

## ACTIVITY 2.3

# LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS 3: CUSTOMS & COURTESIES

This group discussion introduces cadets to the role that military customs and courtesies play in cadet life. Cadets are instructed on the rules governing basic customs and courtesies, but this activity is not intended as an exhaustive catalog covering every possible circumstance and nuance about the subject. Rather, the goal is for cadets to understand and value why military customs and courtesies are used in the CAP Cadet Program. Following this discussion, cadets participate in a lab activity where they learn how to render customs and courtesies properly.

### Suggested Instructor

A cadet officer or NCO should lead this discussion

### Duration

30 min

### Objectives

1. Identify the basic foundation for all military customs and courtesies
2. Explain why CAP cadets practice military customs and courtesies
3. Identify rules governing military customs and courtesies, to include exchanging salutes, reporting to an officer, calling the room to attention, and addressing cadets and senior members
4. Describe why a cadet's image can affect the image of the unit and CAP

## LESSON OUTLINE

### PART 1: FOUNDATION

*15 min group discussion*

1. Does anyone know how the salute originated?

*Anticipated Response / Lecture Item*

The salute has its origin in another time, when kings ruled, knights wore armor, and courtly manners flourished. It was the age of chivalry. The etiquette of the day dictated that should two friendly knights meet, each would raise the visor of his helmet, show his face, and pay proper respect to the other. Since both knights were completely clad in steel, they could recognize each other as friend or foe by the distinctive emblems and devices on their armor - another custom that still lives. Etiquette also decreed that the knights salute with their right hands. The right hand was the sword hand; raising it was

a sign of trust. Even after modern firearms had made steel armor a thing of the past, the knightly gesture of raising the right hand continued to be recognized as the proper greeting between soldiers. *The salute is a sign of friendship and mutual respect.*

**2. What are some other examples of customs and courtesies, besides the salute?**

*Anticipated Response / Lecture Item*

Other examples customs and courtesies include calling officers "sir" or "ma'am," coming to attention when an officer enters the room, and walking on the officer's left. Rich histories have formed the great tradition of military customs and courtesies.

**3. With the history of the salute as an introduction, what do you imagine is the basis for military customs and courtesies?**

*Anticipated Response / Lecture Item*

Military customs and courtesies like the salute are based on simple politeness and respect. When knights of old saluted one another, and when cadets and officers exchange salutes today, the salute is not indicating that one person is inferior to another. Rather, when you exchange salutes with an officer, you show that you are polite and respectful of other people, especially those in positions of authority.

**4. If customs and courtesies are based on respect, does that mean you don't have to salute someone you don't respect?**

*Anticipated Response / Lecture Item*

It is important to note that there will be some people you'll be proud and eager to salute, but there may be times when you'll be angry with an officer, or maybe you will simply dislike them as a person. No matter, the custom of the salute calls for you to salute them just the same. You salute a person's grade or position, not necessary that person as an individual.

**5. Cadets are expected to display good military bearing. What does that mean?**

*Anticipated Response / Lecture Item*

Your bearing is the overall way you conduct yourself, in and out of uniform. It means cadets are not supposed to fool around; they are to show respect for themselves, their leaders, and their uniform; during drill and when formally reporting to an officer, they are to stand at attention properly; in short, you behave in such a way that people see you are serious about being a cadet and becoming a leader.

**6. Based on your understanding of this background information, why do you think CAP cadets practice military customs and courtesies such as the salute?**

*Anticipated Response / Lecture Item*

They show our connection to the Air Force; it is a way to develop self-respect and respect for others; it shows we hold ourselves to high standards of personal conduct; it shows that we aspire to the level of professionalism that our military displays.

**PART 2: RULES FOR OBSERVING MILITARY CUSTOMS & COURTESIES**

*10 min lecture*

*Exchanging Salutes*

- Salute outdoors only, unless formally reporting to an officer
- Salute all cadet officers, senior member officers, and military officers
- No need to salute while in formation – the commander salutes for you
- When in doubt, salute – anyone who sees a need to salute may do so at any time

*Reporting to an Officer*

- When being called out of formation
- When told to report to an officer
- When receiving an award from an officer

*Room to Attention*

- When an officer, who is higher ranking than anyone present, enters the room
- Do not call the room to attention during a class

*Manner of Address*

- Cadet NCOs: By grade and last name, or merely sergeant
- Cadet Officers: By grade and last name, or merely by grade, or as sir or ma'am
- Senior Members By grade and last name, or merely by grade, or as sir or ma'am

**CONCLUSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF IMAGE**

*2 min*

How well you render customs and courtesies reflects on yourself, your squadron, on CAP, and the Air Force. If you are polite and respectful, people will develop a good impression of you and CAP. You'll receive compliments and develop a sense of pride in yourself. If you do not address officers as sir or ma'am, if you goof around in uniform, if you look sloppy, people will not respect you and will be critical of you and all of CAP. People will think you are a slacker, and pretty soon you'll start to think you are, too.