

CALL THE BALL

The Newsletter of the 130th Composite Flight

<http://www.mnwg.cap.gov/farmington>

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Chaplain Mikita brings us the following message by Dr. John C. Maxwell

In my experience, the problems of a person's past impact them in one of two ways: they experience either a breakdown or a breakthrough. This month as we gear up for the New Year, take a moment to decide which path you will take. Are you heading toward a breakdown or a breakthrough?

Steps toward a Leadership Breakdown:

1. Comparison.

No matter what you've experienced, remember this: there are people who've had it better than you and done worse; and there are people who've had it worse than you and done better. I've watched some very talented people miss opportunities because they were worried about what someone else was receiving or achieving. If you prepare yourself to the best of your abilities and give your all in every situation, you will be successful. You may not always win, but you will be a winner. One of my favorite thoughts about comparison comes from a young girl who was competing in a pageant. "There will always be someone prettier than me, more talented than me, and more graceful than me. I can only hope they aren't on the same stage as me."

2. Rationalization.

In this day and age it seems that people can rationalize any situation. A cartoon which appeared a few years ago in the New Yorker showed two clean-shaven middle-aged men sitting together in a jail cell. One inmate turned to the other and said, "All along, I thought our level of corruption fell well within community standards." Taking responsibility instead of rationalizing is a matter of integrity. And integrity is the foundation of leadership.

3. Isolation.

You can't be a leader if you're all alone. Leadership requires teamwork, and teamwork requires people. Trying to avoid a challenge or problem by isolating yourself from everyone always results in a larger problem. You may need to separate yourself from most of the group to solve a problem; however, you should always have contact with at least one other person who can mentor you and help you through the situation. Your mentor may not be able to help you find a solution quicker, but a mentor serves as an encourager, which is sometimes just as valuable.

4. Regret.

Yesterday ended last night. As much as we would like to, we can't go back and change what has already happened. We can only move forward and do the best we can today. Regret merely drains our energy and makes it harder to move on.

5. Bitterness.



Past hurts can make you bitter or better. If you hold onto disappointment you become bitter. If you learn from disappointment you have a better chance of not facing the same disappointment later on. I have found that grudges hurt me more than they will the other person; therefore, clinging to bitterness wastes time and energy. In my book, "Failing Forward", I recount the story of Joseph of the ancient Hebrews. He was thrown into a pit, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and put in jail; however, he didn't hold a grudge against the people who wronged him. Joseph found the positive benefits in his negative experiences, and went on to be a powerful ruler in Egypt.

Steps Toward a Leadership Breakthrough

I believe that a leader faces many hurdles, however he or she becomes stronger and more accurate at every leap. Begin the process by practicing the following five steps.

1. Personal Growth.

Leadership, just as life, is a journey. You must continue to learn in order to lead. Each day I try to learn something, file something and teach something. I learn from reading books, listening to tapes or meeting with other leaders. I file the best quotes and stories that I find, which improves my work as an author and speaker. I also learn a great deal from teaching. My audience lets me know if I am connecting and helping them with the lessons I give. As a leader, you need to develop your own personal growth plan. Include resources and experiences that will help you grow professionally as well as personally. The desire to grow is the first important step toward a leadership breakthrough.

2. Responsibility.

One of the differences between a leader and a follower is the willingness to accept responsibility. A leader takes on the challenge and takes responsibility for the outcome. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. said, "I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty." As a leader,

you must become more concerned with your responsibility than your rights. People who take responsibility get the job done, go the extra mile, are driven by excellence, and produce regardless of the situation.

3. Connection.

As a leader, your relationships with your team members will determine the effectiveness of the team. Before you will be able to rally the efforts of your followers, you need to find out where they are, move toward them, and connect with them. **Remember: you can connect with people and lead them only if you value them.** Here are some ways to connect: 1) make getting to know your people a priority; 2) look for things that you and your team members have in common such as hobbies, experiences, interests; 3) respect differences in opinions or personalities; 4) find out what motivates your people; and 5) include your team in the leadership process by asking for their ideas and suggestions.

4. Resolve.

Truly effective leaders must know their priorities and be able to concentrate their time and energy on meeting goals. A leader who knows his or her priorities but lacks concentration knows what to do but never gets it done. A leader who has concentration but no priorities has excellence without progress. I have found that I am most productive and successful when I concentrate 70 percent of my time and energy on my strengths, 25 percent on new things, and 5 percent on areas of weakness. Learn what you do well that brings the greatest results and make it your priority, and dedicate the balance of your time to growth.

5. Positive Attitude.

When you are leading a group of people, your attitude is extremely important. Because attitudes are contagious, your team will recognize your attitude and adapt to the example you set. If you appear irritated about the challenges your team faces, then your team members will become irritated too. Your progress and the chance for success will be hindered if your attitude isn't right. It is impossible for us to tailor our situations to fit our lives, but it is possible to tailor our attitudes to fit our situation. Tailoring your attitude may take a lot of work. Start by surrounding yourself with positive pictures, sayings and people. Read motivational books. Then try to achieve a goal every day. Your attitude will become more positive as you learn and sense that you are making progress. Leadership develops from the inside out. Achieving a breakthrough works the same way. You have the choice to become a more effective leader in the New Year. It may mean letting go of the past and moving forward with a new focus, but you'll be glad you started moving in a new direction as you see the benefits of reaching your leadership potential.

Quotes of the Month

"The first rule of holes: When you're in one, stop digging." – Molly Ivins, columnist

"Success seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit." – Conrad Hilton, hotel executive

"Be not the slave of your own past." – Ralph Waldo Emerson, writer

"The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings

can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind." –

William James, psychologist

"We ought not look back, unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors and for the purpose of profiting by dear bought experience." – George Washington, American President

"The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year." – John Foster Dulles, former Secretary of State

Squelching the Scuttlebutt:

In the Navy there is a item known as the scuttlebutt. It's sailor talk for the drinking fountain and also slang for gossip and rumor. The rumor are flying about our new recruits who are wishing to transfer to the 130th. If you ask around almost everything under the sun from cadets too wild to be retained by their former squadron to refugees from the 2B file. ENOUGH! I've spoken at great length to the commander of St Paul and these cadets are NONE OF THE ABOVE. None of these cadets have been dismissed or "fired" from St Paul. Quite the contrary their Commander has told me many fine things about them as cadets and as human beings. Among them is a former Cadet commander, a Cadet who was cited for excellence in leadership and another who I've been told "If the Air Force does not make him a drill instructor they are nuts for this cadet is outstanding." So lets

Private Murphy's Law

by Mark Baker



welcome them to our unit just as we have in the past to members from Texas and N. Dakota.

A Band Of Brothers:

In Civil Air Patrol we have the opportunity to work with (in my opinion) the greatest folks in the world. People who will work for nothing and spend valuable personal time in the pursuit of Aerospace education, the cadet program and Emergency Services. Where else can you find people dedicated to doing so much for so little in return? As Christmas approaches I think it is a very fitting time to think about that brotherhood within our unit but even more so outside the unit to the Wing and to our non CAP

To eliminate the need of a review board, cadets need to file the enclosed Special Activities Questionnaire to the best of their ability. Applications sent forward to National HQ on 31 Jan 2000 will be ranked by the grade earned on this questionnaire. Every line on the CAPF 31 must have an entry, even if it is "N/A". More information is in the CAP NEWS, November issue, and on the National website.

Complete the following questionnaire and submit a resume **including** the following information:

Name

Address

Rank

Highest CAP Award

Unit Charter

Activity applied for

Position in Squadron

Years attended Encampment as basic

Years attended Encampment as staff

Years attended other Integrated Leadership Program activities

Years served on unit Color Guard

Years served on Honor Guard

ES rating.

Send to Minnesota Wing HQ or the address above NLT 31 Dec 2000. Include with one CAPF 31 per activity being applied for. Do not forget to include a picture in uniform. Do not forget to rank the activities being applied for. Fill out the CAPF 31 completely, any item that are not applicable should be marked N/A. This process should be followed if applying for Minnesota Wing Flight Academy (deadline for Flight Academy applications 22 Jan 2001) (formerly Solo Encampment).

THE CADET OATH :

"I pledge that I will serve faithfully in the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program ,
and that I will attend meetings regularly, participate actively in unit activities,
obey my officers, wear my uniform properly,
and advance my education and training rapidly
to prepare myself to be of service to my community, state, and nation."

National Special Activities Questionnaire

1. Explain how, in your daily life, you live the CAP Cadet Oath?

2. How have you lived the Core Value of "Volunteer Service" in your life?

3. You are just introduced to someone, and they ask you to talk about yourself, what do you say?

4. Describe an experience where you have used integrity in your life?

5. What talents will you share with fellow cadets at this activity?

6. What are the most important responsibility leaders have to their followers?

7. What do you expect to gain from the activity, and how will it improve your unit? Answer all questions as completely as you can, write legibly, use extra paper, label answers.