



Lesson Plan

Ownership

Version 1.0, 26 February 2021

The Air University
Profession of Arms Center of Excellence
Ira C. Eaker Center for Leadership Development

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

<http://www.airman.af.mil/>

Before the Lesson

Preparing the Participant

- None.

Preparing the Facilitator

All participant preparation, plus:

- Be familiar with the Air Force Little Blue Book:

- [Little Blue Book](#)



- Be familiar with Retired CMSAF #5 Robert Gaylor, Name on the Mailbox, starts at 24:50, with a suggested stop at 31:05:

- [Name on the Mailbox Video](#)



- Be familiar with Ted Talk video by Retired Navy Captain Michael D. Abrashoff. “It’s your ship:”

- [It's Your Ship Video](#)



Preparing the Classroom

- ! Adequate classroom space for separate small group discussions.
- ! White boards with dry-erase markers or easels with butcher block paper and permanent markers as required (one per group).
- ! Computer and projector with internet connectivity.

Preparing Required Materials

- None.

Purpose

Provide a guide for leaders and Technical Training Instructors across Second Air Force to initiate discussions on establishing a culture of ownership in an Airman's individual job and unit mission, ultimately taking the initiative to improve them. All instructors will be able to drive home the importance of ownership.

Description

Ownership is an attitude of accepting responsibility for something and taking control of how it develops. This attitude of accepting responsibility is being accountable. When we are accountable, we assume an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or account for our own actions.

Within the Profession of Arms, we are all accountable for meeting ethical and performance standards in our actions and taking responsibility for our failure to act, when appropriate. Together, we share a responsibility of character, courage, and competence. The only distinction that exists lies in our level of responsibility and degree of accountability, not our commitment to the Profession of Arms.

Accountable Airmen maintain transparency, seek honest and constructive feedback, and take ownership of the outcomes of actions and decisions. They are responsible to themselves and others and refrain from actions which discredit themselves or our service.

So how do we start the conversation?

Ground Rules

Discussions on ownership and accountability are designed to help Airmen make personal decisions to understand, internalize, and display actions of character, courage, and accountability for accepting responsibility. And as such, it is important to create an environment where Airmen can speak freely and honestly. Help them feel that their voices are heard, respected, and important to you and others. Please consider the following:

- Listen more than you speak. The purpose of such conversations is to understand the perspective of others using empathy. Expressing empathy allows you to imagine how another person might feel based on what you know about him/her, even though you might have not experienced those feelings directly.
- Ask questions to help you and others understand.
- Seek to understand others, not have others understand you. Though you might not agree with another member's perspective, remember, it is their perspective.
- No one should apologize for his/her feelings of hurt, distress, sadness, vulnerability, or fright.
- Openness begins with vulnerability, honesty, and truth.
- Do not force anyone to speak. Productive discussions require a willingness to share, which some might not feel comfortable in doing so.
- Use anonymity. Remind members not to provide specific names or information with so much detail that the person(s) mentioned (negatively) is/are identified.
- Provide feedback, comments, and additional questions for greater understanding and dialogue where appropriate.

Before watching the Name on the Mailbox or It's Your Ship Video

Assume the lead for the discussion. Consider employing the "[Think-Pair-Share](#)," or small (3-5 participants) group discussion format to this activity. Below are thoughts and questions that can be asked if and where appropriate in your group setting:

- Thank the group for their participation in the discussion.
- Remind the group that:
 - The purpose for this discussion is to provide a dialogue on ownership and what it means for each of them (individually and collectively) to take responsibility for their actions and decisions in the work center.
 - There will be no reprisal for appropriate discussion comments.
- Ask the following questions, in a "[Think-Pair-Share](#)," or small (3-5 participants) group discussion format:
 - Describe and discuss, in your own words and with an experiential example, what is "Ownership."
 - Explain ways someone can show "Ownership."

After watching the Name on the Mailbox or It's Your Ship Video

Assume the lead for the discussion. Consider employing the "[Think-Pair-Share](#)," or small (3-5 participants) group discussion format. Below are thoughts and questions that can be asked if and where appropriate in your group setting:

- Describe your initial thoughts and feelings about the video.
- Explain what it means for your name to be on your "mailbox?" Describe what thoughts and feelings come to mind.
- Explain in your own words what ownership and accountability are (use information from the description above).
- Discuss positive and negative examples of accountability. For those negative examples, discuss how those actions (or lack thereof) affected others, the unit, or the Air Force.
- Think about a time when you have seen someone make a mistake and take responsibility for it. Describe what thoughts and feelings come to mind. Explain how his/her decision affected you.
- In times when you made a mistake, did you "own it?" Did you shift the blame to someone or something else? What happened as a result?

Conclusion

- Summarize some of the discussion points, suggestions, and available PACE (<http://www.airman.af.mil/>) resources.
- Thank everyone for their participation.
- Continue to engage your senior leaders, supervisors, and members with regular individual and group discussions.