

Leadership Matters



Australian
Air League

Role Modelling Behaviour

Role models are people who possess the qualities and attributes we would all like to have and they affect us in a way that makes us a better person.

Officers and NCOs, because of their leadership positions, can be good or bad role model and cadets look to them for support when:

- they are unsure of something;
- don't know how to do something;
- need advice; and
- don't know how to act in a given situation.

Everyone has a role model at some stage in their lives, some have more than one role model and throughout a person's lifetime their roles model(s) may change.

Consider a good or bad role model and their behaviour – what are the key differences you can see?

Good role model	Bad role model

Always remember!

Young ears are always listening: young eyes are always watching

To be a good role model an Officer or NCO should:

- Be positive
- Act responsibly
- Instil good moral leadership and personal values

We can be the best role model by adhering to six rules:

1) Demonstrate confidence in yourself

Strive to be happy with how far you have progressed. At the same time, whatever you choose to do with your life, be proud of the person you have become. It may be a long road, but it's the responsibility of a role model to recognise and commemorate the lessons learned, the strengths assessed and the character developed.

It is true; we can always improve. However, while it may seem like a great deal of pressure to be a positive role model, nobody is expecting you to be super-human.

2) Display positive choice-making and think aloud

When it comes to being a good role model, you must be aware that the choices you make not only impact on you, but they also influence the cadets who regard you as their leader.

Thinking out loud when you have a tough choice to make allows the cadets to hear how you work through problems, weigh-up the pros and cons, and come to a decision. The process of making a good decision is a skill and a good role model will not only show which decision is best, but also how they came to that conclusion. In this way, the cadets will be able to follow your line of reasoning when they are in a similar situation.

It is inevitable that sooner or later someone will be in the same predicament and think to themselves, 'What did Mr X or Cpl Y do in the same situation'.

3) Apologies and admit mistakes

Nobody is perfect. When you make a bad choice let those know who are watching and learning from you behaviour. When you know you've made a mistake, own up and plan to correct it.

This process will help others to understand that:

- Everyone makes mistakes
- It is not the end of the world
- You can make it 'right' by taking care of the issue and accept accountability

By apologising, admitting your mistake and repairing the damage, you will be demonstrating an important yet often overlooked part of being a leader and role model.

4) Stick with your commitments and your promises

Sometimes it can be difficult to demonstrate 'follow through' when you are tired, distracted, busy or overwhelmed. Stay true to your beliefs by:

- Turning up on time
- Finishing what you started
- Not quitting
- Keeping your word, delivering on your promises
- Keeping going, even when things get difficult

When an Officer or NCO follows through with their goals, it teaches the cadets that it can be done. It helps them to adopt an 'if she can do it, then I can attitude'.

5) Show respect

You may be driven, successful and smart, but whether you choose to show respect or not speaks volumes about the type of attitude it takes to succeed in life.

- Do you treat others the way you would like to be treated?
- Do you create a sense of 'team' and do not favour individuals?

6) Take a flexible and balanced approach

Good role models are great learners and challenge themselves to get out of their comfort zones. When cadets observe that their role model(s) can be many things, they learn that they don't need to pigeon-hole themselves in order to be successful.

Role Modelling – Learning activity

Time allowed: 20 minutes

Resources: For each group
A1 size flipchart paper, whiteboard or large wall surface
Marker pens or chalk
Post-it note pads (two colours)

Group size: 2-4 people

Task objective: To identify good and bad role modelling characteristics

STEP 1 (10 minutes)

- Course tutor should nominate one person to lead the group. Do not ask for a volunteer (*to reinforce the point that leadership is frequently delegated*).
- The leader will ask one team member to draw a large outline of a male or female figure on the paper, whiteboard or wall and add eyes, nose, mouth and ears.
- The group will then discuss and identify **good** and **bad** characteristics of an effective role model.
- Each idea should be written on a post-it note and placed on the chart.
- After a while, the outline will be covered with a range of post-it notes (*tutor to have a few examples ready*).



STEP 2 (10 minutes)

- The leader should ask each member to select which three good characteristics they like most and tell other team members why.
- The leader should ask each member to select which three bad characteristics they want to avoid and tell other team members why.
- At the end the leader should thank all team members for taking part.

A good role model listens to people

A bad role is always late and untidy