



Civil Air Patrol

VISION AND GOALS

Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum

INTRODUCTION

Grit is the ability to face life's challenges with a combination of **vision, courage, and perseverance**. Developing a solid sense of vision for one's life, accompanied by well-developed goals is the first and most important ingredient in the recipe for grit. This lesson uses President Kennedy's vision of leading the quest for outer space and audacious goal of putting a man on the moon by the end of the 1960's to illustrate the importance of having a vision for one's life and setting SMART, realistic, but stretching goals in order to live out that vision.

PRECLASS CHECKLIST

Prior preparation is essential to success. Please prepare the following well ahead of time:

- All media installed and checked out
- Handouts and materials prepared and available as per teacher instruction sheet
- Phase Three cadet orientation/training completed
- Participation awards such as candy or granola bar treats available
- Room arrangements complete

ATTENTION GETTER

LARGE GROUP (USE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OR DEVELOP YOUR OWN. 5 MINUTES.)

Media Clip: JFK-Moon-Speech.mp4 (4:31)¹. In 1962 President Kennedy laid out the vision of a manned landing on the moon before 1970. The program was called the Apollo program. To accomplish this vision the United States spent about \$212 Billion dollars. Three astronauts lost their lives. It was a long, hard road with many setbacks. This film clip is where that vision began.

Note: To put into context how audacious Kennedy's vision of reaching the moon in the 1960s was, it had only been 35 years since Charles Lindbergh had successfully completed the first aerial crossing of the Atlantic in the Spirit of St Louis!

Without Media: Read the following excerpt from President Kennedy's speech to Congress in May 1962.

"I ask the Congress, above and beyond the increases I have earlier requested for space activities, to provide the funds which are needed to meet the following national goal:

"I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish. We propose to accelerate the development of the appropriate lunar space craft. We propose to develop alternate liquid and solid fuel boosters, much larger than any now being developed, until certain which is superior. We propose additional funds for other engine development and for unmanned explorations—explorations which are particularly important for one purpose which this nation will never overlook: the survival of the man who first makes this daring flight. But in a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon—if we make this judgment affirmatively, it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there."

OBJECTIVE

Just like President Kennedy's vision of reaching the moon within eight years mobilized the country into action, we all need to develop vision for our lives and goals that will make that vision a reality.

Michael Phelps is an American retired competitive swimmer and the most successful and most decorated Olympian of all time, with a total of 28 medals. Phelps also holds the all-time records for Olympic gold medals, Olympic gold medals in individual events, and Olympic medals in individual events. Here is how he looked at vision: "You can't put a limit on anything. The more you dream, the farther you get."^{2 3}

According to Corbett Barr, "Goals are individual experiences and accomplishments you strive for. A vision is the bigger picture. Your life's vision defines who you want to be, what you want to be known for, and the set of experiences and accomplishments you aim for. Your vision helps define the goals by giving you a framework to evaluate those goals. Your vision becomes your why."⁴

Once you decide on your vision—where you are headed—then you need to plan how to get there by creating the goals that will enable you to accomplish your vision. It is like going on a trip. You decide on your destination (your vision), then you plan how to get there and what roads to take (your goals).

UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION LED BY PHASE 3 CADETS (3-5 PEOPLE IN EACH GROUP. 15 MINUTES.)

The purpose of this discussion is to help cadets brainstorm a possible life vision appropriate to their age and learn how to set goals to achieve that vision. The first step is to dream about a possible vision. What would their future look like if they fulfilled that vision?

Discussion leader: 5 minutes discussing vision possibilities

- Name possible vision areas: CAP, home, school, sports, music, theatre, trips, career, etc.
- Ask for examples of what a vision might look like in these areas
- Ask if anyone already has a strong personal vision

You can have several visions for your life at the same time. You are not limited to a single vision. You can have one for your education, another for CAP, and still another for becoming a pilot. For this exercise we'll zero in on one vision—getting a pilot's license.

Discussion leader: 10 minutes discussing "SMART" goals

Vision is the WHAT and goals are the HOW. In order to actually achieve your vision—your dream—you need to establish some goals. The goals are the specific steps you take to achieve your vision.

Some goals are better than others. The best goals are based on the word SMART: **specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound**. We will look at obtaining a private pilot's license as a sample vision and decide whether the goal, **"I will take flying lessons and get my private pilot's license,"** is SMART by using each of the letters in the word "SMART" to evaluate the goal. Suggested cadet answers are in (parentheses).

MY VISION: TO BE A PRIVATE PILOT

- "S"** This stands for specific. The goal should not be general. A less effective goal might be "I would like to be a pilot someday." A more appropriate pilot goal would be "I will take ground school and pass my FAA exam." (Pilot's License Answer: Yes, "I will take flying lessons and get my private pilot's license," is specific.)
- "M"** This stands for measurable. There needs to be an event that tells you that you have met your goal. For example, if you say, "I want to be a success in life," it does not define what "a success in life" means. Is success defined by having a family, making a million dollars, getting a position? There needs to be a way you determine you have achieved the goal. If your goal is a degree you will know you have met the goal when you get your diploma. (Pilot's License Answer: Yes, you know the goal is met when you receive your pilot's license in the mail from the FAA.)
- "A"** This stands for achievable. Is it reasonable to expect that you can actually achieve the goal? Do you have access to the resources you need? Do you have the time? Do you have, or can you get, the right preparation? (Pilot's License Answer: Yes, assuming you have the money for flight training, can pass the ground school exam, are medically qualified, and have enough time to complete the training.)
- "R"** This stands for relevant. Does this goal fit in with your plans? Will you be better off when you achieve your goal? (Pilot's License Answer: Yes, you have always wanted to learn to fly and it could lead to a commercial license and flying for the airlines—or becoming an Air Force pilot.)

“T” This stands for time-bound. Have you set a date for reaching your goal? Have you planned enough time to reach your goal? Have you figured in some extra time if emergencies develop? (Pilot's License Answer: No, the above goal, I will take lessons and get a private pilot's license," does not specify when you plan to complete training and get your license.)

**FINAL “SMART” GOAL STATEMENT: I WILL TAKE FLIGHT TRAINING
AND GET MY PRIVATE PILOT'S LICENSE BY DECEMBER 2021**

APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR TO THEIR LIVES

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (15 MINUTES)

Note: Discuss this vision and goals exercise with the squadron commander and deputy commander for cadets well in advance of the lesson to ensure they are on board with the exercise.

This will require a whiteboard or easel with paper. Explain that you will be asking the group to think about a vision for the squadron's cadet corps over the next twelve months. For the first part of the exercise, let them know that you are just looking for ideas—not a fully developed vision. Take the first five minutes to have the cadets brainstorm vision ideas that the squadron could accomplish in the next twelve months. Write them down as they are shared.

After five minutes pick one vision and have the cadets brainstorm some goals needed to reach the vision. Use the SMART model to have the cadets evaluate the goals. If the commander is not there during the lesson make sure she or he gets the final output.

ACTIVITY: PERSONAL VISION AND “SMART” GOALS

PHASE 3 CADETS MONITOR AND ANSWER QUESTIONS (3-5 PEOPLE IN EACH GROUP. 10 MINUTES.)

The folder for this lesson includes a SMART worksheet that should be printed before class with enough copies for each cadet. With the worksheet and a pencil/pen, have each cadet identify an individual vision they could pursue in the next six months and complete the worksheet. Let them know you are there to help if they get stuck using the SMART model. If everyone finishes before the time is up, have them share their vision and goals.

LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (5 MINUTES)—CHOOSE ONE

Media Clip: Apollo-11-Overview.mp4 (2:18)⁵. This is a summary of the Apollo program and a good way to connect the first media clip to the success of the program.

Without the media option, talk about the moon landing or share a goal in your life from the perspective of establishing a vision and setting goals that made it come into reality.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Where there is no vision, the people perish. – Proverbs 29:18

Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.” – Warren G. Bennis

“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.” – Helen Keller

“In order to carry a positive action, we must develop here a positive vision.” – Dalai Lama

“If you want to turn a vision into reality, you have to give 100% and never stop believing in your dream.” – Arnold Schwarzenegger

“Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them – a desire, a dream, a vision.” – Muhammad Ali

“Vision without execution is hallucination.” – Thomas Edison



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VISION AND GOALS WORKSHEET

In the space below write some possible ideas for a personal vision you would like to pursue. Possibilities include: CAP, home, school, sports, music, theatre, hobbies, trips, career, etc. Decide on one vision you could pursue in the next year.

My vision for the next year: _____

Write down the goals you need to set in order to accomplish your vision. Make sure your goals are SMART: **specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.**

Post this worksheet where you can see it and refer to it often. If you review your sense of vision and take action using SMART goals there is no limit to what you can accomplish in life!

Endnotes

¹ Kennedy speech clip source: <https://er.jsc.nasa.gov/seh/ricetalk.htm>

² <https://www.passion.com/inspirational-quotes/6512-you-can-t-put-a-limit-on-anything-the-more-you>

³ We realize that both Kennedy and Phelps have some checkered past. If Michel Phelps' struggle with alcohol and two DUIs come up in discussion it can be used as a moment to point out that he had struggles, got help, and has turned his life around. Here's a quick background post on the subject: <https://www.northpointrecovery.com/blog/back-deep-end-michael-phelps-went-alcohol-rehab-greatest-olympian-ever/>

⁴ <https://corbettbarr.com/how-to-create-a-vision-for-your-life/>

⁵ Apollo 11 clip source: https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/files/Apollo_11_Intro_720p.mov