



CIVIL AIR PATROL United States Air Force Auxiliary

CADET ENCAMPMENT PROGRAM

L13 Teamwork for Performance

Lesson Plan for Cadet Instructor

Overall Goal: The goal of this session is to prepare cadets to transform their flights from mere groups into cohesive, highly-performing teams. This session accomplishes that goal by providing an academic foundation for the oft-discussed and seldom understood concept of teamwork. We want cadets to act like teams and to improve performance by encampment's end. To do that, they require thought-provoking instruction on characteristics of teamwork. Building on that foundation, this lesson makes principles of teamwork understandably by relating them to the encampment flight environment. It is hoped that cadets will then reflect upon the behaviors they see in their flights, and through constructive criticism, identify some practical ways their flight can become more cohesive. Finally, presuming that teamwork is not something easily developed, cadets will consider some of the challenges that make it difficult for groups to become cohesive, high-performing teams.

Objectives. To achieve the overall goals, this suggested lesson plan pursues nine objectives. Cadets will:

- 1.) Explain how mere groups differ from cohesive teams.
- 2.) Defend the view that team members need to change their attitude and behavior to meet the team's needs.
- 3.) Explain how discipline builds a foundation for teamwork. (Following rules and procedures; following a common leader; resisting urge to place self over team)
- 4.) Give examples for ways that teams show active cooperation. (Specializing and dividing the labor; enthusiasm to go the extra mile; fighting for ongoing feedback.)
- 5.) Describe why effective teams make communication an ongoing process. (Great listening skills; ongoing, on-the-spot communication to solve problems early; keeping everyone in the loop because you don't know what you don't know.)
- 6.) Explain why having shared values is a pre-requisite for effective teamwork. (Good leadership works by appealing to values, not merely tit-for-tat transactions; certain morals are accepted as "facts" that are enforceable, not mere beliefs.)
- 7.) Discuss what loyalty (in its best sense) means in the context of an individual's relationship with the team and with fellow teammates. (Stick-to-it attitude; loyalty as a long-range faithfulness; team values promote care for the team's mission and one another's well-being.)
- 8.) Identify in practical terms hallmarks of a successful flight-team and explain how the proposed quality relates back to one of the lesson's six characteristics of teams.
- 9.) Describe some of the challenges that often impede a group's transition to teamwork (free riders, herd mentality, introverts, and obtaining credit), along with describing some practical methods for overcoming those challenges.

Suggested Duration: 60 min

Background. This lesson is one of four standardized classroom sessions in the leadership block. L10 Wingmen, L11 Discipline, and L12 Leadership Concept should precede this lesson on teamwork. Those three lessons focus on the role of the individual, while this lesson obviously centers on an understanding of multiple individuals creating teams.

Suggested Instructor. The encampment cadet commander or perhaps a few squadron commanders team-teaching the lesson would be ideal instructors. It is important for the lesson to take place in a squadron or group environment to prompt the students to think about teamwork a bit more abstractly than they might in the workaday challenges of the flight environment. A team-teaching approach is suggested because item #8 in the content outline is a good place to insert constructive feedback and practical tips on how to make flights more effective. Presumably a couple squadron commanders or executive cadre working together will have observed flights closely enough to identify best practices and common struggles.

Suggested Format. This lesson draws from pop culture and Air Force themes to illustrate concepts about teamwork. Students will understand an academic leadership topic like this one best if a “big” topic like teamwork is broken down into smaller concepts that are illustrated by stories and examples with which they are already familiar.

Visual Aids & Script-Like Notes. A set of slides is available simply as visual aids, not lecture notes where the speaker “talks to the slides.” Instructors are welcome to use their own visuals in lieu of those provided. In the slides’ notes view, a script-like series of questions and answers are offered. The purpose of those is merely to point the speaker in the right direction. You, the experienced airman, are the “star of the show,” not the slides and not the script-like notes.

Content Outline

1. Opener
“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” (Helen Keller)
2. Characteristics of Teams
Icebreaker question: What are some ingredients that transform a mere group into a team?
 - a. Common Goal (insufficient)
 - b. Team members must adapt to the team
 - c. Discipline (Top Gun)
 - d. Active Cooperation (USAF Honor Guard)
 - e. Communication (E-3 Sentry / AWACS)
 - f. Shared Values (Hunger Games)
 - g. Loyalty (Forrest Gump)
3. What do great flight-teams look like?
 - a. Sample behaviors
 - b. Direct observations & feedback regarding flights’ performances
4. Challenges
What are some challenges that make it difficult for groups to transform into teams? And, how do you succeed despite those challenges?
 - a. Free Riders
 - b. Asch Diagram / Herd Mentality
 - c. Introverts (Sherlock Holmes)
 - d. Getting Credit (Derek Jeter)
5. Final Thought: The supreme example of a team-centered ethic
Lieut. Mike Murphy, Navy Seal / Medal of Honor recipient