



Workbook

AETC Learning Professionals Consortium

The Flight Commander's Edge

Idea Lab

23 March 2021

The Air University
eSchool of Graduate Professional Military Education
Maxwell AFB, Alabama
www.airuniversity.af.edu

Welcome!

I want to welcome you to the Idea Lab Workshop for *The Flight Commander's Edge* (FCE) as part of the AETC Learning Professionals Consortium! I can tell you first-hand this program is all about strengthening the squadron at the most important and difficult level of leadership – the junior level. The FCE team is excited to showcase this leader development program and introduce you to the methods used over the past three years throughout the Air Force. This workshop centers on active participation and I look forward to hearing the group's ideas and experiences so be sure to join in the discussions.

The FCE program is designed to help you – the flight commander course director – construct a Flight Commander Leadership Course (FCLC) for your own unit or improve your current flight commander course. The work you do in this Idea Lab will be valuable to building a FCLC tailored to meet your unit's needs, so let's get started building better leaders!

Always learning, always leading,

COURTNEY L. SCOTT, Maj, USAF
Course Director
Air University eSchool of Graduate PME

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How to Use This Workbook

This Workbook serves three purposes.

First, it outlines the flow and **agenda** for the workshop and contains valuable FCE information.

Second, this Workbook serves as your **event notetaker**. Please **print the workbook** or if you do not have access to a printer, we suggest you have this open on another screen for easy access. Several of these worksheets are for you to fill out when prompted during the Idea Lab session, either individually or in your breakout group.

Third, the last section contains a **Checklist for Success** which will guide you to apply the work you have started here and actually conduct your own Flight Commander Leadership Course your home station.

We hope you find this workbook useful not only during the Idea Lab but after, when used with the **Course Director Handbook** and in conjunction with *The Flight Commander's Edge* community. This has been purposefully designed to help you create a well-designed and well-taught flight-level leadership course, valued by your participants and one that prepares them for critical leadership roles within the squadron.

Contact Us

The FCE team is happy to assist you in continuing the efforts you begin with this Idea Lab! If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact us through the organization email box or community below:

Email: flightcommandersedge@us.af.mil

Community: <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/eSchool/FlightCCEdge>

Overview

By the end of this workshop, you will:

- Understand the commander's prerogative for **strengthening the squadron** at the flight-leadership level
- Explain how *The Flight Commander's Edge* enables **leader development**
- Describe the Flight Commander Leadership Course design **framework**
- Appreciate how the **Experiential Learning Model** enables informal learning
- Apply/adapt **AU-provided materials** to design your own Flight Commander Leadership Course
- **Prepare for execution** of your own course at home station

Agenda

The workshop is divided into two parts:

Part I: Theory	Part II: Practice
Welcome (5 min)	Designing Your Flight Commander Leadership Course (5 min)
Pre-Work and Takeaways (15 min)	Breakout Session and Outbrief (~30 min)
What is <i>The Flight Commanders Edge</i> ? (5 min)	Preparing for Execution (5 min)
What is a <i>Flight Commander Leadership Course</i> ? (10 min)	Q&A (10 min)
How do Lessons Work? (10 min)	Help? The FCE Community (5 min)
Break (10 min)	Wrap-up

Administration

- ✓ Please leave your cameras and microphones OFF during the large group presentations.
- ✓ If you need to ask a question, please do so in the chat – we will have someone monitoring it for follow up.
- ✓ Please turn your cameras and audio ON during your Breakout Sessions.
- ✓ Any questions we can't answer during the workshop, we will list in a "Parking Lot" for follow-up near the end or in the community after the workshop is completed.

Part I – Getting Started

In the first part of the workshop, we will begin with a review of the **Workshop Prework**.

Pre-Work Activities

Before the start of the workshop, you were asked to:

- ✓ Watch the FCE video
- ✓ Review the FAQs
- ✓ Conduct an interview
- ✓ Submit results via FCE poll
- ✓ Sign up for the FCE Community via the website



Questions to consider (as you have time today): *Would you use pre-work in your local Flight Commander Leadership Course (FCLC)? If so, what?*

What is the educational purpose of prework?

Revisit this question at the end of this workshop. You may find you have some additional pre-work ideas to consider as you plan your FCLC!


Breakout Exercise I

Prompts	My Notes
<p><i>15 minutes to get to know the small group and answer the questions below</i></p>	<p>My Facilitator's name is:</p> <p>Other breakout members are:</p>
<p>Discuss the results of YOUR interviews, and answer:</p> <p>What are the most important topics for flight-level leadership development?</p> <p>What must ABSOLUTELY be covered in a course for my unit?</p>	

Part II (A) – What is The Flight Commander's Edge?

In this part of the workshop, we will look at the “big picture” FCE program. What it is, how it works, and why it works.

What is *The Flight Commander's Edge*?

Prompts	My Notes
<p>Who operates <i>The Flight Commander's Edge</i>?</p> <p>✓ <i>The eSchool of Graduate PME at Air University</i></p>	
<p>What is the purpose of <i>The Flight Commander's Edge</i>?</p>	
<p>Why is it important that <i>The Flight Commander's Edge</i> have a community of practice? We will answer this as we go along!</p> 	

Why was *The Flight Commander's Edge* established?

Excerpt from CSAF Memo “Squadron Revitalization Implementation Plan” (1 June 2018)

Strengthen Squadron Leadership and Culture


Strengthening the culture of a squadron begins by acknowledging that commanders set the standards for the unit and re-enforce them every day with actions, words, and deeds. While all the actions in this implementation plan will contribute to increased lethality and readiness, none will have a more profound impact on successful mission accomplishment than the selection of and development of an inspiring leadership team. The following actions are designed to improve how we select and prepare our most talented Airmen to become inspiring leaders in our most essential level of combat command – the squadron.

Establish Flight Commander Courses

Intent: Commanding a flight is the first level of command and an excellent opportunity for Wing, Group, and Squadron Commanders to assess potential of our most talented leaders and begin targeted development as part of an overall talent management effort. The path to exceptional Squadron Commanders begins by investing in our Flight Commanders.

Tasks: Wing Commanders will establish Flight Commander/leader courses focused on key skills needed to succeed in this first essential level of leadership. AETC will offer course content options but Wing Commanders will have ownership of the curriculum. SAF/IG and MAJCOM/IGs will include visits to these courses during staff assistance visits to ensure best practices are widely shared across active, guard, reserve, and civilian organizations.


What is *The Flight Commander's Edge* Workshop?

Key Points	My Notes
<p>Equip/prepare local units to host their own flight-level leadership development programs</p> <p>Provide professionally-developed resources</p> <p>Cast a wider net across the force for sharing resources and ideas</p>	
 <p><i>What do I hope to learn from this workshop?</i></p>	

What is a Flight Commander Leadership Course? (FCLC)

Key Points	My Notes
<p>A 2- to 5-day experiential development opportunity</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #c00000; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Goal 1</div> <div style="background-color: #f0d0d0; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve understanding of flight commander roles, duties, and responsibilities </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #806030; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Goal 2</div> <div style="background-color: #f0e0c0; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase proficiency in key flight-level leadership skills and behaviors </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="background-color: #60a040; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Goal 3</div> <div style="background-color: #d0f0d0; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orient flight commanders on unit policies, programs, plans, and procedures </div> </div> </div>	<p><i>What goals does my commander want to achieve with this FCLC?</i></p>


Why Focus on Leadership?

Prompts	My Notes
 <p><i>Why a leadership focus?</i></p>	

Part II (B) – The Flight Commander Leadership Course Concept

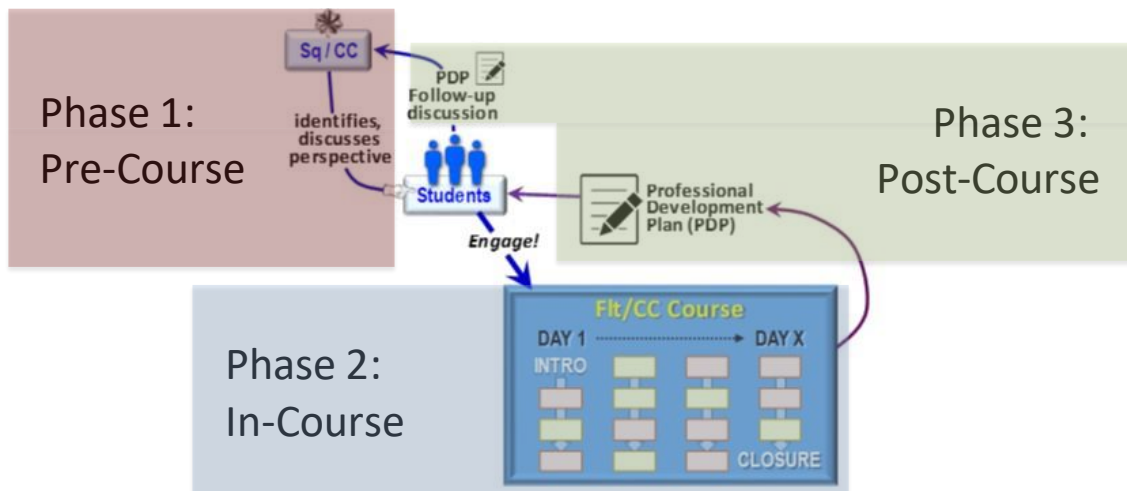
The FCLC combines the best parts of existing flight-level orientation courses with informal, easy-to-present leadership instruction to provide a tailored, leadership development experience. Each student brings some expertise to the table...and that expertise is shared with the other participants.

In this module, we will look at how the program is structured and the resources available to you for building and conducting your own courses.

Key Points	My Notes
<p>Leadership Based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Highlights critical skills and behaviors every flight-level leader needs to succeed</i> 	
<p>Application Focused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Uses experiential methodology to reinforce key flight-level leadership skills and behaviors through dialogue and action</i> 	
<p>2- to 5- days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Based on needs of unit</i> 	
<p>In person or remote</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Multi-phase delivery method helps peoples internalize lessons and prepare for future leadership challenges</i> ➤ <i>Delivery method is whatever works best for your unit!</i> 	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <p><i>What does your commander want for your FCLC to be?</i></p> </div>	

Course Phases

The FCLC model breaks a course down into three phases: pre-course, in-course, and post-course.



Phase 1: Pre-Course

The pre-course phase happens 1-2 weeks before the course begins. Pre-course activities prepare the participant for success in the classroom. Activities include a discussion with the squadron commander (or equivalent) which is important for expectations and goal setting, and any pre-readings which the course director selects for awareness.

Phase 2: In-Course

Phase 2 is the actual course itself. During the course, participants engage in selected leadership lessons (which are AU-provided) and local content lessons (provided by base experts or agencies) over the course of several days.

These in-course lessons culminate in an end-of-course assignment: the creation of a *Professional Development Plan* (PDP) to guide future development.

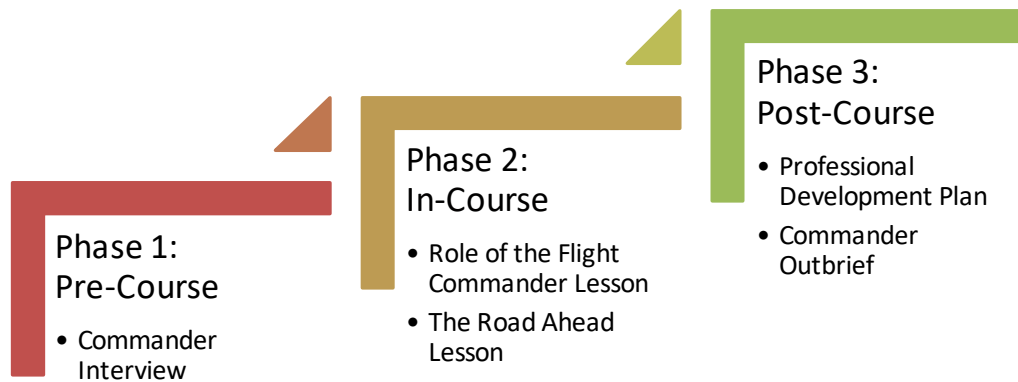
Phase 3: Post-Course

Phase 3 is perhaps the most important. After the course is complete, participants write a *Professional Development Plan* which provides a roadmap for their future development. This plan is briefed to the participant's squadron commander (or equivalent) to garner feedback and developmental support, *and to earn course credit*.

When you put all three of these phases together, you get not a course...but a *development experience* which *introduces, reinforces,* and sets the students up to *master* the leadership skills necessary for success in their job.

Course Flow

The three-phase model drives individual leadership growth through self-reflection and assessment. This self-reflection and assessment starts before the course with the Commander Interview. In this interview, participants (many for the first time) get to learn the commander's perspective on leadership, discuss specific real-world goals for the participant's flight, and establish desired outcomes – or things the student should learn from the course AND BE ABLE TO DO in the real world.



Recommended Lessons

We recommend that each FCE course start with a specific AU-provided lesson -- *The Role of the Flight Commander*. This lesson leverages the pre-course commander discussion (from Phase 1) and sets the stage for self-assessment at the end of each leadership lesson in the classroom.

We also recommend that the course close with another AU-provided lesson -- *The Road Ahead*. In this lesson, participants are given instructions to draft their own Professional Development Plan and close the loop with their squadron commanders through a post-course discussion (in Phase 3).

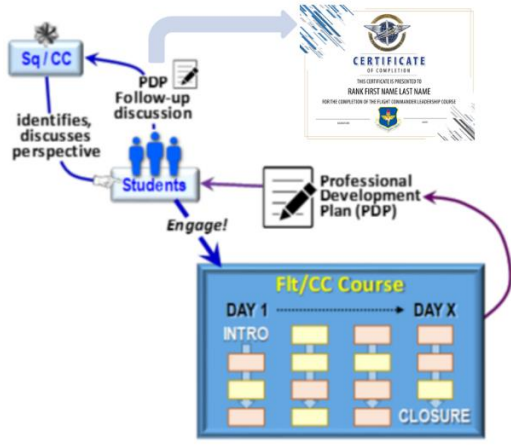
This Professional Development Plan is critical to success.

My Notes

The Professional Development Plan (PDP)

The PDP is a key component of the experiential learning approach used throughout the course. Without this practical exercise as a capstone, behaviors may not be adequately reinforced and result in improved performance.

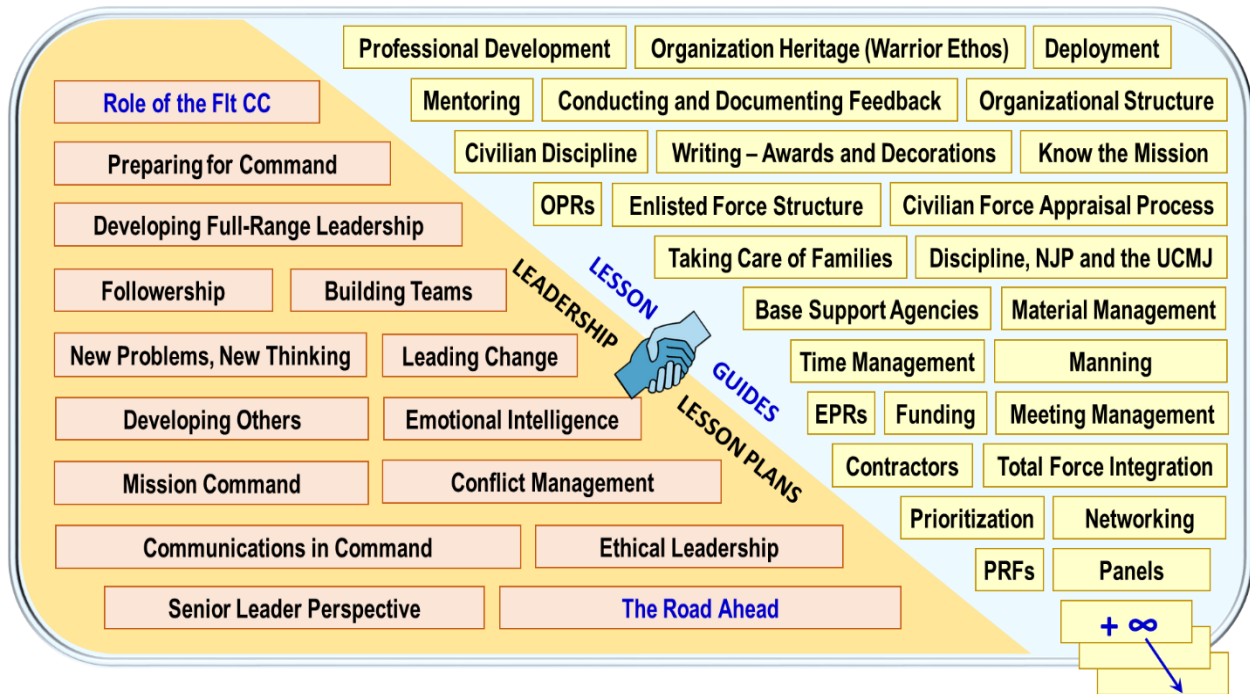
NOTE: The **eSchool, Building a Professional Development Plan (2018)** guide is included in the appendix of *The Role of the Flight Commander* lesson plan (included later in the workbook).

Key Points	My Notes
<p>The Professional Development Plan (PDP) is an end-of-course assignment that provides your FCLC participants the opportunity to identify specific goals and develop action plans and timelines for achieving those goals.</p> <p>Each of the AU-provided FCLC leadership lessons include self-assessments for various leadership skills and behaviors which help guide your participants to develop their own PDP.</p> <p>The PDP “closes the loop” in learning, which starts with the pre-course commander discussion and ends with a course completion certificate presented by the squadron commander after the PDP-based discussion.</p>	
	

Part III – Experiential Learning

We've said that you don't need to be an expert to put on one of these courses in your unit...and you are probably wondering how that is possible. The answer is *experiential learning*, or "learning by doing."

Lesson Plans and Lesson Guides



Lesson Plans

Air University provides recommended leadership lesson plans through *The Flight Commander's Edge* community. The topics reflect the things that all flight-level leaders need to be good at from a leadership perspective.

These lessons were built by the leadership experts at Air University based on the input of leaders (both senior and junior) all around the Air Force. They apply to flight level leaders everywhere and reflect both the new **Airman's Foundational Competency Model** and the even newer **Airman Leadership Qualities**.

Lesson Guides

Lesson Guides are NOT full lesson plans. They are exactly what the name implies – guides for you to provide to YOUR LOCAL BASE EXPERTS. They don't provide lesson content themselves. Instead, they serve to help your LOCAL BASE EXPERTS – people like the SJA, or someone from Manpower, or someone from Services -- tailor presentations to things that flight-level leaders need to know.

Special Lessons

Of the 15 AU-provided lessons, we have four CORE lessons that we recommend ALL courses use.

- **The Role of the Flight Commander** is meant to be the first lesson in every course. It sets the stage for success when combined with the pre-course commander interview.
- **The Road Ahead** should be the last lesson of the course. It paves the way for completion of the Personal Development Plan and sets the stage for mastery of course outcomes.
- **Preparing for Command** highlights the responsibilities of flight-level leaders and how to prepare for those responsibilities.
- **Senior Leader Perspective** presents a high-level leadership perspective on what is important at the flight-leadership level and how flight-level leaders are critical to the mission.

Every flight-level leadership course should contain these four lessons, because they are the ones that truly set the stage for flight-level leadership success.

Detailed Lesson Descriptions

To review detailed descriptions for all lessons and guides, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ym3exzbi>

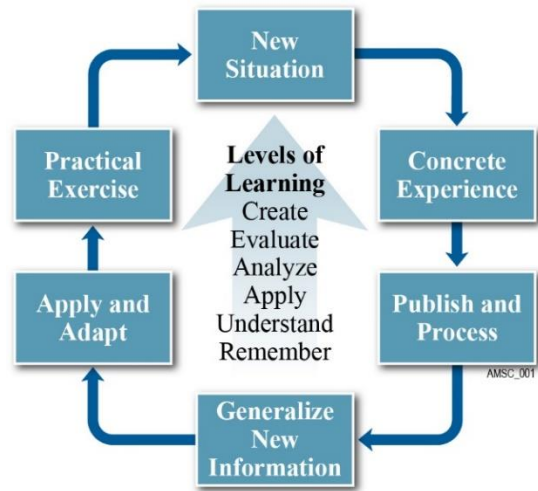
My Notes

The Experiential Learning Model

Experiential learning is "learning by doing."

It is based on the key idea that we learn best from "direct experience" -- and the more times we are exposed to a subject, and the more times we interact with it in a meaningful way -- we get better.

We move up the levels of learning ladder from simply understanding something, but instead being able to do or create something based on that new knowledge.



The experiential model focuses on continuous learning gained through personal and environmental experiences. Key points on the model are summarized in the table below.

Key Points	My Notes
<p>At the beginning of learning, students share a concrete experience to set the stage for learning.</p> <p>Following these stage-setting experiences, students publish and process their learning. Dialogue is key, and feedback is gained from peers and facilitators to identify and internalize lessons learned. It is at this point where learning begins.</p> <p>After processing, students generalize new information through dialogue or lecture.</p> <p>In application, students address how to apply the new knowledge in practice and adapt it to resolve ill-structured problems relevant to their own workplaces.</p> <p>The experiential cycle is capped with a practical exercise that helps the student transition the knowledge or skill from the classroom back into the real world where it will be used on the job.</p>	

In all AU-provided lessons, the practical exercise is a **reflective self-assessment of skills and behaviors required of a flight commander** and the development of a comprehensive *Professional Development Plan* which will be used to guide future learning.

Lesson Plan Sample: *The Role of the Flight Commander*

What follows (pages 20-42 of this workbook) is a walk-through the first lesson in the FCE ecosystem, *The Role of the Flight Commander*.

Follow along as the workshop facilitator explains the sequence and standardized nature of the FCE leadership lesson framework.

Each of the AU-provided leadership lesson packages contain the lesson plan and a slide set for personalization by your unit.

In addition, within the FCE community (on AU Canvas LMS) lesson packages might also include information from the field (examples provided by other units who have used the materials), To Learn More (links to other agencies or information the community has found helpful) and other Resources, to include some videos of the lessons in action.



NOTE: For brevity, this Lesson Plan Extract DOES NOT contain appendices or slides. You will find the complete lesson plan in *The Flight Commander's Edge* community.

How to Use this Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is divided into three key sections and an appendix containing supporting material.

The **About the Lesson** section outlines the lesson and identifies requirements for its effective use. Course Directors should use this section to (a) understand the purpose and context of the lesson, (b) learn about lesson pre-requisites, and (c) guide the selection of facilitators.

The **Before the Lesson** section provides details on the preparation required for this lesson, including participant prerequisites (if any), recommended facilitator pre-course readings, and guidance on how to prepare the classroom.

The **Presenting the Lesson** section contains the actual lesson plan. It provides the recommended outline, discussion, and slide prompts along with actual *questions* and *recommended language* for the facilitator to use in the classroom.

The **Appendix** includes any required in-class handouts or exercise material.

For more information on how lessons are structured, or how to use them in the course, see the ***Course Director's Guide*** or ***Facilitator's Resources***.

About the Lesson

The Role of the Flight Commander

Overview

This lesson serves to introduce the *Flight Commander Leadership Course* and the role of the flight commander. Participants are introduced to the role of the flight commander from the perspectives of the Chief of Staff and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and discuss the roles and responsibilities of command as defined in Air Force Instruction 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*. Leveraging a pre-course interview with their squadron commanders (or equivalents), participants set goals for their flight command tenures. The lesson ends with an introduction to the lesson self-assessments which will follow at the end of each subsequent leadership lesson and the *Professional Development Plan* end-of-course assignment.

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

1. Interpret the role of the flight commander from various perspectives.
2. Understand the Air Force perspective on flight commander roles and responsibilities.
3. Develop goals for flight command based on commander's intent and mission requirements.

Recommended Prerequisites

- None

Recommended Time

- 50 minutes

Recommended Facilitator Qualifications

This lesson is designed for a facilitator with the following minimum qualifications:

1. Subject matter knowledge
2. Command-level experience

Subject matter knowledge can be developed using the information presented in **Preparing the Facilitator** section of this document.

Before the Lesson

Preparing the Participant

Before the course, the participant should receive and complete the following actions.

- eSchool, *Flight Commander Discussion Guide* (2018). Each participant must interview their squadron commander (or equivalent) before attending the course. This handout provides key questions, which the participant must answer before the course. The guide also includes assignment guidance for the final lesson of the course (*The Road Ahead*).

Preparing the Commander

Before the course, the participant's squadron commander (or equivalent) should receive and complete the following actions.

- eSchool, *Squadron Commander Discussion Guide* (2018). This guide supports the participant interview described above. It also provides expectations the commander should have of the participant when he/she returns from the course.

These discussion guides are available in the **Facilitator Resources** section of *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community. They are also included in the lesson Appendix.

Preparing the Facilitator

All required materials and participant preparation, plus:

- None.

(Optional) Additional deep-dive preparation materials are available on *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community.

Preparing the Classroom

Ensure the classroom provides/is provisioned with:

- Adequate classroom space for separate small group discussions.
- A white board or an easel with butcher block paper.
- Computer and projector (internet connectivity for YouTube required).

Preparing Required Materials

Prepare one copy of each handout below for each participant.

- eSchool, *Flight Commander Discussion Guide* (2018)
- eSchool, *Squadron Commander Discussion Guide* (2018)
- eSchool, *Commander's Duties and Responsibilities Worksheet* (2018)
- eSchool, *Building a Professional Development Plan* (2018)

Handouts are available in the Appendix.

Presenting the Lesson

NOTE: This lesson is designed for up to five (5) groups of participants. Groups should be no larger than five (5) members to maximize participation during small group discussion.

Course Introduction (10 minutes)

The course introduction serves to start the *Flight Commander Leadership Course*. A slide template is provided for this block. Tailor it for your organization and course plan.

Slide 1: Flight Commander Leadership Course

Introduce the course.

Welcome to the *Flight Commander Leadership Course*. In this course you will learn about what it means to be, and how to succeed as a _____ (insert your unit name) flight commander.

Slide 2: Course Objectives

This slide provides recommended objectives for this course. Tailor these objectives based on your course design. (See the Course Director's Handbook for additional information.)

This course provides a holistic look at the role of the flight commander in _____ (insert your unit name). By the end of the course, you should be able to perform your flight commander duties better than before.

The course objectives are shown here.

Slide 3: Schedule

Insert your course schedule details on this slide.

Slide 4: Course Prerequisites

Remind participants of course prerequisites.

Before the course started, you were provided a *Flight Commander Discussion Guide* and given instructions to discuss your role and responsibilities as a flight commander with your squadron commander (or equivalent). That guide, and the questions in it, will be referenced throughout the course.

If you haven't completed the guide, or if you don't have it with you, we can reschedule you for a future Flight Commander Leadership Course.

Slide 5: Administrative Information

Insert other pre-course information specific to your unit on this slide.

Lesson Introduction (10 minutes)

This part of the lesson introduces the lesson concepts and presents the role of the flight commander as the first line of leadership.

A set of slides is provided for the lesson blocks of instruction. These slides are designed to support the experiential narrative included in this lesson plan.

Slide 6: The Role of the Flight Commander

Introduce the lesson.

In many units, the flight commander is the first line of leadership. This first lesson looks at the role of the flight commander and how the flight commander serves a much larger purpose than most people realize.

Slide 7: Objectives

This slide lists the lesson objectives.

After participants have reviewed the lesson objectives, continue.

(Optional) Slide 8: From the Commander

This slide is a placeholder for a course introduction video from your MAJCOM (or other) commander. It is optional, but it sets the stage for future discussions in the course.

Introduce the video.

Before we start the lesson, let's take a few minutes and watch this brief video from _____ (insert presenter) on the role of the flight commander.

A sample MAJCOM Commander video is available on Milsuite at the following link (CAC-required):

<https://www.milsuite.mil/video/watch/video/11306>

After video is complete, continue.

Slide 9: Small Group Discussion

Divide the participants into small groups (4 or 5 members) and prompt the participants with the following experience.

In your small group, take five (5) minutes to introduce yourself and answer the following question:

What is the role of the flight commander?

Consider your experience, and the perspective gained from your commander interview before the course. Jot down your thoughts and be prepared to present your answers at the end of the discussion.

Initial Discussion (5 minutes)

The initial discussion focuses on interpreting the participants understanding of the flight commander role in the context of personal experience and commander interview completed before the course. At the end of the discussion, participants should have a good understanding of the role of the flight commander in their own words.

Slide 10: What Did You Learn?

Reconvene the large group and ask one member from each group to share their group's answer. Record key points from answers on a whiteboard.

Anticipated Responses: Answers will vary but should center on examples of mission and people. The answers from the discussion is a segue to actual duties and responsibilities in the next section.

- Executing the mission
- Leading people
- Managing resources
- Improving the unit

After a brief discussion, continue.

Content Presentation (10 minutes)

The previous discussion asked participants to define the role of the flight commander in their own words. In Air Force Instruction 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*, the Air Force describes the role of the commander in terms of "duties" and "responsibilities." This instruction is not only written for official "G-series orders" commanders, but for leaders at all levels. This section summarizes those duties and responsibilities and prepares the participants for the application activity.

Distribute the eSchool, *Commander's Duties and Responsibilities Worksheet (2018)* document.

When complete, continue.

Slide 11: Commander's Duties and Responsibilities

Introduce the duties and responsibilities of a commander by stating the following:

In the last discussion, you listed the roles of the flight commander. Your results focused on several key points, but did you know that the Air Force actually defines what a flight commander should do in an Air Force Instruction?

Air Force Instruction 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*, describes the role of the commander in terms of "duties" and "responsibilities." This instruction is not only written for official "G-series orders" commanders, but for leaders at all levels.

There are four official "duties" and "responsibilities." They are shown here, and on your handout.

The handout is summarized from AFI 1-2 and provides some basic definitions for each area.

In your small groups, take a moment to review these duties and responsibilities. Discuss them in your group and see where your earlier answers would fit...or what you missed. In about five (5) minutes, we will use this information in a short exercise.

As the facilitator, you should be prepared to address any confusion on the duties and responsibilities not resolved in the small groups.

After five (5) minutes, continue.

Application Activity (10 minutes)

Now that participants have an Air Force-level understanding of flight commander duties and responsibilities, this exercise helps them interpret the goals set for them by their squadron commanders and establish personal goals for their tenure in flight command.

Below are the discussion areas that should have been discussed during the pre-course discussion:

- Unit Mission/Vision
- Organizational expectations and how the flight contributes to achieving the overall mission
- Personal Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities for Improvement
- Additional topics pertinent to the squadron commander or flight commander

Slide 12: My Duties and Responsibilities

Begin the exercise with the following directions.

During your pre-course commander interview, you asked your commander for his/her “goals” for you as a flight commander. Now that we’ve defined the key roles and responsibilities of your position from an Air Force perspective, you must reconcile your commander’s “goals” with your larger responsibilities.

On the back of the *Commander’s Duties and Responsibilities Worksheet* you will find a chart for goal setting. Use this chart to map your assigned “goals” with where they fit. Also take a few minutes to add other goals – ones that you have established for yourself as a flight commander – to the chart.

You will use this chart when you complete your *Personal Development Plan* in the final lesson of the course.

Take five (5) minutes on this, and if you have any questions, see if you can resolve them in your small groups. If not, ask me.

Begin the exercise and monitor for time.

When complete, continue.

Lesson Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

The final lesson activity is an introduction to the self-assessment exercises that occur in all future leadership lessons. This section also introduces the *Personal Development Plan*, which all course participants will to complete following the final lesson – *The Road Ahead* – and discuss with their squadron commander (or equivalent).

Distribute the eSchool, ***Building a Professional Development Plan (2018)*** document to all participants.

When complete, continue.

Slide 13: Planning for Self-Development

Describe how the remainder of the course is organized.

Now that you have had the opportunity to consider your specific goals and how they relate to your duties and responsibilities as a flight commander, it's time to think about long-term development.

As you go through the remainder of the Flight Commander Leadership Course, you will experience two different types of lessons: leadership lessons and local (or “how to”) lessons

The leadership lessons focus on key leadership topics that you should understand as a flight-level leader. The local, or “how to,” lessons focus on how things work here at _____ (insert your unit name).

Each of the leadership lessons will end with a self-assessment, where you will have an opportunity to grade your performance in the area presented. These self-assessments will be an input into your *Professional Development Plan (PDP)*.

At the end of each local lesson, you will have an opportunity to provide feedback to the presenter and help improve course content for future participants.

Slide 14: The Professional Development Plan Assignment

Introduce the *Professional Development Plan* assignment and set expectations for graduation.

The PDP is your ticket to graduation. It is an assignment which you must complete to earn credit for this course.

The *Building a Professional Development Plan* handout walks you through the entire assignment step-by-step. This assignment:

- **builds on the content of each leadership lesson,**
- **helps you plan to improve your leadership strengths, and**
- **provides an opportunity for feedback and mentoring.**

After your PDP is complete, you must schedule a meeting with your squadron commander (or equivalent) and brief him/her on the results of your training. After

this presentation, your commander will present you with your completion certificate.

If you complete the activities in each of the leadership lessons, you will have no problem finishing this assignment at the end of the course.

Please review the PDP handout for instructions, and ask me if you have any questions.

End. Break (10 minutes).

NOTE: Appendices and slides have been removed from this sample lesson plan extract.

Break – View video of a Lesson in Action!



Break

Please Return in
10 Minutes




The Intellectual and Leadership Center of the Air Force

The Role of the Flight Commander

< <https://youtu.be/Qbk0BmCat58?t=406> >

During the break take a few minutes to watch select portions of this lesson in action.

Facilitated by Dr. Chris Shannon (Lt Col, USAF, ret) during the formative evaluation phase of lesson development, Dr. Shannon used the AU-provided lesson plan and slide-set, personalized it for his presentation style, and led a group of 42 ABW FCLC participants of varying ranks through this session to rave reviews. We find watching this lesson in action motivating and a great resource to share with you!

Prompts	My Notes
<p>Do you have any questions for Dr. Shannon? He will be available during the Q&A at the end of the course.</p> 	

Part IV – Designing Your Course / Breakout Exercise II

In this part of the workshop, you will apply the *The Flight Commander's Edge* methodology to your own situation and adapt it to create your own Flight Commander Leadership Course.

Step 1: Understand Your Needs and Constraints

Up until this point, we've been talking about your units needs in terms of commander's intent – essentially what your commander wants you to do. It's time to translate those into **needs** and **constraints** – or "Must Dos" and "Must Not Dos."

Needs	Constraints
<p>What must my course cover?</p> <p>How long must my course be?</p> <p>Who is my target audience?</p> <p>Will my commander participate?</p> <p>What other key things must I DO with this course?</p>	<p>What are my restrictions and limitations?</p> <p>What must I NOT DO in my course?</p>

My Notes
Empty space for notes

Step 2: Identify Your Lessons

Review the lesson descriptions on the following pages for a brief overview of the content in each lesson.

Prompts	My Notes
<p>Identify your lessons</p> <p><i>Use the list from your commander interview to ensure you select lesson content according to your unit commander directions.</i></p> <p><i>Select content tailored to your unit's specific needs.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure you consider MAJCOM/NAF/Wing guidance and ascertain the intended focus for the course (lesson topic priority, weight of effort, emphasis areas, etc.).</i></p>	<p>List from Commander Interview <i>(See next page for full FCE list and descriptions)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Role and Responsibilities of a Flight Commander <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing for Command <input type="checkbox"/> Awards and Decorations <input type="checkbox"/> Base Support Agencies <input type="checkbox"/> Civilian Force Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Management <input type="checkbox"/> Developing Others <input type="checkbox"/> Discipline, NJP, and the UCMJ <input type="checkbox"/> Documenting Feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Effective Communications – Speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Effective Communications - Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Intelligence <input type="checkbox"/> Enlisted Force Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Followership <input type="checkbox"/> Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Leading Change <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Mission Command <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Heritage <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Structure and Mission <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Reports and Appraisals <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritization <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving and Decision Making <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Taking Care of Families and the Key Spouse Program <input type="checkbox"/> Team Building / Team-level Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> The Total Force <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

AU-Provided Leadership Lesson Descriptions

Core Lessons

Each course template begins and ends with a special leadership lesson. Called “bookend” lessons, these two lessons are designed to serve as the course introduction and the course wrap-up. They are underlined below.

The Role of the Flight Commander (First lesson): This introduces the FCLC and the role of the flight commander. Focus is on the roles and responsibilities of command as defined in Air Force Instruction 1-2, Commander's Responsibilities. The lesson ends with an introduction to the lesson self-assessments which follow at the end of each subsequent leadership lesson and the Professional Development Plan end-of-course assignment.

Preparing for Command (Recommended second lesson): Addresses three of the key areas essential to prepare for flight leadership. Is designed to equip students with broad knowledge and tools necessary to help develop their command-skills prior to taking a flight commander position.

Senior Leader Perspective (Recommended second-to-last lesson): Senior leadership is responsible for establishing and communicating the vision down the chain of command, as well as mentoring aspiring leaders on what can be expected of those in the position of flight leadership. This lesson should be tailored to the level of leadership available to speak to the students (e.g., wing commander, group commander, etc.).

The Road Ahead (Last lesson): This lesson serves as the capstone of the Flight Commander Leadership Course. Participants summarize their self-assessments and are re-introduced to their end-of-course project – the Professional Development Plan.

General Leadership Lessons

Building and Busting Teams: As the military is inherently a team-driven organism, this lesson briefly reviews three areas of building effective teams: team dynamics, how to build a team, and how to sustain and improve an existing team. Participants are introduced to the behaviors which can build, or bust, a team.

Communications in Command: The lesson exams key examples of communications-in-command to help participants differentiate between communications requirements for commanders and non-commanders.

Conflict Management: This lesson explores basic sources of conflict and provides insight to five recognized conflict management styles.

Developing Full-Range Leadership: This lesson examines how to develop leadership abilities across the full-range of leadership types with a focus on transactional and transformational levels of leadership.

Developing Others: This lesson exposes flight commanders to their role in strengthening the squadron by developing others as a “talent enabler” and the importance of developing others.

Emotional Intelligence: This lesson describes the link between emotional intelligence skills and leadership. It introduces flight commanders to the essential emotional intelligence skills that matter most for success in their flights.

Ethical Leadership: Specifically targeted for developing a thoughtful ethical mindset as part of preparing for flight command, *Ethical Leadership* may be one of the most important lessons in this series.

Followership: Students discover how followership skills link directly to leadership skills through exercises and activities.

Leading Change: The flight commander has a specific role as a change agent regarding organizational change: to support the organizational change culture and help shape its meaning to members of the flight. This lesson highlights some tools used to support change at the flight-level.

Mission Command in Leadership: This lesson examines how the Army concept of mission command (MC) can be used to ensure mission accomplishment while promoting flexibility.

New Problems, New Thinking: Designed to motivate new flight commanders to discover they may need to employ a new depth of thinking when faced with novel or unfamiliar experiences.

AU-Suggested Lesson Guides

Air University has identified 27 recommended topic areas and provided Lesson Guides to help you structure and focus content to your unit's mission.

Awards and Decorations: Flight Commanders are the first step in the process of formally nominating their Airmen for a decoration or award. This guide suggests using AFI 36-2803 which outlines the process and responsibilities of writing, approving, and presenting awards and decorations to eligible recipients.

Base Support Agencies: Flight Commanders are charged with ensuring their team is physically and mentally prepared to accomplish the mission. To lead your flight in an efficient and effective manner, you must know what support agencies are at your team's disposal in order to address the multitude of matters that will inevitably arise in the lives of your team.

Civilian Appraisals: Flight Commanders should constantly be looking for ways to evaluate and recognize superior performance by all members of your team. This guide recommends ways to do that.

Civil Service Force Structure: Flight commanders are responsible for incorporating civilians into their flight team but must recognize that managing a civil service civilian is different than managing a DoD contractor or military member.

Deployment: Flight Commanders are responsible for tracking the readiness posture of their personnel. This requires an understanding of how the AEF system and individual deployments work.

Discipline, NJP, and the UCMJ: Flight Commanders are responsible for maintaining control of their team and reprimanding unacceptable behavior in an appropriate manner. It is also important to know what resources are available on your installation to support the flight commander but also to support the Airman being reprimanded. In this way, an Airman's rights are preserved, and the situation can be handled in a reasonable, impartial, and lawful manner.

Enlisted Force Structure: Flight Commanders should charge enlisted members with the trust and authority to operate at a level commensurate with the education, training, and experience of their respective rank.

Enlisted Performance Reports: Capturing the actions and impacts of enlisted Airmen is different than that of officers and must be considered with regard to the Airman's level of responsibility.

Funding: Flight Commanders need to be familiar with the Air Force budget cycle in order to effectively manage the budgetary requirements of their flights.

Manning: Manpower is one of the resources Flight Commanders must manage on a daily basis. They should understand how manpower is allocated and how to use personnel effectively.

Material Management: It is important for leaders at all levels of command to be familiar with the role of the local LRS.

Mentoring: Mentoring is an inherent responsibility of leadership. This guide provides a focus on mentee development that gives mentees the ability to manage their own development and learning.

Officer Performance Reports: A leader should devote ample care and consideration into capturing the job performance of team members to help set them up for future success.

Organizational Structure and the Mission: Understanding the mission is the first step towards recognizing the role of each organization in reaching success as an Air Force.

Organizational Heritage: It is important to recognize where the wing has been, the people who have shaped it, and their sacrifices which have formed its culture.

Prioritization: Flight Commanders may have to adapt their personal methods of prioritizing to successfully lead their flight. It is critical to align efforts with the Squadron Commander's priorities.

Professional Development: Significant differences exist in Professional Development among officers, enlisted, and civilians which must be accounted for when mentoring or advising members of a team.

Promotion Recommendation Forms: Flight Commanders should understand how to convey concisely the mission impact of their team members' efforts and achievements. Depending on your unit's processes, the Flight Commanders may be involved with the first major effort to capture the important career activities of their officers in a form that remains a part of their official record (e.g., PRF inputs, OPRs, awards, etc.).

Taking Care of Families: Flight Commanders not only have to demonstrate an appropriate balance for their Airmen, but also encourage it with meaningful communication and follow through to ensure your team maintains a proper balance.

Time and Meeting Management: Flight Commanders have limited time and must be divided appropriately so as not to be consumed with any subset of tasks.

Total Force Integration: Flight Commander must be aware of the distinct personnel requirements of the total force to successfully develop the supervisor/subordinate relationship paramount to mission success.

Working with Contractors: Flight commanders are responsible for incorporating contractors into their flight team but must recognize that managing a DoD contractor is different than managing a civil servant or military member.

Flight Commander Panel: This panel of experienced Flight Commanders has familiarity and insight into the position and how to navigate the role of leading a flight.

Senior Enlisted Panel: This panel of SNCOs has perspective into what tasks are best delegated to flight SNCOs as well as how to cultivate a positive and productive flight culture.

They can also provide insight into how the flight leadership team supports the efforts of the squadron leadership team.

Squadron Commander Panel: This panel of experienced squadron commanders has a wide range of insight into the Flight Commander position, how to navigate the role of leading and developing others, and how Flight Commanders can help drive the culture and direction of the squadron.

Step 3: Select a Template

2-day FCLC	3-day FCLC	4-day FCLC	5-day FCLC
<p>Leadership-only course.</p> <p>A leadership-focused course with no local content. (Not recommended.)</p>	<p>Recommended minimum length.</p> <p>Allows inclusion of some/all leadership lessons and some local content.</p>	<p>Recommended classroom-only maximum.</p> <p>Allows inclusion of all leadership content and substantial local content.</p>	<p>Recommended for classroom / off-site activity events.</p> <p>Allows robust leadership presentation, local content, and off-site teambuilding.</p>
Up to 16 hours of instruction.	Up to 24 hours of instruction	Up to 32 hours of instruction	Up to 40 hours of instruction

The **2-day FCLC** is a **leadership-only course**, built using only the AU-provided leadership lessons. This course doesn't have time to address your local content. Use if you only have a short period of time to work with.

The **3-day FCLC** is a **leadership and local content** course. This has the most common course structure used in the field.

The **4- and 5-day** courses are for longer courses designed to cover more local content, often with a lot of leadership involvement.

Prompts	My Notes
<p>Select your template</p> <p><i>Which template will my course use?</i></p> <p><i>Why?</i></p>	

Step 4: Build Your Schedule

The final step is to populate your template.

Once you have decided the format you want to follow, simply plug in your lessons in whatever logical order you choose.

However, remember a few key things we recommend:

- The first lesson should be **The Role of the Flight Commander** and the last lesson should be **The Road Ahead**. Together, these bookend lessons set the stage for pre-course learning and post-course follow-up, both of which are CRITICAL to the experiential learning method used in our courseware.

We also suggest that you include **Preparing for Command** and **Senior Leader Perspective**.

- **Preparing for Command** is a lesson that should come close to the front. It helps future flight level leaders identify key things that they SHOULD or MUST do before taking over a leadership role.
- **Senior Leader Perspective** can be placed anywhere in a course, and often is timed to meet leader availability or to achieve certain objectives (expectation setting, motivation, etc.)

Use the Sample Course Templates provided on the following pages to organize your course.

(Remember, you may be asked to present your agenda after the breakout session!)

Two-Day Template

15 (recommended) or 16 (maximum) hours of instruction is recommended using 50- and 70-minute FCLC lessons outlined in this document.

Sample

Time	Day 1	Day 2
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	<i>Local Content</i>
Block 2	The Role of the Flight Commander*	Mission Command in Leadership
Block 3	Preparing for Command*	Building and Busting Teams
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 4	Emotional Intelligence	Leading Change
Block 5	<i>Local Content</i>	Developing Others
Block 6	Developing Full-Range Leadership	Senior Leader Perspective*
Block 7	<i>Local Content</i>	The Road Ahead*
Recap	<i>Daily Recap</i>	(open)

* Bookend Lesson

Empty Template

Time	Day 1	Day 2
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	
Block 2		
Block 3		
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 4		
Block 5		
Block 6		
Block 7		
Recap	<i>Daily Recap</i>	(open)

Three-Day Template

15 (minimum) to 24 (maximum) hours of instruction using 25-, 50-, and 70-minute lesson blocks.

Sample

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	<i>Local content</i>	Developing Others
Block 2	The Role of the Flight Commander*	Developing Full-Range Leadership	<i>Local content</i>
Block 3	Preparing for Command*	<i>Local content</i>	Conflict Management
Block 4	<i>Local content</i>	Mission Command in Leadership	Leading Change
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 5	<i>Local content or peer networking</i>	<i>Local content or peer networking</i>	<i>Local content or peer networking</i>
Block 6	Emotional Intelligence	Building and Busting Teams	<i>Local content</i>
Block 7	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	Senior-Leader Perspective*
Block 8	Followership	Ethical Leadership	The Road Ahead*
Recap	Daily Recap	Daily Recap	(open)

* Bookend Lesson

Empty Template

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker		
Block 2			
Block 3			
Block 4			
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 5			
Block 6			
Block 7			
Block 8			
Recap	Daily Recap	Daily Recap	(open)

Four-Day Template

15 (minimum) to 32 (maximum) hours of instruction using 25-, 50-, or 70-minute lesson blocks.

Sample

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>
Block 2	The Role of the Flight Commander*	Followership	Communications in Command	Leading Change
Block 3	Preparing for Command*	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>
Block 4	<i>Local content</i>	New Problems, New Thinking	Building and Busting Teams	Developing Others
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 5	Local content or peer networking	Local content or peer networking	Local content or peer networking	Local content or peer networking
Block 6	<i>Local content</i>	Full-Range Leadership	Mission Command	Senior Leader Perspective*
Block 7	Emotional Intelligence	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	The Road Ahead*
Block 8	<i>Local content</i>	Ethical Leadership	Conflict Management	(open)
Recap	Daily Recap	Daily Recap	Daily Recap	(open)

* Bookend Lesson

Empty Template

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>
Block 2				
Block 3				
Block 4				
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 5				
Block 6				
Block 7				
Block 8				
Recap	Daily Recap	Daily Recap	Daily Recap	(open)

Five-Day Template

15 (minimum) to 40 (maximum) hours instruction using 25-, 50-, or 70-minute lesson blocks.

Sample

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>
Block 2	Role of the Flight Commander*	New Problems, New Thinking	Communications in Command	Conflict Management	Sr Leader Perspective*
Block 3	Preparing for Command*	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Teambuilding activity</i>
Block 4	<i>Local content</i>	Followership	Building and Busting Teams	Leading Change	(cont.)
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	(cont.)
Block 5	Local content or networking	Local content or networking	Local content or networking	Local content or networking	(open)
Block 6	<i>Local content</i>	Full-Range Leadership	Mission Command	Developing Others	(open)
Block 7	Emotional Intelligence	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	(open)
Block 8	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	Ethical Leadership	The Road Ahead*	(open)
Recap	<i>Daily Recap</i>	<i>Daily Recap</i>	<i>Daily Recap</i>	<i>Daily Recap</i>	(open)

* Bookend Lesson

Empty Template

Time	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Block 1	Admin/Icebreaker	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>	<i>Local content</i>
Block 2					
Block 3					
Block 4					
Lunch	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
Block 5					
Block 6					
Block 7					
Block 8					
Recap	<i>Daily Recap</i>	<i>Daily Recap</i>	<i>Daily Recap</i>	<i>Daily Recap</i>	(open)

Part V – Preparing for Execution

Once you have selected your course content (leadership and locally-produced) and developed your course timeline, you are ready to begin preparing for course presentation.

Course preparation consists of several discrete, but interrelated tasks:

- scheduling your courses
- selecting and preparing leadership lesson facilitators
- selecting and preparing locally-produced content presenters
- preparing your squadron commanders (or equivalents)
- preparing your participants
- preparing the classroom

We have provided some ideas on what you should do in each of these areas to ready your course for presentation. See the **Facilitator Resources** section of *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community for more tips on how to develop a dynamic and engaging course.

Checklist 1: Scheduling Your Courses

How often should your course be presented? Twice a year? Once a quarter? Monthly? Only you and your organization's leadership can determine what will work best for your unit.

To determine how many, and when to offer, courses each year, consider the following:

- **Target Audience:** How many flight commanders do you need to orient?
- **Course Size:** What is your target course size? Most leadership lessons are designed for small group discussions. Design for 16-20 students to maximize conversation and engagement.
- **Facilitator/Presenter Schedules:** When will your desired facilitators/presenters be available?
- **Senior Leader Availability:** When will senior leaders be available for perspective sessions or panel discussions?
- **Resource Availability:** Are the facilities and equipment available during your target periods?
- **Time for Marketing:** How long will you advertise each course? What is your "registration" period?
-

My ACTIONS

Checklist 2: Selecting and Preparing Your Leadership Lesson Facilitators

The most important course director task is selecting and preparing facilitators for leadership lessons. While the AU-provided leadership lessons are designed to be presented by individuals with minimal classroom training experience, it is important to select facilitators that are highly dynamic and can drive conversation around course topics.

Consider the following when selecting your leadership lesson facilitators:

- **Flight Commander Experience:** Most leadership lessons are designed for presentation by individuals with previous flight commander experience. Completion of SOS or ACSC in-residence is highly recommended, but not required.
- **Expertise:** Some lessons require specific expertise. Review the “Recommended Facilitator Qualifications” section of each lesson plan to ensure your facilitators have the required background.
- **Classroom Presence and Facilitator Skills:** Leading a discussion requires a good classroom presence and facilitator skills. Do not select a facilitator without watching how well they lead large and small group discussions in the classroom environment. The **Facilitator Resources** section of *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community provides tips for facilitators to become more comfortable with lesson techniques and content.

After selecting your leadership lesson facilitators, ensure they have plenty of time to prepare with the lesson plan and other lesson materials. Specific instructions for each lesson are included in the “Preparing the Facilitator” section of each lesson plan.

Additionally, facilitators should consider requesting access to *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community where they can share ideas and ask questions of other lesson facilitators.

My ACTIONS

Checklist 3: Selecting and Preparing Locally-Produced Content Presenters

While leadership lessons are critical to a successful FCLC, locally-produced content is what tailors a course to its participants. Locally-produced content presenters come from wing leadership, the staff, or base agencies and provide a subject matter expert perspective on a key local topic.

These presenters are responsible for explaining “how things work” at your unit, vice the general leadership content presented by leadership lesson facilitators.

Consider the following when selecting your local content presenters:

- **Expertise:** Some lessons require specific expertise. Review the “Recommended Presenter Qualifications” section of each lesson guide to ensure your presenters have the required background.
- **Classroom Presence:** More often than not, local content will be presented in the form of a briefing. How “good” of a briefer is the presenter? Do not select a presenter with poor classroom presence. The ability to engage and entertain the audience during a briefing-style presentation is critical to attention and learning.

After selecting your local content presenters, ensure they have plenty of time to prepare with the lesson plan and other lesson materials. Provide each presenter with an appropriate guide from the **Lesson Guide** section of *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community to guide presentation development and ensure integration with other FCLC content.

Additionally, presenters should consider requesting access to *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community where they can share ideas and ask questions of other lesson presenters.

My ACTIONS

Checklist 4: Preparing Your Squadron Commanders

Squadron commanders (or their equivalents) are critical to a successful FCLC. Commanders:

- Select flight commanders to attend the course.
- Receive the **Unit Commander's Discussion Guide** from the course director.
- Set flight commander expectations and goals during a pre-course discussion.
- Review and discuss Professional Development Plans with flight commanders AFTER the course is complete.
- Present course graduation certificates.

Commanders must be aware of these responsibilities before they nominate participants for the program.

Before the course, engagement between the squadron commander and flight commander should focus on mission and vision, expectations, goals, and arming the participant with the requisite knowledge to fully engage and get the most from the suite of leadership lessons. The discussion guides provided by the course director are designed to facilitate those discussions.

A post-course engagement between the squadron commander and flight commander should focus on an action plan for implementing their Professional Development Plan (PDP) to include establishing timelines and achieving goals. Additionally, this provides an opportunity for the squadron commander to present a course completion certificate to the flight commander.

The course director should provide instructions for both pre- and post-course engagement. Example instructions can be found in the **Facilitator Resources** section of *The Flight Commander's Edge* online community in the "Pre- and Post-Course Discussion Guides" area.

My ACTIONS

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Checklist 5: Preparing Your Participants

The final step in preparing for a course is, of course, preparing your participants. At least one week before a course, participants should:

- Receive a welcome letter containing course timeline, dress expectations, and pre-work requirements (including the **Flight Commander Discussion Guide**).
- Conduct the pre-course discussion with their squadron commander.

My ACTIONS

Checklist 6: Preparing the Classroom

Unlike most unit-level courses, the FCLC is specifically designed for experiential (active) learning. Participants need space to engage and collaborate in both small and large groups throughout the course. As such, avoid an auditorium or briefing room-like environment, as it is likely to be inadequate. The class needs to be able to get up and move around.

An FCLC classroom at a minimum should include:

- **Space for small group engagement and discussion** (separate tables). Groups should be restricted to four (4) or five (5) participants, and class size should not exceed 20 students to maximize participation and learning.
- **White boards or easels with butcher-block paper** – one per group.
- **Projection capability with audio** (speakers).

Additionally, some lessons require internet connectivity via either the NIPRNET or commercial internet. Any videos used in leadership lessons require YouTube access.

All classroom technology should be prepared and checked before the start of a class. Additionally, to minimize delays in presentation, all slide materials should be pre-loaded to the appropriate machine.

My ACTIONS

What's Next?

All Flight Commander's Edge materials are available in the FCE Community of Practice.

To gain access, visit: <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/eSchool/FlightCCEdge>

And, of course, you can always contact the FCE team via email:

flightcommandersedge@us.af.mil

What's Available in the Community?

The Role of the Flight Commander (intro lesson)
Preparing for Command
Emotional Intelligence
Followership
New Problems, New Thinking
Developing Full-Range Leadership
Communication in Command
Mission Command in Leadership
Building Teams
Leading Change
Developing Others
Conflict Management
Ethical Leadership
Senior Leader Perspective
The Road Ahead (closing lesson)

The Intellectual and Leadership-Development Center of the Air Force

**Good luck with your courses!
Send us feedback on your results!**