

**Supporting Question:** How do we get to know our members, their knowledge, skills and abilities? (Hint, ask about the Level I Plan of Action, new member interviews and other tools).

**Supporting Question:** Ask the students to consider duty positions they have held in the past; and ask them to discuss:

- What does this position do in a unit on a weekly basis? What kinds of activities does the person complete or facilitate?
- What skills does this person need to be successful in this position?
- Why would someone want to serve in this position? How does it fulfill one's need to serve?

**Supporting Question:** What resources do you use to help members to learn their staff jobs?

**Supporting Question:** What is the commander's responsibility for mentoring in the unit? How does a good mentoring program impact unit and member success? Does your unit have a strong mentoring program? Is it formal or informal? Why or why not?

**CLOSURE:** Squadrons are teams and it's important to field a good one. Commanders go a long way towards this by seriously and thoughtfully developing their staffs. It's more than happenstance.

**CLOSELY RELATED LESSONS:** Leadership Fundamentals, Developing our Members, Care and Feeding of a CAP Member