

## European Common Module LEADERSHIP AGILITY IN COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS

Italian Air Force Academy – Pozzuoli – Naples

8-12 October 2018

### Header Article 1

First of all I'd like to thank you all for the great opportunity you gave us. Thanks to you, I brought home many memories and lessons learnt that I'll always remember. The most important thing is that we experienced the military life, in some way, and that was the most important lesson I've learnt. All this made me think about the importance of organizing time during the day.

Second of all, each and every lesson and activity we made was very interesting and funny. Those activities gave me the opportunity to understand that the concept of leadership is in everyone of us and in anything we do, but we just don't realize it. Then, the activities gave me the chance to socialize with the other members of the group, establishing international relationships.

Finally, thank you very much, again, for this unforgettable experience.

Antonella Marzano  
Civilian Student  
UNINA



Group picture

### Article 2

I'm writing this in order to give a feedback about the activity that took place in Naples at ITAFA regarding leadership.

Leadership & Agility in Complex Environments, that was the long name of the course, and its purpose was to develop us and improve our overall ability of being leaders through teaching some of the main concepts about Self-Leadership and Team Leadership which represent the foundation of a leadership mentality.

Spanning a period of five days, with multiple classes and interesting activities, it was a very com-

plex course which made us use our mind and resources in order to overcome the situations that were presented to us, doing this in two phases, the first phase was the learning classes in which we were taught the main concepts of leadership and how to be more open-minded in order to achieve the best result and the second phase was applying those concepts through different activities in different environments.

Besides those activities, we had a visit to Apple Academy in Naples in which we were taught how Apple sees leadership and mostly Team Leadership and how do they use it in order to reach new and more

## follows Article 2

challenging goals in order to improve the organization itself.

Also, on the last day we had a recreational activity in order to conclude the course in a relaxing manner by doing a cultural visit to Pompei in which we were presented the ancient city of Pompei and how society worked in that period, a trip which I found very valuable

because now I see in a different way the life of people that lived in that period mostly because of the way that they were judging problems and what solutions they found in order to overcome them.

Overall this activity changed the way I think regarding leadership matters and enriched me through the activities in which I took part.



Robert-Gigi.Albu  
Cadet Student  
ROMANIAN NAVAL ACADEMY

## Article 3 - A great experience in Academy: LACE!

I started this course with many doubts about what I would have studied.

I didn't have any personal knowledge about the concept of leadership and everything is related to this idea. I thought a leader was a boss who had only to split tasks between some people and to coordinate them to reach a goal. But I have learnt a leader is much more. The most important quality that a leader has to control is empathy: if I don't succeed in relating to people sharing with them emotions and feelings, I can't be a real leader.

A leader has also to make clear to his mates which is the mission towards which their efforts are directed and which are the main goals of the work, otherwise people are not inspired to do better and better. Even if it's fundamental to know in theory the main characteristics of a leader, I have understood that only the experience can make a leader, so now I know that I have to exploit every team work opportunity to improve my personal skills and to find my personal way to be a leader.

Therefore, I consider very interesting

the practical activities that allowed me to find theoretical definitions applied in real problems with real possible solutions.

LACE has given me also the opportunity to interact with very different cultures, coming from all Europe, in a very challenging environment. I will be always thankful to the Academy of Aeronautics that has supported in every way this weekly course.

Emilio Sepe  
Civilian Student  
UNINA





## Article 4 - *My educational experience at ITAFA.*

My educational experience at ITAFA was amazing.

It positively affected me, personally and professionally. On a personal front, it allowed me to broaden my horizons by getting in touch with people from different countries and cultures. Professionally, I enhanced a common understanding of the essential functions and workings of Self and Team Leadership.

Each activity allowed me to pursue that aim!

Furthermore, at the end of every outdoor experience I was amazed about how communication, cooperation, trust and mutual

respect can help teams to carry out tasks.

I'm sure the things I've learned at ITAFA will be an essential tool for my future.

I will always remember that week as one of the most intensive and educational week of my training period!

Thank you for the opportunity.

Marianna Sparaco  
Civilian Student  
UNINA



## Article 5 - *...a unique experience...*

Leadership and Agility in Complex Environments course in the Italian Air Force Academy was a unique experience for me. The basic concepts related to leadership were presented what interested me in the topic. Thanks to this I would like to continue my education in this direction.

As for the course itself, it was carried out exemplary - each activity had its purpose related to the main subject of the course. This allowed to maximum use of

the fairly short course time. Practical exercises perfectly complemented the series of lectures.



Patrycjusz Kwartnik  
Cadet Sergeant  
POLISH AIR FORCE ACADEMY



## Article 6 - Coverage

I am Generoso and I am a student of Aerospace Engineering at University of Naples "Federico II". From the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018 I was selected by ITAFA for participating at the third and final part of the LACE 2018 course.

I am satisfied to have spent my time in attending this course, essentially because it faced different topics which I have never had a practical idea of and because it has really started in me a self-developing process oriented toward the improvement of my leadership skills, and not only.

Before my participation at LACE course, in fact, I can say that I had a wrong idea of what soft skills were. Now I understand in which sense those skills are products of personal experience, now I understand that they can be effectively learn via practice, but theory can be useful to accelerate the developing process. The last consideration came out when I focused about the organization of the course: before each practical activity we had a frontal lesson with a supervisor which gave us some hint-concepts, useful to reach the purposes of the practical activity.

What I essentially learned is that complex environments surround us in everyday life and leadership can be the key to manage the variables of those environments via collaboration with people and team-working. Nevertheless, it's important to understand that without a well developed self-leadership, team-leadership cannot be well-structured, and also other more complex form of it. Therefore, the first brick of the organizational chain which must be solid is the personal one.

In addition to the LACE course, during the experience at ITAFA I enjoy: military welcome and treatment; meeting and communicating with different cultured people, promoting cultural exchanges; learning about some gestures of military personnel; the wondering landscape; officer mess food; observing how each member of the Academy was very proud to stay there, inspiring a sense of belonging which was contagious.

Generoso Piccirillo Sibiano  
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**The Italian Air Force was founded as an independent service on 28th March 1923, and after few months, on November 5th, the Air Force Academy was established in Livorno in the same building of the Italian Naval Academy. From 1926 through 1943 the Academy was housed in Caserta, in a baroque royal palace of the 18th century: that's where the Italian pilots of the 2nd world war were trained.**

**In August of 1943, the Academy was moved to Forlì just for 1 month: in fact on September 10th all courses were suspended due to the signature of armistice.**

**On November 7th of the same year, the Academy was relocated in Brindisi and all courses were reactivated.**

**On November 1945, the Academy was established on the Island of Nisida in Naples bay. In December 1961 the Academy finally moved to its current location, in Pozzuoli.**





## *FEEDBACK AND REMARKS*

The Course for us was a new way of learning leadership and a exquisite method of developing ourself as better leaders.

What I learned most from this course was:

- 1) team cooperation is the key to achieve the most difficult common objectives;
- 2) the exchange of information and the capability to plan strategies make the difference among teams/groups;
- 3) the self-awareness is the engine which allows to start the leadership process inside a team;
- 4) before starting to plan a strategy to face a problem, it is fundamental to understand in which environment I am, what my resources are, what level of confidence I have with people that surround me;
- 5) the words "leadership" and "leader" have a common root, but they can be antithetical in the meaning.



## I learned....

...that the more you risk the more you can be followed, because people follow actions and examples not words.

...the importance of the cohesion in a team building.  
The challenges of communication between students from different nations.

...first of all the ability to communicate with others (countryman and not), to predict their intentions in order to better plan my "strategies" and choices, how to behave in critical conditions to assume the figure of "leader": its meaning, problems and advantages that it implies.

...to cooperate with others cultures and different backgrounds. Especially I learned to "go together" to reach our goals.

The importance of empathy, listening to the other group members in order to understand their point of view and find a better solution. The importance and meaning of time.

Nationwise: the differences between the reaction of different nationalities on situations were often large, this was very educational for future working in international missions.

...wait, there's more to come...

What I learned to most from this trip are differences...

Differences in culture (national) and differences in the way we are educated.

This puts our education in perspective and gives something to reflect on. With the differences in culture I mean the often emotional way of working vs. more structured. For example I was surprised when I observed the cooking activity in the kitchen. In my opinion there was more chaos, emotion and focus on the side issues than I am used to.

Also we are thought to mind everyone in the whole process. Personally I found it interesting that the facilitating staff (cooks, cleaners, waiters, guy in back for powerpoint) were mostly ignored and they ignored us. The cultural difference here is apparent and gives me something to reflect on.


My overall feeling about the course is:

✓ The course was well structured and organized. Above all the morning lesson were all different but at the same time connected, it felt as if the flow of the argument itself (leadership) was never interrupted. This in fact led me to fully understand the subjects that were explained without problems.

✓ A continuous feeling of amazement for the adventures that I lived, adrenaline, happiness for the knowledge acquired every day, empathy with my team, anger when we did not reach a specific goal assigned to us that then I tried to turn into a teaching.

✓ The course was a great experience. Not only in the meaning of education about leadership. I very liked sailing and cooking activities. It was very good to do practical exercises - not only lectures. It helps to develop the learnt knowledge.





*Civilian-military: sometimes military personnel assumes that their way is the way that everybody acts. The addition of civilian participants teaches a lot about what is the "normal" way and what is the effect of military education.*





# *Cooking & Dinner - 9 Oct 2018*





# BATTLESHIP

NISIDA, 10 OCT 2018





*Greetings from Italian Air Force Academy!!!*



*See you next year...*