

Attachment 4

Questions New Commanders Should Ask

What follows is a list of questions that you should ask before, during, and after you assume command. Some questions should be repeated at least annually, others are focused on immediate information gathering. They also range from the very conceptual to the very specific, and all are designed to give you an idea as to what you need to know and expect.

It is by no means all-inclusive. It's designed also to be the seed for your own brainstorming sessions. They are segmented by the receiver - wing, group (if applicable), and unit staff. Add whatever questions you feel you need in order to get your job done.

These questions may take some time to answer. There are some questions and tasks you need to resolve very shortly after you assume command. Many of those involve the instruments you must take possession of in order to command. It also extends to the command philosophy and emphasis of your boss. Thus, wing questions should necessarily be close to the top of your agenda, if not already there.

The timing for the rest however, is up to you. You and your staff should prioritize the rest of the items. These are answers you need so you can manage your resources and command! Good Luck!

Questions For Everyone:

What are the critical issues you need to tell me?

Questions For Wing:

1. What are the WG/CC's command emphasis items?
2. What must I answer to the wing directly for? (Specifics)
3. What are the memorandums of understanding & agreements that affect my unit?
 - National
 - Region
 - Wing
 - Group
4. How often do we tap the state director (SD)?
5. How well are we doing our jobs? (WG/CC) Do you have any ideas why? What are the unit's weaknesses? (Mission oriented)
6. What do you want us to do? Short term? Long term?

7. Where do we fit into the wing's mission?
8. What do you need?
 - Finance
 - Logistics
 - Operations
 - Safety
 - Legal
 - Communications
9. How are we reimbursed?
 - Counter Drug
 - Mission
 - Proficiency
 - Cadet Orientation Flights
 - Drug Demand Reduction
 - Other
10. What's the situation on member uniforms?
11. What's the situation on wing level (and higher) scholarships?
12. Why did the last commander step down?
13. What must I fix right now?
14. Can I see the commendables and bench marks from other units' inspections?
15. Where are other units having problems?
16. How have we directly supported wing activities over the past two years?
17. What can we do to improve it?
18. How far out is the wing's plan?
19. Let's make sure the CAPF 27 is sent to National?
20. How often do we check into the net?
21. Can I rotate staff in coming with me to the Commander's Call?
22. How soon can the wing staff start staff assistance visits with me? (if needed)
24. Can I get a wing calendar?
25. What are the current policies concerning insurance issues?

Questions For Group (if applicable):

26. Can I get a group calendar?
27. What are the command emphasis items?
28. How organized is the group structure?
29. What must I answer to the group for? (Specifics)

Questions For All Unit Staff:

30. What do we do well? (Task oriented)
31. What don't we do well? (Task oriented)
32. If you could keep one thing, what would it be?
33. If you could scrap one thing, what would it be?
34. If you could change one thing, what would it be?
35. If you could start one thing, what would it be?
36. If you could avoid one thing like the plague, what would it be?
37. How well are we doing our jobs? (Mission oriented) Why aren't we doing well? (if applicable)
38. What is our collective relationship with the families?
39. How far out should we plan?
40. How soon can I...
 - look at our wing banker account records
 - Sign the PA's
 - Do the audits
 - Do the inventory
 - Turn the committees
41. Who does the unit need to thank? (outside the unit)
42. How much money are we asking our members to spend?
43. Is it smart money?
44. How much time are we asking members to spend?
45. Is it smart time?
46. How often does the unit socialize? (i.e. pizza night, open house, etc.)
47. How can I better communicate with...
 - members
 - parents
 - spouses

Administration (DA):

48. How clean are the files?
49. Do I have a member locator?
50. Do I have a call down tree?
51. How soon can I get the mailing address changed? Do I need to?
52. Do we have two full sets of regulations?

Cadet Programs (CP):

53. How many cadets went to encampment?
54. How many are becoming mission qualified?
55. How many are flying?
56. How many cadets applied for scholarships, prep school, special acts, and wing stuff?
57. Do we participate in the Cadet Advisory Council?
58. If not, why not?
59. What is the authority granted to the cadet staff, and justify why they get it?
60. Do we have relationships with local schools?
61. How healthy?
62. If not, why not?
63. What is our collective relationship with the parents?
64. What's our relationship with the local recruiters? (PA too)
65. How can we make it better? (PA too)
66. Who's due for training awards? (PD too)
67. Can we get into the Cadet Competition business?
68. Do we have a relationship with JROTC?
69. Do we get AF orientation rides?
70. Do we have all the tests we need? (Testing too)
71. Do the parents have skills/talents/connections we can use (even if they are not members)?

Operations (DO):

72. How many pilots are active?
73. How is the flying divided? (Who's flying the hours?)
74. How many flight hours for each over the past two years, by year?
 - ES Mission
 - Disaster Relief
 - Counter Drug
 - ROTC Orientation
 - Cadet Orientation
 - SAR and DR Exercises
 - Proficiency (mission and standard)
75. What is the condition of our aircraft? (LG too)
76. Do we use them enough to justify their assignment to us?
77. How many members are mission qualified?
78. What are their OPS QUALS expiration dates?
79. Training schedules for new and renewing ES qualifications?
80. Do we have relationships with the local ES community?
81. if we do, how healthy are they?
82. If not, why not?
83. How healthy is our relationship with the local FBO?
84. What is the status of our Flight Release Program?

Personnel (DP):

85. Do we have any disciplinary actions pending?
86. Any for the past two years?
87. How many members have we recruited over the past two years, by year?
 - cadet
 - senior
88. How many renewed after year 1?
89. How many are still here?
90. Why did the members leave?
91. What do they say makes them stay?
92. Did we submit people for Cadet of the Year, Senior of the Year, and other staff awards?
93. Are we under strength? (staff too)
94. If so, who should we target for? (staff too)
95. How many members can this unit hold as presently configured? (staff too)
 - leadership
 - facilities capacity
 - equipment
 - missions
96. Can we grow? (staff too)
97. What do we need to change to grow? (staff too)
98. Can we change to grow? (staff too)
 - leadership
 - facilities capacity
 - equipment
 - missions
99. How upgraded are the personnel files?
100. When can I get commander privileges in e-Services and WIMRS?
101. What are the ages of our members?
102. Do we need to plan for member attrition due to age?
103. What is the overall attitude of the membership?
104. How's the morale?
105. How do we follow up with members who quit?
106. Who's due for promotion?
107. Do they deserve it (promotion board)?
108. Do we have a promotion board and membership committees?
109. Who's due for performance awards?
110. Who's piggy backing positions?
111. Is the workload divided equally?
112. Can we get a set of all membership packets offered?

Aerospace Education (AE):

- 113. Do we have an internal program to complement the cadet text?
- 114. Do we have a model rocketry program?
- 115. Are there facilities to support one?
- 116. Do we enter the wing aerospace model contest annually?
- 117. Are we doing aerospace current events?
- 118. Do we have someone doing external aerospace - in the local schools?
- 119. Are we tying cadet orientation flights to the cadet text?
- 120. Have the senior members supported the ACE, AEX, & TOP Flight programs?
- 121. Do we have a program to get it done?

Professional Development (PD):

- 122. How many people have completed all components of Level I?
- 123. How long does it take from the time they join?
- 124. Do we give refresher training in Safety & CPPT?
- 125. What are we doing in the senior training program after this?
- 126. How are we training for staff jobs?
- 127. What are the professional development levels of my deputies?
- 128. Who's due for training awards? (DP too)
- 129. Do we have the latest Great Start materials?

Finance (FM):

- 130. What outstanding expenses do we have?
- 131. Is this building leased, if not, how'd we get here?
- 132. Do we have any recurring expenses?
- 133. Let me see the financial statements for the past two years?
- 134. Who's presently on the Finance Committee?
- 135. What is next year's budget?
- 136. What do we need money for?
- 137. How much do we have?
- 138. How much do we need?
- 139. What kind of fund raising activities do we normally do?
- 140. If we don't, why not?
- 141. Do we charge unit dues?
- 142. What's the wing policy on donations?
- 143. Do we take advantage of our Federal (State) tax exempt status?

Inspector (IG) (Wing or Group level only):

- 144. What were the two past inspection reports?
- 145. Do you have the current Assessment guides for use as a reference?
- 146. What in your opinion can we do to do better?
- 147. Do we have to answer any “areas of concern” or “findings”?

Logistics (LG):

- 148. Is there anything missing, and how do we find out?
- 149. If we rent or lease our property, is it in writing? If not, how soon can we have it in writing?
- 150. What is the condition of our building?
- 151. How can we improve it?
- 152. What is the condition of our vehicle?
- 153. May I see copies of the vehicle logs; are they current?
- 154. Is it adequate for our needs?
- 155. What is the condition of our aircraft (DO too)?
- 156. Do we have a computer?
- 157. Do we have to get any equipment, now?
 - copiers
 - printers
 - radios
 - computers
 - typewriters
 - TV/DVD Player
 - etc
- 158. Is our “wish list” into the wing?
- 159. How well do we secure what we do have?
- 160. Where are all the keys?
- 161. Do we have to get the locks/combinations changed? (testing cabinet mandatory)

Public Affairs (PA):

- 162. What's our relationship with the public?
- 163. How can we make it better?
- 164. How many times have we been in the newspaper in the past two years?
 - positive
 - negative
- 165. Do we have copies?
- 166. How many times should we have been?
- 167. Why weren't we?
- 168. What's our relationship with the local recruiters? (CP too)
- 169. How can we make it better?
- 170. How can you help me open dialog with local politicians?

Safety (SE):

- 171. Can you show me the safety audits for the past two years?
- 172. What was the result of the last short-notice safety inspection?
- 173. Does the safety education plan comply?
- 174. Are you qualified?
- 175. Show me every CAPF 78 that was initiated in the past two years?
- 176. What was the outcome?
- 177. What do you want to concentrate on?
- 178. How can I give you support?

Yourself:

- 179. What's our relationship with local politicians?
 - council members
 - mayors
 - congressmen (state and federal)
- 180. How can we make it better?
- 181. Did the past CC's have a long range plan?
- 182. Where is it?
- 183. How far out should I plan?
- 184. What must I "bone up" on?
- 185. How do I balance this commitment with those of work and family?
- 186. How do I make it easier for the members to balance their commitments with this, work, and family?
- 187. What kind of scheduling system do I want to have?
- 188. What's my goal?
- 189. How can I sell it?