

THE CADET / SENIOR TEAM

Seminar L5 Lesson Plan

Scope: Cadets learn to lead by actually leading. Having opportunities to serve on a squadron staff and share in the leadership of the squadron is an important aspect of their development. During this seminar, students consider who comprises a staff, how the staff works together, and how Cadet Programs Officers should design a cadet staff and mentor the cadets.

Format: Guided Discussion

Duration: 50 minutes

Objectives:

1. Identify the positions comprising a squadron staff; summarize the duties of each
2. Defend the idea that in designing a staff, each cadet needs a tailor-made challenge
3. Describe how cadet position descriptions define how cadets and senior members divide the labor of leading the squadron
4. Explain why there is no standard organizational structure for a cadet unit
5. Discuss the importance of mentoring cadets as they begin and end their term of staff service

Resources: CAPP 52-15, *Cadet Staff Handbook*, Part 1 and Appendix 1 & 2;
CAPP 216, *Cadet Programs Officer's Handbook & Specialty Track Study Guide*, Part 8

STARTING POINT

Introduce yourself and state the seminar's topic.



ATTENTION

Listen to these two perspectives:

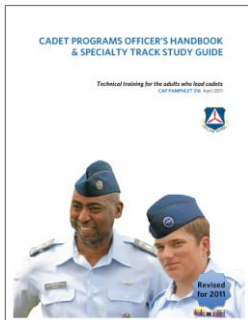
1. "I'm a C/SSgt and the highest ranking cadet in the squadron. I should be cadet commander. The senior staff needs to back off and realize that the cadet program is cadet run. The seniors' job is to sign paperwork and drive us where we want to go."
2. "I'm the adult here, so as a Cadet Programs Officer I'm the one who needs to make the decisions, teach classes, and set goals. Just like in school, cadets are the students, and I'm the "teacher" so I'm in control."

Whose perspective is right? In CAP, is the program "cadet run," or "senior run"? In this seminar we'll see that that question itself is bogus. It's a false dilemma. In the Cadet Program, cadets and seniors work together and share in the leading of the squadron.

MOTIVATION

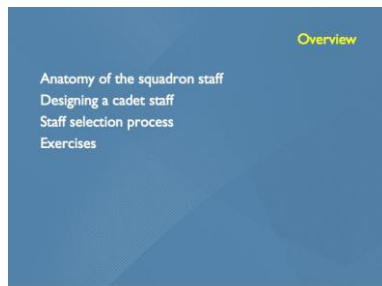
Cadets learn to lead by leading. By having a stake in the success of the squadron and their experience as cadets, their leadership education is much more effective than if they only studied leadership in books or listened to boring lectures.

This seminar is an opportunity to discuss how Cadet Programs Officers mentor cadets, oversee the cadet staff, and make staff service a learning experience for the cadets.



WARM UP

Have the students open CAPP 216 and read the position description for their "primary" job at the squadron, and one other position that interests them. Allow 3-5 minutes for this task.

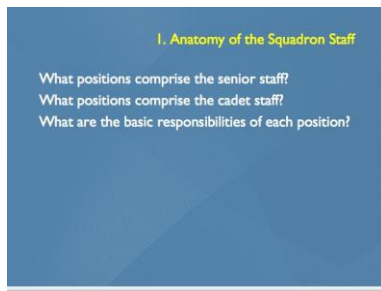


OVERVIEW

See slide.

MAIN POINT #1

A SQUADRON STAFF IS A TEAM OF PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER



What positions comprise the senior staff? What are the basic roles and responsibilities of each of those positions?

Anticipated Responses:

Answers can vary. The list below does not attempt to list every conceivable responsibility. There can be a great deal of flexibility in staff duties. Don't get bogged down in hair-splitting. For a description of each job position, refer students to Part 8 of CAPP 216, *Cadet Programs Officer's Handbook & Specialty Track Study Guide*.

Refer students to the "Who Comprises a Cadet Program Staff?" handout. Lead them in a group discussion of each position, and encourage them to list the responsibilities of each position in the corresponding box on the handout.

Squadron Commander

- Select or approve the staff
- Set or approve goals, projects, and schedules
- Promote cadets
- Resolve disputes
- Lead the squadron as a whole

Deputy Commander for Cadets / Deputy Commander

- Supervise the implementation of the overall Cadet Program
- Supervise and mentor the senior member Cadet Programs staff
- Guide and mentor cadets, especially the top staff
- Assist the commander

Other Support Functions: DDR Officer

- Mentor DDRx activities
- Prepare and present drug-free lessons and activities

Leadership Officer

- Plan and conduct leadership classes
- Conduct or supervise drill and ceremony training
- Supervise the unit's physical fitness program
- Guide cadet staff in their role as trainers / instructors

Aerospace Education Officer

- Plan and conduct aerospace education classes
- Coordinate special aerospace activities (e.g.: rocketry, STK, AEX, etc.)
- Supervise cadet AE mentors
- Guide cadet AE instructors

Chaplain / Character Development Instructor

- Conduct monthly character forums
- Ministry of presence
- Mentoring and counseling

MINI-TRANSITION

Please turn your handout over and we will consider the cadet structure in detail.

What positions comprise the cadet staff? What are the basic roles and responsibilities of each of those positions?

Anticipated Responses:

Again, refer to the "Who comprises a Cadet Program staff?" handout. The list below does not attempt to list every conceivable responsibility. There can be a great deal of flexibility in staff duties, and the range of cadet grades.

After the students have a chance to respond, "show and tell" with the position descriptions found in Appendix 1 of the Cadet Staff Handbook.

Cadet Commander C/Capt – C/Lt Col
Supervise, mentor, and lead the cadet staff and corps
Make personnel assignment recommendations
Develop or recommend plans, policies and procedures

Cadet Deputy Commander C/Capt – C/Lt Col
Assist the cadet commander
Supervise and guide the flight commanders

Cadet Executive Officer C/Capt – C/Lt Col
Assist the cadet commander
Manage the cadet staff's administrative affairs

Cadet First Sergeant C/MSgt – C/CMSgt
Assist in inspections
Supervise and guide the flight sergeants
Model military bearing, attitude, discipline, etc.

Cadet Flight Commanders C/2d Lt – C/Capt
Supervise, mentor, and lead the cadets in their flight
Train cadets in basic leadership topics
Develop leadership skills in the flight sergeants and element leaders

Cadet Flight Sergeants C/SSgt – C/CMSgt
Assist the flight commander
Prepare cadets for inspections and follow-up
Lead the flight in drill
Model military bearing, attitude, discipline, etc.

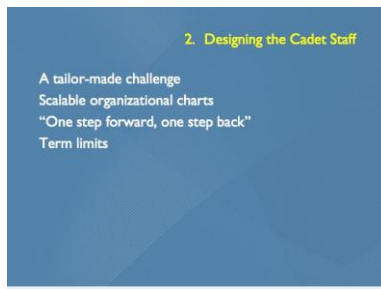
Cadet Element Leaders C/A1C – C/TSgt
Provide basic guidance to the cadets in their element
Tutor cadets and provide individualized training
Model military bearing, attitude, discipline, etc.

INTERIM SUMMARY

A squadron is not an adversarial system. The cadet staff and senior staff share in the work of leading the squadron. Each has their own domain.

MAIN POINT #2

THE COMMANDER SHOULD CAREFULLY DESIGN THE CADET STAFF



We know what jobs comprise a squadron staff, but how does a squadron go about assigning cadets to staff positions? How do you know which job is right for which cadet? Next, we'll consider the task of designing a cadet staff.

But first, please read sections 1.1 through 1.5 in the *Cadet Staff Handbook*.

[Allow 4-5 minutes for independent reading]

In designing a cadet staff, the handbook advises you to tie together what three things?

Anticipated Response:

The cadet's leadership skill, their rank, and their job.

What does the handbook mean by that? Does it make sense to you to tie together skill, rank, and job when designing a cadet staff?

Anticipated Response:

Answers can vary. It's all about tailoring the challenge, finding a leadership assignment that is not too advanced for the cadet, nor too diminutive.

The handbook talks about scalable organizational charts, making the claim that there is no "one size fits all" organizational chart for cadet units. What does this mean? Do you agree with that perspective?

Anticipated Response:

Answers can vary. The basic idea is that some units are top-heavy, others bottom-heavy, and so on. Because every unit is apt to have its own mix of cadets, commanders need several organizational structures to choose from, otherwise cadets will be assigned to jobs that are too challenging or not challenging enough.

After the students discuss this question, show and tell using Appendix 2 of the Cadet Staff Handbook.

The reading including this statement (page 3): “Every time the cadet staff takes one step forward in the Cadet Program, the senior staff should take one step back.” What does that mean? And what can seniors use to guide how “hands-on” or “hands-off” they are with the cadet staff?

Anticipated Response:

Answers can vary. As cadets mature, the senior staff needs to give the cadet staff more autonomy and responsibility. The cadet position descriptions guide seniors on how they divide the labor with cadets. Flight sergeants should be given full authority to do flight sergeant duties, but only flight sergeant duties, for example.

What are some considerations about term limits? Do you see them helping you manage the cadet staff?

Anticipated Response:

Answers can vary. See the points raised on page 4 of the *Cadet Staff Handbook*.

EMPHASIS ITEM

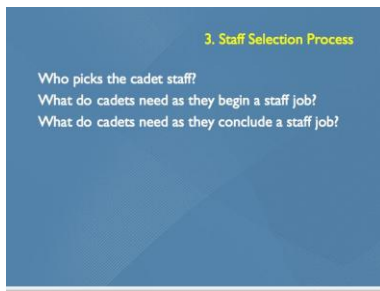
A couple times each year, ask yourself what the cadets’ mix of ranks will look like in 6 months. Who is about to graduate high school and will be leaving the squadron? Who will have their Mitchell and be deserving of a prestigious job? By making an educated guess about what the squadron will look like 6 months from now, you can better manage the design of your staff and plan ahead for change.

TRANSITION

We know what jobs are found on a squadron staff, we know what those jobs entail, and we understand some of the factors leaders need to consider when designing a cadet staff. Next, let’s get even more practical by talking about the staff selection process.

MAIN POINT #3

USE AN OPEN & HONEST STAFF SELECTION PROCESS



How do you pick who will serve in the various positions on the cadet staff? Who makes these decisions?

Anticipated Responses:

Ranking cadets and senior members should have a say in how staff assignments are defined. Ultimately, the squadron commander has the final decision. Whatever process is used, make it an open and honest one.

EMPHASIS ITEM

Interviews might seem unnecessary, but they are good experiences for the cadets. *Briefly review the sample questions shown on page 5 of the Cadet Staff Handbook.*

A 14-year-old C/SSgt has been selected to serve as flight sergeant. It's the first major assignment for this cadet. What needs to happen for that cadet to get off to a good start in their new job?

Anticipated Responses:

Answers can vary. See the checklist on page 6 of the *Cadet Staff Handbook*.

It's the end of a cadet's term as flight commander. What can you (or a cadet officer) do to help the cadet finish the job in a way that's both positive and educational?

Anticipated Responses:

Answers can vary. See the checklist on page 6 of the *Cadet Staff Handbook*.

INTERIM SUMMARY

If we're going to give cadets some autonomy and a sense of ownership over their program, then it's important for us as Cadet Programs Officers to run an open and honest selection process, to ensure they understand their responsibilities, and to help them learn from the experience.

EXERCISE #1

APPOINTING A CADET TO A NEW STAFF POSITION



Preparation: Have the students work in pairs to complete the exercise below. Designate one student as Student #1, the other as Student #2.

Instructions for Students

This is a role-playing exercise. You'll take turns playing the roles described below:

	<u>Student #1</u>	<u>Student #2</u>
<u>Scenario #1</u>	Cadet Programs Officer	C/SSgt and evaluator for Student #1
<u>Scenario #2</u>	C/Capt and evaluator for Student #2	Cadet Programs Officer

If you're the student playing the role of the Cadet Programs Officer, your task is to help the cadet described in the scenario get off to a good start in their new job.

If you're the student playing the role of the cadet, your job is to react to your "superior's" guidance. Further, you'll give your fellow student feedback about how well they fulfilled the guidelines for appointing a cadet to a new position, as described in the *Cadet Staff Handbook* (page 6).

Scenario 1

You're appointing a bright, hard-charging 14-year-old C/SSgt as flight sergeant. He's served as element leader before, but this is his first real challenge as a cadet NCO. The cadet is very sharp in terms of appearance, customs and courtesies, drill, and the like.

Scenario 2

You're appointing a 16-year-old C/Capt as cadet commander. The cadet is bright and promising but is beginning to become more rebellious and independent (like most 16-year-olds). She's the only cadet officer in the squadron, but has led the unit's 18 active cadets while serving as flight commander for the past 9 months. Before that she was first sergeant, and has been the squadron's shining star for the past 2 years. During her membership, she's had some good NCOs to serve as her role models, but not very many cadet officers.

Anticipated Response:

There is no “right” or “wrong” answer. What’s important is that the students show an understanding of the guidelines in the handbook, and do their best to help the cadet get started in a new job.

CLOSING THOUGHT FOR THIS EXERCISE

When a cadet takes on a new job, make sure someone gives them some guidance about the job’s responsibilities and your expectations. Also give the cadet a chance to ask question. Help them get started right so they can succeed.

EXERCISE #2

DESIGNING A CADET STAFF

Exercise #2			
RED SQUADRON	BLUE SQUADRON	YELLOW SQUADRON	ORANGE SQUADRON
Abby C/Amn	Gus C/TSgt	Montel C/1st Lt	Tanjela C/2d Lt
Blake C/A1C	Hilda C/A1C	Nancy C/SSgt	Upton C/2d Lt
Carlos C/A1C	Isabelle C/MSgt	Olivia C/MSgt	Vicky C/Lt Col
Dorothy C/A1C	Jerome C/SrA	Pedro C/Capt	Walt C/Lt Col
Everett C/SrA	Kari C/A1C	Quentin C/SMSgt	Xavier C/Maj
Frank C/Amn	Lamar C/A1C	Russ C/1st Lt	Yvonne C/TSgt
		Sun C/MSgt	Zach C/SSgt
Total Strength: 12 cadets	Total Strength: 18 cadets	Total Strength: 24 cadets	Total Strength: 30 cadets

Divide the class into four teams, or into teams with 3-5 students each. Assign each team one of the squadrons below. Or if you like, give each team two squadrons for sake of variety.

Instructions for Students

Your task is to design a staff structure for your squadron. How many flights and elements will you have? Will you fill every position? Which positions will you assign to which cadet?

Keep in mind that there is no one-size-fits-all structure for a cadet unit, and the goal is to give each cadet an assignment that is tailor-made to their rank and leadership skill.

Only the highest ranking cadets are listed here. Red Squadron, for example, lists 6 staff candidates, and a total strength of 12, so we know there are 6 more "ghost" cadets that are lower-ranking than the six shown below.

You are free to consult the charts in Appendix 2 of the *Cadet Staff Handbook*.

Format of Your Answer: Give your answer in the format of an organizational chart. In each "box" on your chart, give the cadet's name and their position.

RED SQUADRON

Abby C/Amn
Blake C/A1C
Carlos C/A1C
Dorothy C/Amn
Everett C/SrA
Frank C/Amn

Total Strength:
12 cadets

BLUE SQUADRON

Gus C/TSgt
Hilda C/A1C
Isabelle C/MSgt
Jerome C/SrA
Kari C/A1C
Lamar C/A1C

Total Strength:
18 cadets

YELLOW SQUADRON

Montel C/1st Lt
Nancy C/SSgt
Olivia C/MSgt
Pedro C/Capt
Quentin C/SMSgt
Russ C/1st Lt
Sun C/MSgt

Total Strength:
24 cadets

ORANGE SQUADRON

Tanjela C/2d Lt
Upton C/2d Lt
Vicky C/Lt Col
Walt C/Lt Col
Xavier C/Maj
Yvonne C/TSgt
Zach C/SSgt

Total Strength:
30 cadets

Instructor Note: Give the students 5-10 minutes to prepare their solutions. Then regroup as a class, have each team identify its problem and diagram its solution on the whiteboard.

Anticipated Response: Answers can vary. What's important is that the students choose jobs appropriate for each cadet's grade (e.g., no NCO or officer roles for the airmen of Red Squadron), and a structure appropriate for the unit's overall size (e.g., tiny Red Squadron can suffice with just one flight).

CLOSING THOUGHT FOR THIS EXERCISE

Remember that there's no "standard" design for a cadet staff. Every squadron is different. The challenge is to find a structure that works for your unit, given its size and the cadets' experience level.

SUMMARY



A staff is a team. It's senior members and cadets working together and sharing in the leadership of the squadron.

Cadet position descriptions help define how seniors and cadets divide their labor. Grant cadets the authority to perform the tasks listed in the PD, but *only* those tasks.

Tailor the challenge. Find a position for each cadet that matches their leadership skills and grade.

Design a staff structure that works for your situation. There's no "standard" structure because every unit is different.

When appointing a cadet to a new position, or when their term ends, make that time a teachable moment.

REMOTIVATION

Cadets learn to lead by leading. If you design and manage a good cadet staff program consistent with the principles we discussed today, your cadets will become the leaders we want them to be.

FINAL THOUGHT

A squadron is like a one-room schoolhouse. You have older teens and twelve year olds, airmen and officers. Each cadet is at a different point in their development as a leader. The situation presents a huge challenge for you as you try to match cadets with tailor-made challenges. Consider the advice St. Benedict gave to the abbots who were starting monasteries during the middle ages:

"Arrange everything so that the strong have something to yearn for, and the weak nothing to run from."