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THE FLIGHT COMMANDER'S EDGE

Lesson Plan

Developing Others

10 May 2022

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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 Handbook* or *Facilitator's Resources*.

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About the Lesson

Developing Others

Overview

This lesson exposes flight commanders to their role in strengthening the squadron by developing others. Participants are first exposed to their role as a "talent enabler" and the importance of developing others from an individual and Air Force perspective. Following this, different types of developmental opportunities are examined from the perspective of Air Force doctrine. Finally, a basic assessment mechanism and planning tool are introduced which can be used to design and facilitate individual development opportunities.

Objectives

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

1. Understand the importance of developing others.
2. Identify types of development opportunities.
3. Facilitate the development of others from a personal, mission, and career perspective.

Recommended Prerequisites

- *Professional Development*

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

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

Before the Lesson

Preparing the Participant

- None.

Preparing the Facilitator

All participant preparation, plus:

- None.

(Optional) Additional deep-dive preparation materials are available on *The Flight Commander's Edge* website. In addition, scan the "Enlisted Force Development Action Plan (2022-2023)" to reinforce the foundational concept that *Developing Others* is **action-based**: it integrates deliberate education, training, and experience to produce the best Airmen and Guardians to meet mission requirements.

Preparing the Classroom

- Adequate classroom space for separate small group discussions.
- White boards or easels with butcher block paper (one per group).
- Computer and projector with internet connectivity (and doctrine.af.mil access if needed)

Preparing Required Materials

Prepare one copy of each handout below for each participant. Do not distribute handouts before the class.

- Air University Global College, *Developing Your Flight Worksheet* (2022)
- Air University Global College, *Creating a Learning Environment Checklist* (2022)
- Air University Global College, *Developing Others Self-Assessment Worksheet* (2022)

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.

Introduction (5 minutes)

The introduction to the lesson sets the stage for future learning through a group discussion on what developing others means to the participants. Participants discuss personal examples of previous developmental experiences.

Slide 1: Developing Others

Introduce the lesson.

Slide 2: Leaders Add Value

Continue the introduction.

Leadership guru John Maxwell is fond of saying that "Leaders add value to people."

That maxim holds true as a military leader. It is obvious through the eyes of your subordinates.

Personal leadership skills of any Department of the Air Force member can (and should) be improved through training, education, and experience. As a flight commander, this is one of your most important jobs. To do this, you need to pay attention to, and develop, your individual flight members' *knowledge, skills, and abilities.*

This lesson provides a quick look at the flight commander as a "talent enabler" responsible for developing flight members as productive members of the force.

Slide 3: Objectives

This slide lists the lesson objectives.

<u>After participants have reviewed the lesson objectives, continue.</u>

Slide 4: Small Group Discussion

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

In your small group, take five (5) minutes to share your experiences with regards to *developing others* and describe your experiences, framed by these questions:

What does *developing others* mean?

Why Is *developing others* important?

How have you (or others) been *developed*?

Monitor participants' discussions for activity. Focus participants on providing examples of intentional development of themselves or others, not complaining about non-development across their careers. This discussion is designed to define force development in terms familiar to the participant, to reveal the reasons for development across the force, and to identify sample developmental activities with respect to knowledge, skills, and abilities, which the participants will use later in the lesson.

<u>After five (5) minutes, continue.</u>

Initial Discussion (5 minutes)

The initial discussion centers on the definition of developing others and why developing others is important from an individual and force-wide perspective.

Slide 5: What Did You Learn?

Reconvene the large group and ask one member from each group to share their group's discussions. Ensure the group answers the two key questions below.

What does *developing others* mean?

Anticipated Responses: Answers will vary but will likely focus on developing knowledge, skills, and abilities related to mission accomplishment. Before moving on, ensure participants understand that developing others, at the flight level, involves ensuring flight members:

- Can do the job to meet the mission, and
- Are progressing in their careers along the appropriate career track guidance.

Why is *developing others* important?

Anticipated Responses: Answers will vary but will likely focus on achieving the mission. Most young leaders don't understand their responsibility with respect to "talent management" for the Department of the Air Force writ large. Before moving on, ensure participants understand that developing others is important at two levels:

- At the micro level, developing others is about the mission. Can the member (and hence, the team) successfully perform his or her duties in support of the larger goal.
- At the macro level, developing others is about continuous learning and force-wide talent management. Flight level leaders have a responsibility to help the squadron commander/superintendent manage the talent pool for the squadron and ensure a ready supply of trained professionals to perform future missions.
- At the personal level, flight leaders have a responsibility to help subordinates garner personal satisfaction and motivation through learning and achievement.

After a brief discussion, continue.

Content Presentation (10 minutes)

This section of the lesson examines the types of development opportunities, which the Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 36-2670, *Total Force Development*, includes under the definition of competencies.

> **Competencies**: — Observable, measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics needed to perform institutional or occupational functions successfully (p. 310).

Before continuing, write three categories on the white board, with ample space for fill-in responses:

Knowledge *(thru Education)*	*Skills* *(thru Training)*	*Abilities* *(thru Experience)*

When complete, continue.

Slide 6: Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Continue the presentation.

> **As you've probably discovered, there is no secret recipe for developing others. In your small groups, I know you have discussed both good and bad examples.**
>
> **Let's see if we can refine those and give you a better idea of what you should be doing as a flight-level leader.**
>
> **On the board (and shown on this slide), I've written three categories.**
>
> **You've probably heard these terms before.**
>
> - **Knowledge is information applied to a function.**
>   - **You "know" the contents of your Tech Order or manual. You gain this knowledge through *education*.**
> - **A skill is an observable competence.**
>   - **Flying a plane is a *skill*. You gain skills through *training*.**
> - **An ability is an observable behavior competence or a behavior that results in an observable product.**
>   - **You are a proficient pilot, based on combination of flight knowledge and piloting skill applied over time. You gain abilities by applying knowledge and skills over time to gain *experience*.**

Instructor note: Ensure participants understand the Knowledge/Skill/Ability → Education/Training/Experience link before continuing.

Slide 7: Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

When ready, ask the following questions to the large group.

What types of development activities did you come up with earlier? Let's see how your ideas for development fit into this structure.

Ask for group members to share results of their developmental ideas discussions and suggest which category the ideas would fit into. Record ideas on the white board.

Anticipated Responses: see next slide.

Slide 8: Sample Development Activities (Optional)

The goal of this exercise is not to perfect a list of education, training, and experience developmental opportunities. Rather it is to get the participants thinking in terms of the three areas in which they should develop their subordinates. Perfect answers are not required.

If the participants do not fully grasp the concept developmental activities, you may show this slide to spur discussion and improve comprehension.

Knowledge (thru Education)	Skills (thru Training)	Abilities (thru Experience)
Professional Military Education (education programs)	Professional Military Education (training/hands-on programs)	Professional Military Education (long-term resident programs, tech schools, etc.)
		Assignments (in-career field and career broadening)
Initial Qualification Training (knowledge portion)	Initial Qualification Training (hands-on portion)	Unit Qualification Training
Continuing education programs (on or- off-duty)	Skill-development programs	Seminars / conferences (TDY)
Self-directed (or commander-directed) study	Self-directed (or commander-directed) practice	Recurring training / advanced training (TDY)
Informal discussions		Relationship-building
Book clubs, book reports		
Teaching	Coaching	Mentoring
Education and training together provide the tools for developing our Total Force. Experience, the continuously growing part of an Airman or Guardian's career is where the synthesis of education and training occur.		

When complete, continue.

Application Activity (25 minutes)

The activity section of the lesson employs small group discussion to examine ways flight leaders can identify and facilitate development opportunities for others. A worksheet is provided which can support individual counseling and development planning in the unit.

Distribute Air University Global College, *Develop Your Flight Worksheet* **(2022)** – two copies per participant.

When complete, continue.

Slide 9: Developing Your Flight

Continue the presentation.

> **So, the real big question is this: How do you develop others in your flight?**
>
> **Fortunately, the steps in the process are relatively straightforward.**
>
> **First, you must assess the developmental needs for each of your people – from a personal, a mission, and a career standpoint.**
>
> **Second, you must identify development opportunities – opportunities for the individual to achieve a personal goal, meet a mission need, or support career growth. For some mission needs, there may be no existing opportunities – no pre-defined** *education* **or** *training* **– and you may have to create a unique** *experience* **to meet the need.**
>
> **Third, you must support development opportunities. This is often the hardest part – it often involves:**
>
>> a. **nominating individuals for training or education,**
>> b. **advocating for the use of (always limited) unit funds,**
>> c. **coordinating development opportunities, or**
>> d. **conducting an opportunity that you've created.**

Slide 10: Development Activity

Begin the activity.

> **While the steps are straightforward, it means you must manage a lot of moving parts to make it work as it should.**
>
> **To help in this, we've provided you a worksheet. This worksheet provides a simple, tabular approach to help you keep the steps in the developing others process straight.**
>
> **We are going to get some practice with that worksheet now.**

Pause for participants to retrieve one copy of the *Developing your Flight Worksheet.*

> **For the first part of the exercise, work individually.**

Review the worksheet and start to fill in the information for yourself and a few members of your flight. There are sample questions to help you stay on track.

As you work through the worksheet, you will discover that you don't know the answers to some of the questions. This is your homework. You will need to do some digging. A great place to start is with your Commander, First Sergeant, Superintendent, or Career Field Manager. In some cases, you may not know the personal goals of your people – this is a great time to find out.

In about five (5) minutes, we will come back together for the next part of the exercise.

Monitor participants activity. Answer questions as required and remind participants that they are not expected to have all the answers for their flight at this time.

After five (5) minutes, continue.

Slide 11: Development Activity (cont.)

Reconvene the group and continue the activity.

Ok, now you should have at least one of the lines (other than yourself) filled in on the worksheet.

Now it's time to get help.

In your small groups, discuss your results. Ask your groupmates to help close the gaps in your knowledge or provide other ideas for development opportunities to meet your specific needs.

Take about 10 minutes to talk through this in your small group, and then we can have each group summarize a key point or two, as a class.

Monitor participants activity. Answer questions as required and remind participants that they are not expected to have all the answers for their flight at this time. Have the groups summarize for the large group what they discussed. What was a key takeaway for them?

After ten (10) minutes, continue.

Slide 12: Creating a Learning Environment

Distribute the **Air University Global College,** *Creating a Learning Environment Checklist* **(2022)** to all participants. This worksheet contains some prepared tips.

When complete, reconvene the group and conclude the activity.

Developing others is potentially the most rewarding part of your mission as a flight-level leader. It is tough work to get started, but once you begin taking an interest in the development – personal, mission, and career – of your people, your flight will become a positive "learning environment."

What is a learning environment? To put it simply, it's a place where work-life-and-learning all work together to produce positive results for the individual and the organization.

To learn more about how you can do even more to foster such a learning environment, we've provided a short checklist of things for you to consider once the course is over.

Lesson Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

The final lesson activity is a self-assessment of effective behaviors for developing others. This activity feeds the final lesson in the course – *The Road Ahead* – and will be used to support the development of the participants' personal development plan.

Distribute the **Air University Global College,** *Developing Others Self-Assessment Worksheet* **(2022)** to all participants.

When complete, continue.

Slide 12: Self-Assessment Exercise

Initiate the self-assessment.

> **The *Developing Others Self-Assessment Worksheet* is designed to help you plan for your future. The instructions are self-explanatory. Take a moment to read them, then fill out the sheet. If you need more time, you can go into the break.**

> **Keep this worksheet with your course materials. You will need it again for the last lesson of the course.**

End. Break (10 minutes).

Appendix: Required Materials and Handouts

- Air University Global College, *Developing Your Flight Worksheet* (2022)
- Air University Global College, *Creating a Learning Environment Checklist* (2022)
- Air University Global College, *Developing Others Self-Assessment Worksheet* (2022)

Developing Your Flight Worksheet

Developed by the *Air University Global College*

Name:

Developmental Needs		
Personal Goals *What is this person's personal learning or improvement goals?*	**Mission Requirements** *What education, training, or experiences are needed for this person to better perform the mission?*	**Career Growth** *What is the next logical step to keep this person on the right career track? PME, job, assignment, career broadening, etc.*
Developmental Opportunities		
Knowledge → Education *To meet knowledge needs, what educational opportunities are available?*	**Skills → Training** *To develop skills, what training opportunities are available?*	**Abilities → Experiences** *To develop abilities, what experiences are available?*
Developmental Support		
Scheduling Requirements	**Funding Requirements**	**Other Support**

Name:

Developmental Needs		
Personal Goals *What is this person's personal learning or improvement goals?*	**Mission Requirements** *What education, training, or experiences are needed for this person to better perform the mission?*	**Career Growth** *What is the next logical step to keep this person on the right career track? PME, job, assignment, career broadening, etc.*
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Developmental Support		
Scheduling Requirements	**Funding Requirements**	**Other Support**

Developing Your Flight Worksheet (cont.)

Name:

Developmental Needs		
Personal Goals *What is this person's personal learning or improvement goals?*	**Mission Requirements** *What education, training, or experiences are needed for this person to better perform the mission?*	**Career Growth** *What is the next logical step to keep this person on the right career track? PME, job, assignment, career broadening, etc.*
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Knowledge → Education *To meet knowledge needs, what educational opportunities are available?*	**Skills → Training** *To develop skills, what training opportunities are available?*	**Abilities → Experiences** *To develop abilities, what experiences are available?*
Developmental Support		
Scheduling Requirements	**Funding Requirements**	**Other Support**

Name:

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Developmental Support		
Scheduling Requirements	**Funding Requirements**	**Other Support**

Creating a Learning Environment Checklist

Developed by the *Air University Global College*

The squadron commander (or equivalent) strengthens the squadron through talent management, while the flight commander strengthens the environment allowing people to thrive. Learning together can change the culture of the flight!

1. Survey the members of your flight. Is there something they want to learn?
2. Include the squadron leadership in your flight's learning environment plans.
3. Provide an incentive…be sure to coordinate with the squadron commander.
4. Think about your development; what did others do for you? What worked? Why?
5. Use curriculum provided by MAJCOMs (if available) or some 'professional' curriculum with learning outcomes and education objectives but seek new approaches to learning.
6. Use learning loopholes – learners can test out if they have a mastery of the topic, or if they have already attended earlier sessions of the same topic.
7. Ensure a Subject Matter Expert facilitates if needed, and if possible.
8. Stimulate thinking, (ex: use CSAF Leadership Library, or DOD Reads site) to emphasize intellectual growth.
9. Encourage a bit of competition, create micro-learning opportunities, and keep exciting, not boring or cumbersome.
10. What is the return-on-time-invested? Use pre-event and post-event surveys to determine if the time spent is achieving the developmental needs of the flight members.
11. Most military members have high levels of motivation to learn - incorporate that motivation into the learning environment.
12. Foster a sense of learning community by offering collaborative learning and spaces (such as commander's conference room once a week) in the local area.
13. Be flexible and accommodate schedule fluctuations due to operational / mission requirements. Offer learning at various times and different days.
14. Anticipate interruptions to the scheduled learning sessions, have a backup plan.
15. Don't overwork the flight during the sessions, include some fun elements!

Create a Learning Environment Action Plan

✓ Get to know my flight members – ask questions
✓ Use weekly meetings to look at learning opportunities
✓ Work with SNCOs to get to know various development paths
✓ Find out what my flight needs to enhance the learning environment
✓ Simplify the method – focus on their Strengths, Weaknesses, Way Ahead
✓ Be willing to request tangible resources (training, conferences) for the flight
✓ Plan to keep learning fun and flexible – volunteer to lead a session and be a teacher

Self-Assessment Worksheet

This self-assessment provides an opportunity for you to assess your own leadership skills and behaviors. These skills and behaviors are based upon the concepts addressed within this lesson. *You will use these worksheets again during the final lesson of the course.*

> NOTE: Not all these skills and behaviors were covered in this lesson, rather, they reflect what an ideal flight commander should know and be able to do in this topic area.

Rate yourself on a scale of 1-5 in each of the skill or behavior areas below:

5 – Needs No Improvement   3 – Average   1 – Needs Significant Improvement

Competency Reference	Skill	Behavior	Self-Assessment (1-5)
Leading People	Developing others	At the team or flight level: • Assess developmental needs • Identify developmental opportunities • Support developmental opportunities • Create a learning environment • _____ • _____	

(See tips on reverse)

Some tips:

- Ask your supervisors, peers, and subordinates how they perceive your behaviors in these areas. Often, we are biased toward ourselves, meaning we tend to rate ourselves better than others actually perceive us. In leadership we must strive to minimize the differential between how *we think we behave* and *how others perceive* our behaviors.

My Notes