

Professional Development of Senior Members

CAP Officer Basic Course

Introduction

Professional development is the education and training a person works through to become a more technically competent, independent, and contributing member of the organization to which they belong.

Every organization needs a strong professional development program to ensure its employees, or in Civil Air Patrol's case, its members can perform the duties that are required of them. The backbone of any successful organization or company is the quality of those entrusted in carrying out its missions. In the Civil Air Patrol the missions of Aerospace Education, Emergency Services and Cadet Programs need dedicated and well-trained individuals. Civil Air Patrol has designed its professional development program to meet the needs of the organization and to make our members the best trained professional volunteers in the nation.

1. Explain the difference between the technical, management, command and executive levels of training.

People come to Civil Air Patrol (CAP) with a vast array of interests, experience and expertise. CAP then utilizes this experience and expertise to professionally carry out its missions. CAP's professional development program has been developed to maximize this personal expertise by bringing these professionals into the organization and then refining these skills to enhance the program. To maximize its member's knowledge the professional development program consists of five levels where a member gains increasing levels of knowledge and experience in the program. The program consists of orientation, technical, management, command and executive levels, where each level is designed to build upon the expertise gained in the previous level.

Level 1 - Foundations Training is to be the most crucial level in that it grounds the member in what Civil Air Patrol's goals and missions are. A new member will learn how they might fit into the organization, how they can contribute and what program areas they may want to specialize in. Most importantly, new members will equate the quality of their experience at this level to the quality of Civil Air Patrol as a whole. In short, first impressions are made here.

Level I consists of the foundations course, cadet protection and operational security training and is taught at the basic unit or squadron level. The squadron commander is responsible for ensuring that the new member is given the proper orientation training so they may begin their CAP career properly. Once the member has completed Level I they are ready to move on to Level II or the Technical Training Level where they will begin to work in their chosen specialty areas.

Level II - Technical Training is the first level where a member begins to actually learn new skills and gain new experiences. Criteria for completion of this level are: completing Level I, attaining a technician rating in any specialty track, completion of the CAP Officer Basic Course (which you are taking now), and completing the Squadron Leadership School.

Technical training is just what it says, a member is assigned to a specialty area where they will assist the unit in its day to day operations, and learning as they go. The specialty area might be in finance or logistics or public affairs or any one of 26 possible choices that CAP provides for its members. CAP has developed Specialty Track Study Guides which outline each of the specialty training areas that a new member may choose from. Specialty Track Study Guides are CAP pamphlets that outline what duties, requirements, tasks, and

regulations/manuals a member needs to become knowledgeable about and proficient in as they perform their duties.

A member may choose to use their professional expertise as a way of assisting their unit, for instance, a person who is an attorney by trade may be a Legal Officer for CAP. By its very structure CAP needs qualified legal officers who not only know the law but also know how the law applies to the Civil Air Patrol Corporation. There are many instances when knowledge in interpreting legal documents such as leases or contracts is required by our units and their commanders. Another area is our need for professional pilots since many of CAP's taskings require the expertise of pilots who not only make their livelihood in the air but also perform these same functions for our organization. Members may also choose to work in an area that they do not have any professional expertise but where they have an interest such as the cadet program. Many members are interested in the cadet program because of the many personal rewards gained by teaching and observing as our cadet members grow into strong young adults. One of the great strengths of the CAP is the ability to work in many different areas where you have professional background or where you have a passion. To find out more about the choices of specialty tracks you can ask your Professional Development Officer or go to http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/forms_publications_regulations/pamphlets.cfm (the National Headquarters web page, Pubs and Forms, pamphlets) and look through CAP pamphlets 200 to 229).

CAP encourages its members to be well rounded in all facets of the program. To help accomplish this we provide a 12-hour course called Squadron Leadership School (SLS). During SLS the member will learn skills critical to working in a squadron. This course will enhance the member's ability to do their job and more importantly discover ways to help their fellow members in the unit. Squadrons depend on each functional area operating both independently and in conjunction with other areas. For example, Cadet Programs needs a well functioning recruiting program to bring in new members, recruiting needs a strong aerospace education section to educate our members in the aerospace world and the aerospace program needs pilots and observers to give practical experience when instructing cadets.

The CAP Officer Basic Course is included in Level II Technical Training and focuses on three main dimensions of leadership, they are; 1) the personal/interpersonal dimension of leadership, 2) the professional dimension of leadership and, 3) the organizational dimension of leadership. Module I expounds upon not only how we develop out leaders in CAP but also how we can become good followers. Every organization needs a cadre of well trained and motivated technicians to accomplish their missions. Lessons found in Module I teach the member how to work together as a team to be more efficient in their work for CAP. The professional dimension of leadership or Module II discusses specifically what makes CAP different in its professional development versus other organizations. The third section Module III is where it discusses the organizational dimension of leadership and delves into the vision of CAP and how the organization is structured to accomplish its missions. Members learn about everything from how the organization functions from a legal standpoint to how it partners with the Air Force and others.

Level III - Management Training is designed to develop a member's experience and expertise beyond working within a squadron to eventually commanding a squadron or working at the group or wing level. Criteria for completion of this level are: completing Level II, one year of experience in a command or staff position, attaining a senior rating in any specialty track, attending two conferences and completing the Corporate Learning Course.

At the Management Training level a member is challenged to learn about the CAP Corporation and how the corporation fulfills its missions beyond its own community. A member is asked to interact with members of other units in the Wing or Region. Members that have gone through at least one annual cycle performing the staff duties of their chosen

specialty may be eligible for the Senior Rating. The Senior Rating denotes proficiency and the ability to work without direct supervision.

To help broaden a member's corporate experience it is required that they attend either two national, region or wing conferences which can include aerospace conferences. Members who attend any of these conferences become more knowledgeable about the CAP Corporation. Conferences provide the opportunity not only to learn through attending seminars but also provide valuable networking opportunities. These networking opportunities allow members to discuss better ways to perform their duties with other professionals in their specialty.

When a member attends the 12-hour Corporate Learning Course (CLC) they will learn how a wing operates in each of CAP's major mission elements, as well as how mission support functions support these major mission elements. For example, if the squadron finance officer performs their duties correctly then this will help ensure that the wing finances are recorded and balanced in accordance with the appropriate regulations. It is important for every member to understand how they fit into the larger picture and how their actions and work affects the corporation as a whole.

Level IV - Command and Staff Training is for unit commanders and staff members who will be leading their respective areas and training others. Criteria for completion of Level IV is two years of service as a commander or staff member, attain a master rating in any specialty track, conduct a public presentation or aerospace education program, complete the Region Staff College and serve as a staff member for a professional development course or at an approved conference. Members who have reached this level are considered high-level leaders in CAP.

When a member has served in a staff or command position for two years or more they have shown a serious commitment to the organization. These members are the ' journeymen' of their specialties and do the day-to-day work in the program that makes CAP so successful. Unit commanders at all levels seek out these trained individuals to solve the issues facing our organization on a day-to-day basis.

Attaining a master rating in a specialty track proves that the member is an expert in a particular area. Earning the master rating is the pinnacle in any functional area. Leading and mentoring others, training new members and assisting in making improvements to the program are all characteristics of a master rated member. It is a given that a master rated member has achieved technical expertise in their area but it also signifies that they have decided to take on a leadership role in CAP.

As a member grows in their leadership role in the organization we ask them to promote CAP by making a public presentation or teaching on an aerospace related subject. This task has two main benefits; first the organization realizes a greater presence in the community and second the member grows in their knowledge and expertise about CAP as a whole.

Aerospace Education is one of CAP's main missions, in fact, CAP is the only organization chartered by Congress to teach aerospace education to the public. This charge by Congress should be considered very significant and worthy of every members' time and effort. To grow and prosper CAP must educate the public, which includes the greater aviation community.

Region Staff College is a week-long in-residence course that prepares members to better execute the duties and responsibilities associated with CAP command and senior staff positions. The course objective is to build on the leadership skills that our members already have exhibited. Each of the eight regions conducts a Region Staff College once a year with the expectation that graduates of this course will become our future leaders and mentors.

As members progress in the program they start giving back by using their expertise to train others and enhance the program as a whole. Members who have completed Level IV have developed a greater understanding and awareness of not only what CAP does for their community but also what they as individuals can do for the CAP.

Level V - Executive Training is the highest level of CAP training and is for members who wish to lead the organization at the Wing, Region and National levels. Criteria for completion of Level V is to serve a total of three years in a command or senior staff assignment, attend National Staff College, serve as a staff member for Region Staff College or National Staff College or be a director of an approved professional development course and conduct a Foundations Course Summary Conversation for a new member completing their Level I. Members who have completed Level V have earned the highest level of training that CAP offers.

National Staff College is a week-long in-residence course that prepares members for executive leadership roles with the intent of carrying out the missions of CAP. The course objective is to tackle the issues facing Civil Air Patrol in today's global climate with a strategic view. National Staff College is held annually at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. Students participate in lectures, seminars, and practical exercises led by highly qualified personnel. Speakers include professors and instructors from Air University as well as senior-executive leaders from private industry, the United States Air Force, and Civil Air Patrol. The National Staff College curriculum includes executive leadership, principles of organization, problem solving, group dynamics, interpersonal communications, strategic planning, executive management of resources and CAP mission accomplishment at the national level.

When a member has served in a staff or command position for three years or more they have shown the highest commitment to the organization. These members are the experts of their specialties and ensure the policies and vision of the organization is carried out which makes CAP one of the best group of professional volunteers in the nation.

2. Discuss the relationship between the professional development program and related awards.

CAP's professional development program is based on an increasing level of experience and expertise. As a member advances through the professional development program and completes the different levels of training they are eligible for corresponding awards. For example, when a member completes the Foundations Level I they will be awarded the Membership Award Ribbon. CAP's awards program helps demonstrate to the members and others that they are mastering the program and becoming increasingly more knowledgeable in how the organization operates.

CAP has named all its senior professional development awards after prominent leaders in aerospace. By doing this, CAP recognizes the contributions made by these aerospace pioneers and lends credence to the work and effort put forth by its own members.

Completion of Level II will make a member eligible for the Benjamin O Davis Jr. Award. General Davis was a West Point graduate and the first black pilot to solo in an Army Air Corps aircraft. He was the leader of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II and the first African American to become a General Officer in the United States Air Force. A member who completes Level II has demonstrated dedication to the program and a willingness to enhance their personal development.

The Grover Loening Aerospace Award is given to a member who completes Level III of the program. Mr. Loening was an aviation pioneer who was the first civilian member to the National Air and Space Museum's Advisory Board. He was the first ever to be awarded a degree in aeronautical engineering in addition to managing the Wright Brothers factory,

becoming a published author and forming the Grover Loening Aircraft Company. A member who achieves the Grover Loening Award proves that they are committed to making the organization a strong advocate for aerospace education. A Level III recipient has also gone beyond their local unit to become a part of the larger organization.

Level IV is known as the Paul E. Garber Award; Mr. Garber was the curator emeritus of the National Air and Space Museum and an early champion of Civil Air Patrol. Mr. Garber joined the Army in World War I and became a Navy Commander in World War II. He was instrumental in ensuring the most complete collection of historical aircraft were preserved and displayed at the Smithsonian National Air & space Museum. Members who earn the Garber Award have shown their commitment to the organization beyond their own development by assisting others to become better members.

The pinnacle of the senior professional development program is the Gill Robb Wilson Award which has a special number for each recipient. Less than 5% of all members earn this award named after the man who is considered the founder of Civil Air Patrol. A few of Mr. Wilson's accomplishments include being a correspondent for the 'The Herald Tribune', a published author and the New Jersey Director of Aviation. Members who have earned the Wilson Award know the importance of setting an example, being good mentors and practicing sound leadership principles. Level V recipients have shown the ability to go beyond personal goals by assisting the corporation in accomplishing organizational goals.

As we can see, Civil Air Patrol believes very strongly that rewarding members for their hard work and dedication is vitally important. As professional volunteers, Civil Air Patrol members work long hours and show great dedication to the organization and to the communities that they serve. The five-level award system is the organizations way of showing how appreciative it is to its members for this dedication. Each award shows a major milestone in the professional development of our members and should be justly recognized.

3. State how the Civil Air Patrol ensures the organization has a trained cadre of officers.

Civil Air Patrol understands that to carry out its three missions of Aerospace Education, Emergency Service and Cadet Programs it needs to have a well trained cadre of *professional volunteers*. A volunteer can be defined as a '*person who offers to do something*' or '*a person who offers to perform a service voluntarily*'. A professional is generally defined as '*a person who is paid to do a job or perform a service*'. In CAP we know that to do our missions effectively we need not just volunteers but professional volunteers that although they may be unpaid they are well trained individuals. Many of the jobs or tasks that are required of our members could not be done by someone who does not have formal professional training.

Many of CAP's members come into the organization already trained in a professional field such as: certified pilots, lawyers, educators, accountants and the clergy. These professions are utilized throughout each of the three missions extensively. You cannot be a legal officer in CAP if you are not a qualified attorney nor can you be a chaplain if you do not have an ecclesiastical endorsement from an approved religious organization.

In addition, CAP has many jobs that can be trained internally within the organization such as cadet programs officer, administrative officer or emergency services officer. CAP realizes it is just as important to have a well trained cadet programs officer as it is to have a well trained legal officer and the professional development program is where this training takes place. Through a series of training opportunities which includes classroom and on-line courses, mentoring and on the job training CAP guides a member by exposing them to increasing levels of experiences and opportunities. Whether members have formal training or are internally trained, CAP realizes that all members need to have a firm foundation in the organization's policies and procedures. Specific core competencies such as ethics,

accountability, safety and leadership are woven throughout every facet of the professional development program.

The majority of training that takes place in Civil Air Patrol is developed and conducted by its members. This process ensures that the unique nature of the organization in addition to its goals and objectives are fully integrated in every aspect of the professional development program. CAP also takes advantage of its relationship with the United States Air Force by utilizing many excellent training opportunities and resources. One of those resources is the Air University online course system (AUA4/6) which provides both correspondence and on-line courses that are available to our membership. There are many specialty courses that are offered to members depending on the job or position they are asked to fulfill for the organization. A few of the many specialty courses are the Unit Commanders Course which trains new squadron commanders how to effectively manage their squadrons, the Region and Wing Commanders Course which trains new Wing and Region commanders about their responsibilities as corporate officers and the Inspector General College where members are taught how to effectively manage the Inspector General program.

Progression up through the various leadership positions in CAP requires members to also progress through the professional development program. CAP understands the importance of its leaders having a well rounded education in how CAP operates and all aspects of the program. For example, a member cannot advance to Level III until they have completed Level II. Consequently, once a member has completed Level V then they should be able to perform the most advanced functions of the organization.

Lesson Summary and Closure

Civil Air Patrol uses five levels of training to ensure it has a trained workforce to carry out its three missions of Aerospace Education, Emergency Services and Cadet Programs.

Each level builds upon the previous level to ensure continuity of experience, expertise and opportunity for the membership. Members are expected to progress through the program in a systematic way to ensure they take full advantage of all the training opportunities that CAP has to offer.

Completion of the various levels allows members to earn awards which recognize their dedication and service to the organization. Members who achieve these awards should feel proud as it truly demonstrates their commitment to the Civil Air Patrol, their community and the nation.

Works Cited

CAP Regulation 50-17: CAP Senior Member Professional Development Program

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Images of CAP ribbons comes from http://www.mcchord.org/rack_builder/check_sr.html