

Delegating Authority

Lesson Plan:

Duration: 50 Minutes

Teaching Method: Lecture/Discussion

References: Student Guide

Teaching Aids/Handouts: Student Guide & Slide Presentation

Reading Assignment: Student Guide

Lesson Objective: Comprehend the importance of delegating authority to your staff.

Desired Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe what is meant by delegation of authority.
2. Discuss the relationship between authority and responsibility.
3. Discern when and who to delegate to.
4. Define “homogeneous assignment” in your own words.

Lesson Strategy:

This segment is designed to help unit commanders understand the concept of delegating authority and to understand how it can apply to their daily command.

Emphasize the concept’s importance to command – how no one can do everything alone. Delegating authority’s importance lies in its use as a force multiplier and as a time management tool. Place special emphasis on defining the relationship between authority and responsibility. Work with the students to identify situations where delegating authority is useful. Also talk about how to find the right person for the job assigned (homogeneous assignment).

CAP Unit Commanders Course: Director/Instructor Guide

This teaching outline provides an introduction, outline of the main points, and a conclusion to be adapted as required to meet the needs of a particular wing. The presenter should personalize the lesson to reflect the unique characteristics of the wing.

Lesson Outline:

MAIN POINTS:

- I. What is meant by delegation of authority.
- II. Relationship between authority and responsibility.
- III. When and who to delegate to.
- IV. Homogeneous assignment.

Teaching Plan

Lesson Objective: Comprehend the importance of delegating authority to your staff.

ATTENTION:

CAP makes squadron commanders ultimately responsible for all that happens in their unit – a daunting task to be sure. But you can't run the squadron by yourself, and no one expects you to.

MOTIVATION:

While you are ultimately responsible for everything that happens, you have a powerful tool available to you. You can delegate the authority to perform most of the tasks to your staff. Delegating authority to your staff really isn't a luxury: it's a necessity. Your unit will not be able to accomplish its mission unless you allow everyone to do what they've been tasked to do. What delegation of authority requires from you is the expertise to know how to apply it, and the confidence to apply it freely.

OVERVIEW:

This segment will help you understand and be comfortable with delegating authority to your staff members; and empowering them to do their jobs effectively. You'll learn how to delegate to your staff members the authority to act with a maximum of initiative and a minimum of interference.

TRANSITION:

STATE: Part of your responsibility as a commander is to stay available for the “big issues,” while still being familiar with the day to day workings of your unit.

Main Points:

MP I. What is meant by Delegation of Authority

- A. Definition: To extend an umbrella of authority over your staff to complete required tasks, while empowering them with the freedom to get the job done.
- B. Commanders who don't delegate:
 - 1. Create a bottleneck.
 - 2. Lose staff effectiveness.
 - 3. Fail to have a trained person ready to take command in your absence.
- C. Authority = Freedom
Delegating authority:
 - 1. Empowers staffs.
 - 2. Gives staffs freedom to perform.
 - 3. Makes your staff more proficient.
 - 4. Frees you for more important/imperative tasks or decisions.

MP II. Relationship between authority and responsibility

- A. Definitions
 - 1. Authority is the right to control, command, or determine.
 - 2. Responsibility implies accountability for a particular task, thing, or person.
- B. Relationship between these concepts
 - 1. One cannot have authority without responsibility.
 - 2. One can have responsibility without authority.
 - But, most likely, nothing will get done without authority.

MP III. When and who to delegate to

STATE: You cannot delegate your responsibility as commander, you can delegate authority, program management, etc.

- A. When to delegate:
 - 1. When the time required to perform the task exceeds your time available.
 - 2. When the required level of expertise exceeds your level of knowledge.
- B. When NOT to delegate:
 - 1. Decisions affecting the overall efficiency and morale of the unit.
 - 2. Actions which by regulation or law you must carry out yourself.
- C. What to delegate:
 - 1. Authority to develop important initiatives and projects.
 - 2. Oversight of certain staff functions.

MP IV. Homogeneous assignment

- A. Definition: Putting the right person in the right job
- B. Matching the assignment to the person.
- C. Who to look for, what to watch for...someone with a similar expertise or who has had a strong interest in the subject area which can make up for the lack of qualification; someone with the motivation to learn, and learn quickly.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS:

Use the suggested questions to facilitate the discussion, and field any questions that the students may have.

Lesson Summary:

SUMMARY:

Delegating authority requires some faith and preparation on your part. However, when done correctly, the benefits you will derive will far outweigh any risk you take. You'll get more done in less time and have a more effective staff if you allow your staff to help you get the mission accomplished. Match the right person to the right job, empower them with the authority to do the job, and let them go.

REMOTIVATION:

Delegating authority will empower your staff, and give you more time to focus on the big picture. You need to be available when the big problems come.

CLOSURE:

Empower your people, so you can be there when you're really needed.

Suggested Questions:

1. Define *delegation of authority* from commander's perspective.

Answer: To extend an umbrella of authority over your staff to complete required tasks, while empowering them with the freedom to get the job done.

2. What can happen when a commander cannot or does not choose to delegate their authority?

Answer: The commanders may:

- a. Create a bottleneck.
- b. Lose the effectiveness of his/her staff.
- c. Fail to have someone ready to stand in for the commander in an emergency.
- d. Have the students give their own answers base on experiences they've had.

3. **Define *span of control*.**

Answer: It means ensuring that a person is not required to control more people or resources than he or she can reasonably handle alone.

4. **What can you delegate?**

Answer: Several possibilities, among them are:

- a. Special initiatives and projects.
- b. Meeting planning.
- c. Signatory authority over certain documents.
- d. Oversight of specific staff functions in accordance with CAP directives.
- e. Etc.

5. **Define *homogeneous assignment*.**

Answer: Basically, putting the right person in the right job.

Field any other questions that the students may have.