

USNA Leadership Training Utilizing The Four Class System Midshipmen Roles and Responsibilities

The men and women who make up our Navy and Marine Corps are the services most valuable resource. When America sends its sons and daughters into military service, its citizens expect them to be well trained, well equipped, and most of all, well led. The four-year experience at the Naval Academy is designed to prepare its graduates to accept this lifelong challenge of leadership. Leaders are critical because they set the standards and are the ones most responsible for their unit's mission accomplishment.

Leadership training at the USNA provides a well planned and tested methodology for leadership development over a full four years. A USNA document, *Waypoints*, clearly defines the role of each class in the squad, the company, and in the brigade. For each year, major goals are identified and then quantified as specific, measurable objectives. Midshipmen know what are expected from them.

Fourth Class Year – Plebe: Imposed Discipline to Self-discipline

The Fourth Class Year is one of transition where Plebes emerge from the state of imposed discipline to the essentials and reality of self discipline. In this metamorphosis is the secret of success for the remaining three years as a midshipman and for the future as an officer. The strongest character is grounded in self discipline and the maturation of the fourth class midshipmen in this area receives great emphasis.

Role of a 4/C Plebe

- Learn military basics and develop follower-ship skills
- Build a Sense of Pride in the Naval Academy
- Develop Professionalism and Conduct
- Effective Listening and Observation Skills
- Strong Base of Professional Knowledge
- Practice Excellence in Performance

Third Class Year – Youngster: Mentors of the Plebes

Third Class Midshipmen gain strength and initiative. During this year Midshipmen seek to establish equilibrium with their grades and professional development while mentoring Fourth Class Midshipmen.

Role of a 3/C Youngster

- Role of the Youngster

Teacher
Guide
Motivator
Sponsor
Role Model
Enhance Leadership Experience

Second Class Year – Flamer: Keeper of Standards

The Second Class Midshipmen are the holders and keepers of the standards of the Brigade and are the engine for the development of the Fourth Class.

Role of a 2/C Flamer

Leadership by Example
Train the Plebes
Support the Chain of Command
Develop Active Role in the Company
Maintain and Increase Company Morale
Develop 3/C Leadership
Prepare for 1/C Leadership

First Class Year – Firstie: Lead the Brigade

The First Class Midshipmen are in their final stages of preparation for a commission. Serving as Midshipmen Officers, the First Class leads the Brigade.

Role of a 1/C Firstie

Follow Commander's Intent
Definition of Roles
Make the Chain of Command Work
Lead by Example...Set the Spirit
Delegate
Supervise
Turnover

The distinctions between and among the classes are a matter of degree, and should be grounded at all times in the attainment of responsibility, increased duty, and the final, professional preparations for departure from the Naval Academy, to assume leadership positions in the naval service.

Sources –

Colonel John R. Allen '76, USMC

http://www.usna.com/News_Pubs/Publications/Shipmate/2002/11/Commandant.htm

USNA Waypoints 2003