



NOVEMBER 2020

"The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership."

Harvey S. Firestone
 Founder, Firestone Tire Company

The Role of the Flight Commander

Read

[AFI 1-2, Commander's Responsibilities.](#)

In many units, the flight commander is the first line of leadership.

[Build Up Your People](#)

D. Michael Abrashoff, former captain of the U.S.S. *Benfold*, relays some of the simple methods he used to build his team's morale. Perhaps some of these techniques can be used in your flight.

Watch

CMSgt Nathan Perry, USAF First Sergeant Academy Commandant, talks about leadership and the importance of first sergeants during COVID-19. In this four minute video, he reminds us of the importance of understanding your role within an organization.



Questions to Consider

What is your Commander's Intent?

How do you welcome new members to your flight?

Ask these questions of yourself and your flight members

What are the top characteristics of an effective leader?

When listing traits, consider this: A few should be specific to your current role. Others should be enduring and apply to leadership in general. How does your list align with the four duties and responsibilities for commanders outlined in AFI 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*: lead people, improve the unit, manage resources, and execute the mission? If your list doesn't align...should it? Why or why not?

What is your role as a flight commander?

Discuss your role with your commander. Talk with other flight commanders about their daily tasks and what they perceive their role to be in their units. Listening to others' experiences provides context for your own leadership development.

How are you developing yourself?

What are your commander's expectations for you and your team? How do your commander's expectations affect your own Professional Development Plan?

How are you developing your team?

Developing your team begins anew whenever a new member arrives. Organizations that deliberately welcome new members and have a plan for acculturation help them off to a good start. Newcomers need to understand their role in the organization as a whole, learn expectations, and begin to transition to their job. Their experience in the first few weeks will have a significant bearing on their level of commitment and ability to become productive. Welcoming new Airman or Space Professionals to your flight is great way to grow the team and encourage them to feel valued from day one.



Contact *The Flight Commander's Edge*

If your unit would like to create its own Flight-level leadership course using professionally-developed resources from Air University visit <https://www.airuniversity.af.mil> or email us at FlightCommandersEdge@us.af.mil