Leading a Class

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Leading a class

Topics we will cover:

- Why outstanding classes are so important

- Preparing the class

- Practicing leading the class

- Giving a great presentation

Outstanding classes are vital to an outstanding encampment

- For in-flight cadets, classes are a big part of encampment.

- Classes teach subject matter that is required by CAPR 52-16 chapter 5. If these subjects are not covered, encampment credit is not given.

- Excellent classes make a huge difference in the quality of the encampment experience.

Outstanding classes make a difference

Think back to the best class and the worst class you've had.

- The best classes:
  - Remember how enjoyable, interesting, and valuable they were.
  - Remember how you felt towards the instructor: respect, admiration, etc.
  - If you prepare well, you can provide that same experience to this year's in-flight cadets.

- The poorly taught classes:
  - Remember how boring or annoying they were? You probably remember feeling that you didn't learn anything useful. You may have felt the classes were a waste of time.
  - Remember how you felt towards the instructor - you don't want this year's cadets thinking of you that way!

Preparing a class

In order to give an outstanding class, you must take the following steps to prepare:

- ◆ Define the subject

- ◆ Define the learning objectives

- ◆ Structure the class and prepare an outline

- ◆ Create good visual aids, if any

- ◆ Practice your presentation

Preparing a class, step 1:
Define the subject

- Is it a subject you will be able to teach well?
  - ◆ You have to know the subject well
  - ◆ You have to be able to be enthusiastic
  - ◆ **Do not** teach subjects that you cannot teach well!
- What level of detail will you go into?
- What will you include?
- What will you exclude?

  - ◆ A very important step! You cannot teach everything about the subject in 50 minutes.
  - ◆ Cut out all you can – teach only the important,the valuable, and the interesting, and skip the rest.

Preparing a class, step 2: Define the learning objectives

- What parts of the class do the students **need** to remember?
    - This information must be repeated – preferably three times.
    - Best if it can be heard, read, and said
- What parts of the class do you need to touch on briefly?
- How will you determine if the learning objectives have been met?
    - Review with oral questions
    - Quiz
    - Participatory exercise

Preparing a class, step 3: Create an outline

- The outline should contain all the topics you need to cover

- The topics must be grouped into a logical order or progression.

- Structure your class into parts:

  - Introduction

  - Body

  - Review

  - Quiz or participatory exercise

Preparing a class, step 4: Create visual aids

- Not every class requires visual aids. Use a visual aid *only* if it is going to aid teaching or improve comprehension.
- Types of visual aids:
  - A PowerPoint presentation
    - May have relevant graphics
    - Avoid irrelevant graphics or clip art! They distract the students' attention from the text on the page
  - A chart (flow chart, diagram, picture, text)
  - A model (of an airplane, spacecraft, etc.)
  - A demonstration (using another person to demonstrate, acting out a scene, etc.)

Preparing a class, step 5:
Practice your delivery

We have all had to sit through a class where the presenter had not prepared his delivery well. Symptoms include:

- Presenter fails to cover all the material in the allotted time
  - Presenter spends too much time on low-priority material
  - No time left at the end for review and questions
- Presenter veers off onto tangents or lapses into story-telling
- Presenter is clearly unfamiliar with the PowerPoint presentation being used
- Errors in PowerPoint presentation or other visual aids
- Presenter uses filler words (um, ah, like, etc.)

Practice your delivery

- Practice giving the class to be sure you will cover all the material in the allotted time

- Practice delivering the class with your PowerPoint presentation
  - Proofread the presentation for errors
  - Be sure the material is in the most logical order
  - Smooth delivery; fix any technical difficulties

- Practice what questions you will ask

- Get feedback from another experienced presenter

- Feedback will include comments on your presenting voice, your presenting style, and your use of filler words

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Giving a great presentation

Great presentations are:

- Clear

- Concise

- Interesting

- Relevant

- Involve the audience

Great presentations are **clear**

- Speaking voice is loud enough

- Voice energy (similar to "command voice")

- Enunciation is clear

- Sound enthusiastic!

    - If you sound bored or tired, your class will be boring

Great presentations are concise

Choose your material carefully!

- Leave out any material the students do not need to know

- Focus on on the main points; don't give too much detail

- Be very careful if you include your personal experiences – do not go off on a tangent!

Great presentations are **interesting**

- You can make **any topic** interesting or boring.

- There is no boring material – only poorly edited material, and poorly presented material.

- Interesting presentations contain material that is **relevant to this audience.** So only include relevant material!

- People pay attention when they know they are going to need the information later!

  - ◆ Motivate your audience at the beginning of your class by explaining **why they need this information.**

  - ◆ "There will be a flight vs. flight knowledge test at the end of this class…"

Great presentations
involve the audience

Don't just talk at them – keep them involved!

- Get them to complete your sentences

- Include participatory activities in your class

- Keep the class moving!

- Ask questions!

Involve the audience by asking questions

Asking questions accomplishes two tasks: it keeps students involved, and it lets you gauge whether they have absorbed the material.

- Don't wait until the end – ask questions throughout the class.
- Right answer? Give positive reinforcement!
- Wrong answer? Don't be mean.
  - Ask guiding questions – **lead the student** to the right answer
  - Don't get hung up on someone who can't answer. You risk losing momentum. Just move on to the next person.
- Some students want attention, and will answer all your questions. But those that answer questions will remember the material better, so
- Be an equal opportunity teacher – **ask the students who don't raise their hand.**

Creating Good PowerPoint Presentations

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Good PowerPoint presentations have some common qualities

- Clear

- Uncluttered

- The right amount of information on each page

- Free from spelling and grammar errors

- Free from formatting errors

Good PowerPoint presentations are **clear**

- Choose a sans-serif font

- Make sure the font size is large enough
  - Use 40 to 44 point for the title
  - Use 24 or 28 point for the body (shrink to 22 or 20 point if necessary to fit on a page)

- Good spacing between paragraphs makes slides clearer
  - Best: 0.4 or 0.5 lines between paragraphs
  - Use 0.3 or 0.25 lines between paragraphs only if necessary to fit on a page

- Use bullets, not numbers - unless you have a need for numbers

Good PowerPoint presentations are **uncluttered**

- The most common mistake: using a cluttered or distracting background "theme"

- The second most common mistake: putting too much text on the page

  - Split into two pages when necessary

- Other common mistakes involve too many graphics or charts with too much detail

Good PowerPoint presentations **include only relevant graphics**

- Don't include graphics unless they **add information** that is relevant to the presentation.

- If you include a graphic, make it **large enough** to be clear and easily seen. Crop out any unnecessary parts.

- If you include a chart, make sure the text in the chart is large enough for the audience to read easily.

Thank you for your attention

You can find this information on the web at:

www.cap.mdickinson.com