

INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY

INTRODUCTION

1. Instructional and organizational skills are really a part of a wider skill generally known as 'leadership', a word you may have heard used in many contexts (and which has already been mentioned in other parts of your training) as a skill generally held to be a desirable quality of all managers and commanders. In the Services the word 'leadership' is sometimes used in much the same context as the word 'management' is used in civilian life. But no matter what these skills are called, they are exercised in much the same way. This document is intended to act as an introduction to the subject of Instruction and Organizational ability, both subjects are covered in depth in the following documentation available from the 121 Squadron website:

- a) [Instructional Techniques](#)
- b) [Leadership](#)
- c) [Leadership Style](#)
- d) [Communication](#)

MANAGEMENT SKILLS – KNOWLEDGE

2. In many ways you have already been initiated into the art of management by having yourself been drilled, disciplined, instructed and organized in an Air Training Corps squadron environment to which has now been added your study of the Corps structure and of squadron administration and organization. You cannot, for example, expect to be able to teach drill to others unless you have yourself learnt and experienced it, and you cannot expect to organize others until you have the necessary knowledge and background. Thus 2 of the basic qualities needed are KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE, and these you have been absorbing and acquiring.
3. One of the most important management skills is knowledge; and you must use this skill to guide and persuade a body of people (in your case a class of cadets) to do something or to learn something. The common situation, then, is the manager (or leader), the people to be managed (or led) and the task or job that they are to do. The big question – is how is it to be done? There are many ways in which the techniques of leadership or management skills may be applied, and the following example of an instructional situation may help you to understand and apply the practical aspects of leadership (or management).

EXAMPLE OF KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED IN A STAFF CADET TASK

4. Suppose that you are given the task of assisting a class of First Class Cadets to pass their Leading Cadet examination. The first requirement is to know what the cadets will have to do. There will, of course, be much experience in the squadron on which you can draw, and you will have taken the examination yourself. The following is an example of the things you will need to know about and consider in your task of helping your juniors with the examination:
 - a. What subjects? What date? Are the cadets eligible? How to enter?

- b. What incentives are there for the cadets to want to pass the examination? Badge? Certificate?
- c. What form of examination? Who sets it? Who marks it? How does the cadet know whether he has passed or not?

NOTE: The above questions should prompt a full study of ACTI No 21 and its Annexes. This will ensure that you know all about the examination and its administration. Naturally your class of cadets will ask you questions and you will need to be able to answer some of them if you are to merit their confidence.

- d. How does your class fit into the squadron's training programme? Consult the programme.
- e. What training aids? Obviously the first requirement will be the Training Handbooks – ACP's. Maps and compasses for map reading practices and any films and any of the aids for Principles of Flight that the squadron might have or that the class might make. Knowing what is available, you will need to plan in advance to obtain the items and your CO may need to consult the Civilian Committee on finance if materials are to be purchased for the cadets to make items of their own. Thus the matter of training aids leads back to your knowledge of squadron administration – the part played by the Adjutant, the Training Officer and the Supply Officer; they will help you in this. Your success in this will have a large bearing on the interest and enjoyment the class of cadets will get from their work in preparation for the examination.
- f. Progress? Not all cadets will be able to attend all the instructional periods arranged for them and so an individual progress record is needed. ACPs 12 to 14 are provided (ACTI No 4) for this purpose. Do you know how to use them?
- g. Project Training? Project training of at least 25 hours is mandatory. Does the squadron have fixed projects or are you to guide the cadets to choose their own? Are any of the cadets also doing the D of E scheme and can any of this work be integrated with the ATC syllabus? Can the Civilian Committee help by providing funds for the purchase of materials that might be needed for project training work?

MANAGEMENT SKILLS – ACHIEVING THE TASK

- 5. So much for the knowledge. What about the guiding of the cadets to learn the subjects and do the project work? Clearly it now becomes a question of communication – of passing your knowledge to each individual cadet so that he will see the incentives and know what is required of him. If this information and knowledge leads him to want to pass the examination, then the battle is already half-won. Learning comes from interest and wanting to know, and may well be achieved by private study to learn academic information and by practice to achieve skills in projects. Thus the instructor's primary aim is to develop interest and desire to know. Much has been written about instructional techniques and plenty of experience and advice is available at your squadron. The Instructional techniques section on the 121 Squadron website covers the subject in detail. In this instance it may be sufficient to give one example of the use of the senses HEARING, SEEING AND DOING and one example of a practical method of learning.

6. The example is in map-reading. The learner will derive some benefit if he HEARS you talking about maps (e.g. in a lecture), but his attention may wander and he may not hear vital parts. He may learn more if you give him a map so that he can SEE what you are talking about. He may learn much more when you take him out of the classroom and he can DO what you have tried to teach him by hearing and seeing.
7. Ultimately, your development of the learner's interest and desire to know should result in his consolidating his learning by private study, by reading the training handbooks and understanding what he reads. In your squadron you could use the system of testing private study (having created the individual's interest) by setting the study of a chapter or chapters of a training handbook followed by questioning the cadets, e.g. by oral or written questions, or by dividing the class into halves and asking one half to question the other orally. But remember that it is usually advisable to do some class work with or without the book first. This might be the only system open to a squadron which does not have specialist instructors in some subjects. One thing is certain, the only way you can discover whether your class of cadets has learnt anything is to ask them questions.

CONCLUSION

8. The management (leadership) aspects of instructional and organizational ability boil down to knowledge and communication. Almost every situation can be dealt with in this way. Whatever the task – an adventure training exercise, organizing attendance at annual camp, sponsoring the D of E Scheme, taking a party of cadets to Air Experience flying – learn all you can about the things that have to be done to ensure success in the task and then communicate with each individual cadet to get it done.

Further essential reading:-

- a) [Instructional Techniques](#)
- b) [Leadership](#)
- c) [Leadership Style](#)
- d) [Communication](#)