

# CORE VALUES IN ACTION AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

SQUADRON LEADERSHIP SCHOOL  
"CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP" BLOCK  
SEMINAR 2.2

## SEMINAR OVERVIEW

### SCOPE

The students involved in this course are at the beginning of their exploration Civil Air Patrol core values. But the concepts explored in this lesson are not new to any citizen of this country. Core democratic values are the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles of American society, and unite all Americans. These values are expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and other national documents, speeches and writings.

As future members and leaders of this organization, not only do members need to have a grasp of the concepts which make core values viable, but they need to see how the application of core values pay great dividends for both the individual and ultimately the short, and long term goals of this Air Force Auxiliary. It must be assumed that our adult members have some grasp of the basic idea of core values. But to understand the need for a personal and organizational commitment to these values, they need to zero-in on an acceptable understanding of each aspect of the concept. To understand that this is not just mouthing a batch of words, students will go through the process of matching the Core Values with their individual behavior attitudes and ways of doing business. A guided discussion is viewed as the best approach for exploring the ideas which lead to an understanding of the lesson objectives.

### OBJECTIVES

**COGNITIVE OBJECTIVE:** The objective of this lesson is for each student to foster a corporate environment that reflects our Core Values, both formally and informally.

DLO 1 – Describe the impact of employing Core Values in our decision-making.

DLO 2 – Explain various ways to apply our CAP Core Values to planning, processes and operations.

DLO 3 – Develop strategies to implement Core Values-  
Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence and Respect

Method: Guided discussion  
Complete assessment and strategy worksheet

### References:

CAPP 50-2 Civil Air Patrol Core Values  
[http://www.capmembers.com/media/cms/P050\\_002\\_C64238751B2E9.pdf](http://www.capmembers.com/media/cms/P050_002_C64238751B2E9.pdf)

United States Air Force Core Values

<http://www.airforce.com/learn-about/our-values/>

A Basic Guide to the Core Values: "The Little Blue Book"

[http://capmembers.com/media/cms/Little\\_Blue\\_Book\\_60E272ED66993.pdf](http://capmembers.com/media/cms/Little_Blue_Book_60E272ED66993.pdf)

AF Core Values Guru's Guide

[http://capmembers.com/media/cms/Gurus\\_Guide2\\_642B47DEF42FD.pdf](http://capmembers.com/media/cms/Gurus_Guide2_642B47DEF42FD.pdf)

## DURATION

*50 minutes*

## SEMINAR OUTLINE & MAIN POINTS

### **MP I. The impact of core values**

Where would you find some of the core values of our American Constitutional Democracy stated?

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What are some of the fundamental American beliefs and principles (or core values) as stated in these documents?

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Superman's motto said it simply: Truth, justice and the American Way.

Belief and willingness to die to defend these beliefs and principles have defined us as Americans over the years. Certainly American society has not been perfect in adhering to all these beliefs and principles over the years, but most Americans would agree that these are principles we should continually aspire to as a society.

As these guiding principles for American society define us as Americans, so to are the guiding principles which define us as CAP members.

What are the guiding principles for CAP members?

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Let's hear some personal examples (no names please) of the impact of core values, both failures and successes?

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Identify the core values involved.

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**MP 2. Identify ways to apply our CAP Core Values to planning, processes and operations**

Some assumptions as we consider core values and develop a strategy to implement core values in our organizations.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

How can core values leadership come from below?

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One way is the school house environment, like this lesson where we talk about and share our thoughts on core values. Units might add aspects of core values to all types of training sessions.

Another way is by commanders and supervisors emphasizing core values in daily activities and serving as role models demonstrating our adherence to CAP core values on a daily basis. It might be just taking some time to explain a decision or discussing integrity and excellence in connection with a new policy or sharing examples of how cutting corners undermines core values.

A good example of commanders emphasizing core values is the CAP Ethics Policy letter issued by the CAP National Commander in August 2005. See if you can pick out CAP core values. The letter states the following Standards of Ethics:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

The letter concludes, ***“In order to continue our traditions of excellence, integrity, and service to our country, we have created an ethics policy. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. As representatives of this organization your conduct must follow the highest ethical standards possible.”***

As a leader in your organization you might consider issuing an ethics policy for your work area or unit which makes a statement to subordinates about your own adherence to core values. Challenge the members of your organization to identify and surface situations which do not track with stated core values.

A third way to apply core values by the members themselves creating a climate of \_\_\_\_\_

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With this background on ways to apply core values, let's take a look at some strategies for implementing core values. Here we can borrow some tools from the USAF core values gurus who provide some excellent resources at: <http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/gurus/>

### **MP 3. Strategy for implementing core values**

State: You might begin with an assessment of the current ethical climate of the unit using Table D of the Guru's Guide titled "The Crystal Ball Application of Core Values Doctrine." Here you are asked to evaluate the unit on such issues as how the unit has performed during inspections, disciplinary issues, and what type of reputation your unit has in the group or wing and in the community you serve. Then taking a closer look at the unit, consider such questions as:

1. Who comes first in your organization?
2. Are people in the unit well trained and knowledgeable?
3. Are members of the unit more likely to use terms like "we" and "you" rather than "me" or "I".
4. Do members regularly blame others for problems in the unit or wing?
5. Do members try to fix blame rather than fix the problem?
6. Are members afraid to bring up problems and admit mistakes or are they afraid to make decisions they should be making?
7. Is there a "filling the squares" attitude in the unit?
8. Do members of the unit treat each other with respect and dignity?

As a commander you might also consider doing a core values climate survey of your unit similar to the Core Values Climate Survey. (Attachment 4, from the Guru's Guide). This may be an eye opener as members are asked to anonymously assess the ethical climate of your unit.

Once you have made your own assessments, you might ask other leaders in the unit to do the same and then have an open discussion of similarities and differences. If you find your assessments differ significantly from others, this is a good time to find out why. With these assessments in hand, it is now time to think about things you and others in the unit can do to promote core values and things you should avoid so you do not undermine core values. Table C of the Guru's Guide offers help here.

Table C of the Core Values Guru's Guide is called Professional Compass Worksheet which guides the member through the process of matching the AF (and CAP) Core Values with his/her individual behavior, attitudes, and ways of doing business. Table C lists a number of aspects of the AF core values of Integrity, Service and Excellence and asks the individual to evaluate each with these questions:

1. What can I do in the future to promote this core value?
2. What must I avoid in the future so that I don't undermine this core value?

Once you have completed Table C you might ask other leaders to do the same. No doubt there will be ideas you missed and you have also modeled the behavior we have discussed that is that core values are everybody's business.

When finished note that this worksheet provides a strategy for what to do and what to avoid to promote core values in the unit. Don't stop there. Make this a dynamic list by adding new items and issues as they arise and repeating the questions of how do I promote core values concerning this issue and how do I avoid undermining the issue? Use this core values framework when considering issues that may arise in future plans, processes and operations of the unit.

