

Decision Making

Current as of
17 July 2019

Lesson Plan

Objective: At the completion of this discussion, participants should be able to internalize the importance and impacts of making decisions. Members should be able to correlate how proper decisions positively impact the mission and those around them. (Warheads on foreheads).

Assessment Questions:

1. Could you discuss how your decisions affect mission outcome? Y/N
2. Can you provide examples on how your decisions affect your teammates? Y/N
3. Can you write down the Core Values represented on CMSgt Etchberger's story?

Instructional Aids: White board, Facilitator Course Note Taker, Power Point presentation

Foundational Competencies: Accountability, Decision Making, Communication, Resource Management, Results Focused, Flexibility, Change Management, Leadership, Initiative, Precision, Analytical Thinking, Information Seeking and Fosters Innovation.

References: AFH 1; AFI 1-1; CJCSI 3405_01; AF Doctrine Vol 2

“Effective Airmanship requires good decision-making. From Airman Basic to General the decisions each of us make every day impact the delivery of airpower. The following chapter is designed to spur development of critical thinking habits in our Airmen and deepen their awareness of the decision-making processes. The habits of mind necessary to become a critical thinker are developed over time; there is no magical process or checklist to follow. Each of us must work every day to make good decisions by consciously applying the intellectual analysis necessary to account for complexities not normally considered and often overlooked.” AFH 1

Lesson Outline

Introduction	
Introduction a. Attention Step b. Motivation c. Overview	5 Minutes
MP 1. Decision Making Filters a. Characteristics	10 Minutes
MP 2. Case Study and Heritage a. CMSgt Richard Etch Berger	15 Minutes
MP 3. Connect their Decisions with Mission Success	10 Minutes
Conclusion	5 Minutes

MP1: Introduction

ATTENTION STEP: Bring an Airman to the front of the room in front of the class. With you and the Airman in the front of the class, ask the participants “if I were to slap Airman XXXXXXXX across the face with my hand, what could Airman XXXXXXXX’s response look like?”

NOTE: DO NOT slap the Airman!

List the responses on the board. After engaging with the participants for a few minutes about the possible responses, ask “Are any of these responses automatic?”

There answers should get them to a negative response. You would then display this quote:

“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

Viktor E. Frankl

LOQ: What do you think this quote means?

FUQ: What does it mean to you?

MOTIVATION: This attention step is designed to help the participants realize that they are in control of their reactions. They have the power to choose and therefore can control their reaction. While the overall outcome may be decided by outside influences, their reaction, attitude and motivation is their choice and theirs alone.

OVERVIEW: *Today we are going to talk about the power each one of you has over their choices and how making the right choice will help the Air Force accomplish its mission*

Transition: With our better understanding of the impacts of decision-making we can now look at how we come to make the decisions we make.

MP2: Presentations

LOQ: What are some characteristics we use in making decisions?

Anticipated Response

Experience

Values

Training

DISCUSSION: Let me introduce you to the ‘Decision Filter’! When making decisions, most, if not all of these characteristics (aka filters) help us in making our choices.

Integrity
 Attitude
 Self-Discipline
 Work Ethic
 Knowledge
 Experiences
 Biases
 Trust

(Slide with Decision Filter)

LOQ: Are there any you agree with?

FUQ: Are there any you disagree with?

FUQ: What would you add?

Specifically, how does knowledge play a role in the choices we make?

- We use things we know and experiences to shape how we make the decision.
- Can experiences cause us to make bad decisions? If so, why?

MP3: CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY: CMSgt Etchberger Medal of Honor back story/story

During the Vietnam War, Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Richard Etchberger, a 35-year-old combat support veteran with the 1043rd Radar Evaluation Squadron, was part of a covert CIA and Air Force team sent to a small radar station on top of a remote mountain in Laos. The site, called Lima Site 85, was dedicated to directing U.S. air support in North Vietnam during the early years of the war. The mission wasn’t easy to join. Etchberger and the other airmen involved needed to be released from the Air Force and hired by Lockheed to avoid giving the perception that Laos was involved with the U.S. government in the war. The program became known as Heavy Green. When the mission was over, the airmen would be welcomed back into the Air Force. From a mountainous jungle perch only 12 miles from North Vietnam, 40 airmen controlled hundreds of air strikes into enemy territory during the 1968 Rolling Thunder campaign.

The North Vietnamese knew the value of the site, so they made many attempts to take it out. None were successful until March 10, 1968, when they began to attack the site with heavy artillery. By nightfall, Etchberger and his off-duty team realized their sleeping quarters were vulnerable to the shelling, so they hid with their guns and survival radios on a ledge partially protected by a rocky overhang for the rest of the night.

Early the next morning, enemy commandos scaled the cliff the compound was on, killing 11 of the 19 Americans working at the site. While Etchberger's team was initially spared, it didn't take long for the enemy to find them and start attacking, killing two airmen and seriously injuring two others.

Since Etchberger was a radar technician, he didn't have any formal combat training. But that didn't stop him from picking up arms and defending their position. For hours, Etchberger single-handedly held off the enemy with an M-16 rifle, all while calling for air rescue and directing air strikes that were practically right on top of him.

Once rescuers arrived, Etchberger risked his own life several times, running through heavy fire to put three of his wounded comrades into rescue slings hanging from the hovering rescue helicopter. But when he finally climbed into the sling himself and was lifted to the chopper, he was shot by enemy ground fire. He didn't survive the flight.

Essentially, he gave his own life to save the lives of his remaining crew and keep the enemy out. For his actions, Etchberger was secretly awarded the Air Force Cross, since details of the mission were classified until the mid-1980s. Etchberger's wife, Catherine, who accepted the honor on his behalf, was told the real story of what happened to her husband but was sworn to secrecy – a secret she kept for the rest of her life, not even telling her children.

On Sept. 21, 2010, CMSgt Etchberger's three sons received the Medal of Honor in their father's name.

Retrieved from: www.dodlive.mil/2017/09/24/vet-earns-medal-of-honor-42-years-after-classified-vietnam-mission/

LOQ: What were some decisions that Chief Etchberger had to make?

Anticipated Responses:

To go to Laos as contractor
To continue saving his Amn
To fight
Whether to surrender

FUQ: Who else in the story had to make decisions?

Anticipated Responses:

His wife
She could have told his story but didn't even tell the kids

FUQ: What core values were represented in this case study? Please share where you saw that Core Value

Transition: Now that we have seen how complex decisions can be and the time to relate these decisions with the participants in the room.

Anticipated Responses:

Integrity

Service before Self

Excellence

MP3: Decisions and their effect on the mission and others:

LOQ: Someone share with us an example of when you have had to make a difficult decision?

NOTE: Have a couple of examples ready if no appropriate example is given. Or if no answer is given.

FUQ: Hindsight being 20/20, would you have made the same decision or done something different? Why?

FUQ: With CMSgt Etchberger's example and the others that have been shared, what could have been the impact of not making the right choices?

MP4: Conclusion

STATE: Going back to the beginning of this discussion, we make decisions based on several characteristics. Those choices will have impacts on not just ourselves, but to the mission and those around us.

How does mastery over our power to choose to give us growth and freedom?

SUMMARY: In closing, you can see that our own values, when in balance with the AF Core Values, are instrumental in making good, right and just decisions.