

Mentoring at the Unit Level

Think Back

What was it like when you first joined Civil Air Patrol? Do you remember the frustration of not being able to just jump in and start contributing right away? What if you had had a good friend as a Mentor then?

Mentoring at the Unit Level

As a Unit Commander:

you set the tone for a new member's positive experience. Think about how much easier that would be with a trained Mentor working directly with each new member.

Mentoring at the Unit Level

Overview

- “Mentoring” defined
- A mentor program helps new members succeed
- A simple mentoring program in your unit
- Select good mentors within your unit
- Properly train, match, & monitor your unit mentors
- Mentoring can enhance membership retention

Mentoring at the Unit Level

Define “Mentor”

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Mentor:

(Wikipedia)

... wise and trusted guide and advisor

(CAPP 50-7)

...trusted counselor or guide, tutor, or coach

(CAPP 50-8)

... more experience helping less experience

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Why mentoring is so important

- CAP membership is complex to outsiders
- CAP is unique from other organizations
- Mentoring is a practical tool for matching experience with inexperience
- Mentoring improves sense of self-worth for existing experienced members
- Mentoring buffers initial CAP culture shock

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Mentoring improves

- New member confidence
- Overall unit performance
- Unit moral and esprit de corps
- Communications within the unit

Mentoring at the Unit Level

A mentor program helps new members succeed!

A mentoring program:

- ◉ Buffers the initial “Culture Shock”
- ◉ Gets them started on the right track
- ◉ Provides needed direction and focus
- ◉ Busts through the cloud of confusion
- ◉ Provides them with confidence
- ◉ Makes them feel valued
- ◉ Enhances moral and esprit de corps

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Simple unit mentoring program

- Identify available mentors
- Train your Mentors for success
- Match Mentors to new members
- Monitor the program for adjustments

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Identify available mentors in your unit

- Only use motivated seasoned members with a past of successful CAP duty performance
- Identify those who enjoy and fit the teaching, guide, and advisor role
- Mentors must be good role models
- Mentors are those who are eager and comfortable greeting new visitors

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Qualities of a good mentor:

- Vast experience
- Great wisdom and Judgment
- Outgoing Personality
- Respected by Others
- Demonstrated Success
- Friendly
- Temperament to Teach
- Willing to Mentor

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Train your mentors to succeed

- Review CAPP 50-7 and CAPP 50-8 in detail
- Review your expectations with Mentors
- Ask and get commitments of service to the unit
- Reward unit mentors with meaningful public recognition and praise

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Match mentors to member's needs

- Involve the new member in the choice of mentor
- Mentor and Mentee should review expectations with each other in detail
- Be sensitive to special cultural needs of mentor and Mentee as much as is feasible
- Be prepared to adjust/change pairing if necessary to make mentoring work for both
- Follow up with inquiries about "...how is it going?"

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Monitor the program regularly

- Tune in your awareness for problems or discontent from mentor or mentee
- Periodically review feedback and adjust as required (maybe designate a Unit Mentor Officer)
- Watch for signs of “lopsided” mentoring (CAPP 50-8)
- Listen. Listen. Listen... and hear what is happening from both perspectives

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Membership retention through mentoring:

- helps remove the initial “confusion cloud”.
- helps improve personal relationships.
- promotes opportunities for new members.
- gives new members more direct communication with command and unit structure.
- helps motivate the less motivated.
- enables dedicated new members to succeed.

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Summary

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- Select good mentors within your unit
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- Mentoring can enhance membership retention

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Closing thoughts

A unit mentoring program will:

- create a welcoming experience for new members
- give your seasoned members more purpose with their experience and wisdom.

Take an active role in helping your unit succeed by starting and conducting a mentor program NOW!

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Questions & Answers