ARMY UNIVERSITY PRESS

NCO JOURNAL

The Official Magazine of NCO Professional Development

30th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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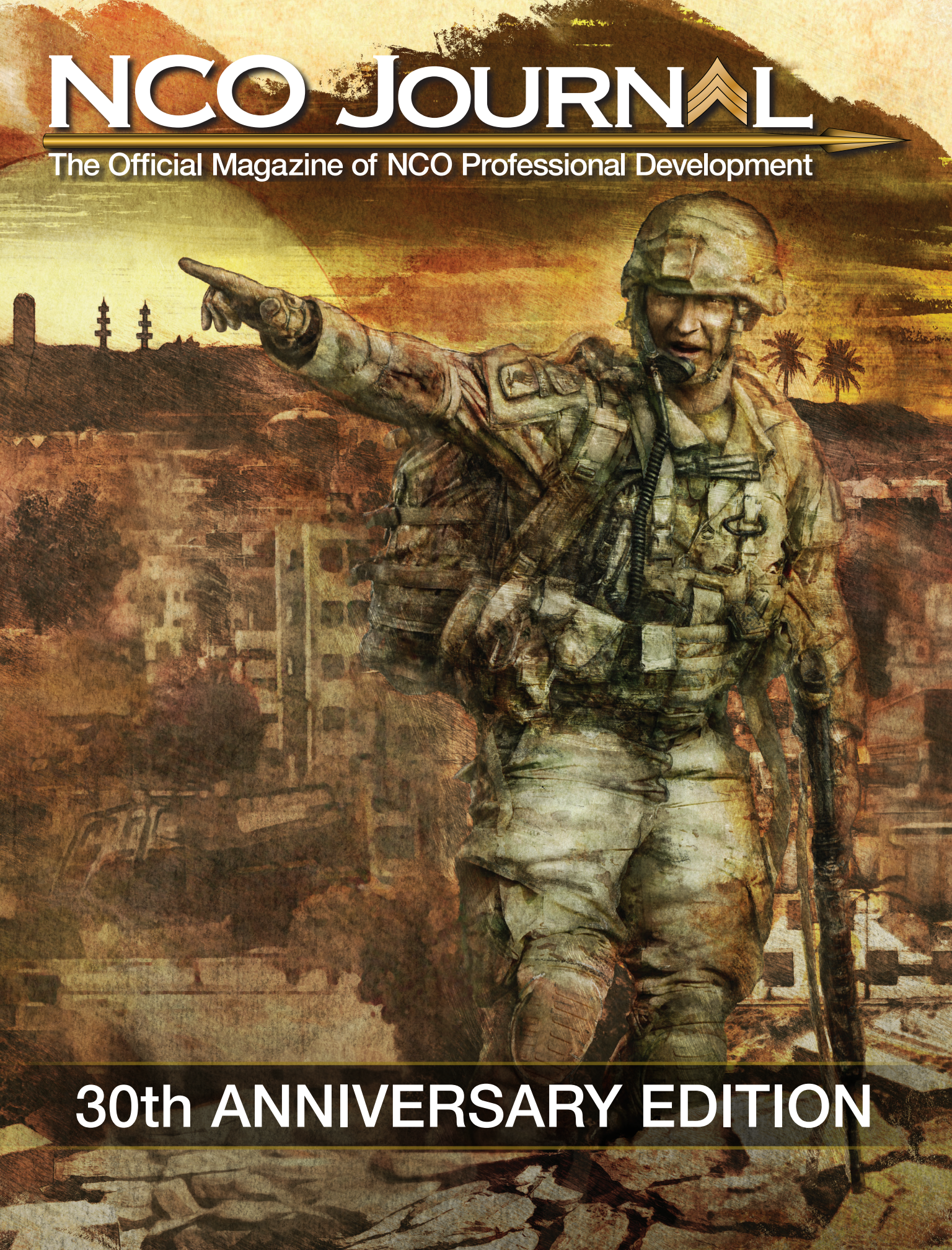

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The *NCO Journal* is the official journal for noncommissioned officer professional development. It provides a forum for the open exchange of ideas and information relevant to the NCO Corps. Its purpose is to support training, education, and development of the NCO Corps and to foster a closer bond among its members. Additional information can be found on our webpage at https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/.

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Cover art: The 30th Anniversary Edition cover art is based on a photo by U.S. Army Lt. Col. John Hall, 173rd Airborne Brigade, of a platoon sergeant with the First Rock of the 173rd Airborne Brigade guiding his paratroopers as they capture a hostile airfield during a training exercise in Northern Italy, Aug. 26, 2017. (Cover art by Dale Cordes, Contractor)

Next page: Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston visits Soldiers from 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division near Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 17, 2020. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Michael West)

Pg. 4-5: Volcanic eruption of Mount Yasur, Oct. 16, 2006. (Photo by Rolfcosar, *https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/legalcode)

Pg. 25: An M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle assigned to the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division provides security during Decisive Action Rotation 19-06 at the National Training Center, Fort, Irwin, California, April 8, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Carson Petry)

Pg. 36: U.S. Army Soldiers with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division (Task Force Stalwart, pose for a group photo in Afghanistan, March 28, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jasmine L. Flowers)

Pg. 53: U.S. Army Sgt. James Balestrini, a fire control specialist with 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, positions himself in the prone to qualify on the M-240B Machine Gun at Montana Range in South Korea, Jan. 25, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Alon Humphrey)

Pg. 66-67: U.S. Army Sgt. Luis Lopezllorens, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, writes a paper in response to "If you could change something about the Army, what would it be?" at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, May 11, 2021. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Daniel Proper)

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Pg. 69: U.S. Army Soldiers with the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) fold the U.S. flag as part of military funeral honors for Pfc. William H. Jones at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, Aug. 22, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

Inside back cover: Poster captures U.S. Army Paratroopers, assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade, conducting an Airborne Operation at Rivolto Air Base, Udine, Italy, June 2020. (U.S. Army graphic by Paolo Bovo)

Army University Press

From the Sergeant Major of the Army

For as long I as I have been a noncommissioned officer, the *NCO Journal* has been a trusted source of professional development on topics like leadership and training for our Corps. In this 30th Anniversary Edition, I challenge each of you to reflect on how far we have come since the inception of the *NCO Journal*.

In three short decades, we have transformed the NCO Corps into the most coveted and respected enlisted force in the world. There is no doubt we are better trained, better educated, and better led than ever before. But what got us here, won't get us "there."

As I look to the future, I don't know what the operating environment will look like; but there are constants to war, and those are the aspects we must continue to focus on. It begins with our People.

I like to say we don't "man our equipment" – we equip our People. We equip them with the training to know exactly what to do, the discipline to do it the right way, and the mental and physical fitness to stay ready for any mission. We do that through small unit leaders who build cohesive teams. Without trust in the people who lead you and you serve next to, we will not be ready to deploy, fight, win, and return home. It is the foundation of everything we do.

Trust is fragile. You have to earn it every single day; we are constantly under evaluation. As the old adage goes: The best time to start was yesterday, the second best time is now. The past year has shown we must place our focus on People first. Investing time in our Soldiers now has a direct correlation to improved readiness. Soldiers who aren't focused on challenges at home or work are ready to train. It has to be a deliberate process.

It begins with a conversation. I ask new members of my Squad how they grew up. It's simple, but profound. America's Soldiers have the most unique and incredible stories; these perspectives shape how they operate, how they solve problems, and how they respond to coaching. Without understanding your people, you are likely to apply a one-sized solution to each of them. This might gain compliance, but it hinders their commitment to the team. A Soldier compliant yet uncommitted to the Squad is more likely to engage in harmful behaviors, isolate themselves, and be permissive to others doing the same.

Even worse is a leader uncommitted to the Squad.

Building a committed leader requires frequent engagement at every level. This is why the future of the NCO Corps depends on regular leader development–not just annual counseling when evaluations are due but consistent mentorship and education at the organizational level.

The Army owes it to our Soldiers to get this right. We're implementing new assessment programs to more accurately evaluate the talent, potential, and attributes of enlisted leaders at the company/troop/battery, battalion, and brigade levels. I want senior NCOs who will invest in the next generation.

Finally, I believe staff sergeants are the key to all of this. They are mostly responsible for training junior Soldiers and growing them into noncommissioned officers, but thinking back to my own experience, I couldn't have done that job without the mentorship, coaching, and counsel of the senior NCOs in my unit. Platoon sergeants, first sergeants, and sergeants major all have a role to play.

NCOs own the culture of our units – my question for the next 30 years of the *NCO Journal* is will our culture be one of compliance, or commitment?

–Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston

History of the *NCO Journal*

By NCO Journal Staff

The *NCO Journal* is a forum for the open exchange of ideas and information pertinent to the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Corps. It is designed to support the training, education, and development of the NCO Corps while fostering a close bond among its members. The *NCO Journal*'s content is carefully selected to be relevant, useful, and valuable to the time-constrained NCO, delving into the topics and issues affecting the NCO Corps today. With about 816,000 Soldiers currently serving in the U.S. Army (Cancian, 2021), approximately one third in the NCO ranks, the *Journal* has a wide-ranging audience. But it didn't spring out of "thin air"—it has a history all its own.

Much of the early success of the *NCO Journal* can be attributed to a few extraordinary people—former Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Carl Vuono and former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates. It was their foresight and leadership more than 30 years ago that ultimately brought the *Journal* to life.

Sgt. 1st Class John D'Amato, then-public affairs NCO for the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA), Fort Bliss, Texas, did the majority of the legwork in researching and obtaining the necessary information on staffing, budget, content, and publication frequency. Due of his hard work and tenacity, Army leadership decided to create the premier magazine for NCO professional development. He also wrote nearly 90% of the stories for the inaugural Spring 1991 issue.

Col. Fredrick Van Horn, then-commandant of USASMA, and his command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Mock, were instrumental in providing leadership and guidance along the way. They ensured the process of creating and designing the *NCO Journal.*

Mock selected Master Sgt. Gil High as the first editor of the magazine, recruiting him away from *Soldiers* magazine.

After Mock came Command Sgt. Maj. Ronnie Strahan, who helped spread the word about the *NCO Journal* and to garner support and stories from the field.

Another success story during the *Journal*'s early years was hiring Jim Collins, a DA Civilian, as managing editor who provided continuity and stability, something rotating Soldiers could not do.

Sgt. Maj. Bill Lopez became the editor-in-chief after graduating from the Sergeants Major Course (SMC) Class 37, maintaining consistency throughout the magazine's first year. He led the first team of seasoned professionals and continued to improve the *Journal*.

The early days of the *Journal* didn't have the high-speed computers and desktop publishing programs of today. Photoshop software hadn't even been created yet; each story had to be typeset and sent to a contractor who printed it for pagination and paste-up. There was no such thing as emailing a complete magazine, graphics and all, over the internet to be printed. The magazine had to be sent in bits and pieces, with photographs and text handled separately.

Since those early days, the *NCO Journal* has had numerous editors, managing editors, staff writers and graphic artists—too many to mention—but each brought something new to the *Journal*, which resulted in constant upgrades and improvements throughout its long history.

In 1998 and 1999, the *NCO Journal* almost disappeared and could only be found online. No hard copies were produced. It lost much of its readership and interest from the NCO Corps. That was until Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley insisted it come back in print in 2000.

Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr. and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston made 2009 the "Year of the NCO," increasing the staff of professionals who wrote the stories, page count, and frequency of publication, and producing innovative products for use in the field.

In March 2013, the NCO Journal again reverted to online-only. However, with the increasing influence of social media, and an environment steeped in various digital multimedia content, the Journal began to create robust and relevant content that reached modern NCOs around the world. It strived to provide a more creative forum for NCO professional development, a multifaceted approach designed to reach today's multifaceted NCOs.

In April of 2017, the *NCO Journal* joined the Army University Press in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, changing to a more scholarly, peer-reviewed type format, giving NCOs a professional forum in which to advance their writing skills and share information and points of view. ■

Reference

Cancian, M. F. (2021, June 10). U.S. Military Forces in FY 2020: Army. U.S. Military Forces in FY 2020: Army | Center for Strategic and International Studies. https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-military-forces-fy-2020-army.

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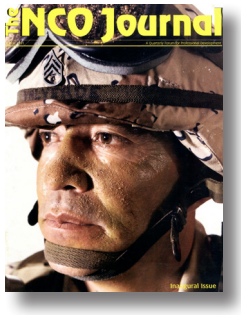
Desert Lessons



By Sgt. 1st Class John K. D'Amato

Originally published in the inaugural Spring 1991 issue

Military experts call it a "target-rich environment." Battles fought across its barren, trackless terrain have been characterized by their speed and lethality. It has no friend, no conqueror, and no equal. It is unforgiving and allows for no mistakes. It recognizes no middle ground – only complete victory or complete defeat.

It is "The Desert," and if the American Army is to be successful in the deserts of the Persian Gulf, its leaders must learn the lessons of the desert and learn them well.

Fortunately for NCOs in the Gulf region and for those awaiting deployment, there are thousands of desert war lessons learned – from the time of the battle of Carrhae in 54 B.C. to those from Desert Storm.

Hundreds of simulated battles at the National Training Center (NTC) and other desert training areas point clearly to areas where noncommissioned officers (NCOs) need to place training emphasis.

Lack of vegetation and prominent terrain features in the desert make pinpointing one's position extremely difficult, even during daylight hours. NCOs must train their Soldiers to use their compasses, to accurately measure distances traveled, and to navigate in a land nearly void of man-made and natural terrain features.

Experience gained at the NTC has shown that, although their map-reading skills are adequate for the training areas near their home bases, Soldiers in the desert may either become disoriented or be forced to hug the roads and dry streambeds for fear of getting lost.

Many units now have more sophisticated land navigation or location determination equipment than the standard compass and map can provide.

Unfortunately, the Soldiers of such units sometimes become too reliant on these means and allow their map reading skills to slip. Satellite links, electronic or other equipment can be lost in battle or unavailable, and overdependence on any one method of land navigation or location identification system can lead to disaster. The best-led Soldiers are those who can use available systems, such as the Position Azimuth Determining System, yet fall back on sound map reading skills when necessary.

If land navigation in daylight is difficult, it's worse at night. There are dozens of stories out of the NTC of units stumbling through the night, missing rallying points or objectives, and finding themselves with tired, demoralized, and lost Soldiers at daylight.

Night is when most units move. NCOs, therefore, must know that their Soldiers can operate in near or total darkness.

Newcomers to the desert often say it seems that they can "see forever." More experienced Soldiers might describe it as seeing the world through a full goldfish bowl. Objects seem closer than they are, shapes distort, and important terrain features disappear entirely.

The shimmer of heat on sand creates mirages of water or hills in the distance. There are accounts from World War II of lost Soldiers walking for days toward mountains that did not exist.

Dust also impacts on observation. It can, at the same time, obscure movements and give them away.

Crew-served weapons, especially field artillery and tank main guns, tend to kick up huge clouds of dust, blinding the crews and equipment trying to put follow-on rounds on target.

Taking a page from the German Afrika Korps or the British Desert Rats in World War II, some NCOs operating in Desert Storm have their troops limit the dust clouds by laying down wet mats or oil in the sand in front of their big guns. Another way crews are overcoming the siting problem is to have one vehicle fire and another sense where rounds are impacting.

The Kuwaiti and Saudi sands effect far more than siting, however. With sand temperatures reaching 165 degrees, rubber weakens, wood shrinks, and metal softens and bends. To those units slow to adapt to their new environ-

An M60/A1 kicks up a swirl of sand as it closes on its target. Dust clouds can obliterate a target or reveal its location. The sand is also an enemy to movement – clogging filters and stopping engines. (U.S. Army photo)

Soldiers who drink only when thirsty are setting themselves up for dehydration and heat stroke. Careful supervision can prevent combat losses dut to heat injury. (U.S. Army photo)

ment, the desert soon becomes a maintenance nightmare.

Sand mixed with lubricating oil forms a thick, gritty paste that fouls weapons.

A little sand inside radio cable connectors causes operators to force and break them. Filters clog and engines stop. Tires weaken and puncture easily in rough terrain.

Proper equipment maintenance is an NCO's responsibility, and breakdowns of vehicles, weapons, radios and other electronic equipment in the desert are often more a function of inadequate Soldier training than poor equipment.

Whether it's in the Saudi desert or in the rugged terrain of the NTC, smart NCOs devote a good portion of each day training and supervising maintenance. And the wisest of leaders are calling in the experts – the armorer, motor maintenance and communications NCOs, etc. – to doubly ensure that training and maintenance are by the book.

Breakdowns will occur, however, so there have been times when Soldiers have become stranded. To minimize problems NCOs have learned to expand the buddy system so there are extra safety checks before and during movements. And to limit injuries, Soldiers are receiving reinforcement training in survival and rescue techniques.

Heat is the most obvious and immediate physical danger in a desert environment. During World War II, air temperatures in the Sahara Desert often reached 136 degrees Fahrenheit. Inside their tanks crews recorded temperatures of 160 degrees.

Soldiers in all desert wars have gone without hats and shirts in the mid-day sun, thus losing valuable cooling perspiration and becoming heat stroke victims. Others have fallen victim to dehydration when they didn't force themselves to drink at regular intervals. Both are problems that can be attributed to lack of NCO supervision.

Another problem identified by the study of past desert wars is the effect of poor hygiene and sanitation. Diarrhea from fungus infections and debilitating rashes have severely limited the capabilities of numerous desert armies. Yet, both are easily controllable through leader supervision and awareness. For example, even when water is unavailable, Soldiers can diminish the chances of infections by wiping away perspiration and dirt with clean, dry cloths.

The war in the desert is often described as a "war of water," with victory going to the side that conserves and uses its available water wisely. The British Desert Rats of World War II became masters of water conservation. As standard practice, water used to heat rations was then used to wash clothes and finally poured into vehicle cooling systems or used for vehicle decontamination.

Lack of water threatens the life of every living thing in the desert, but the dangers there are not all physical.

"An oppressive feeling of immense loneliness overcomes everyone more or less frequently in the desert, a feeling that one is cut off from everything one holds dear," wrote World War II veteran, German Generalmajor Alfred Toppe. Leaders, according to Toppe, "must recognize such moods and depressions and offer sincere encouragement so that pressure will disappear."

Experience has shown that NCOs who keep their Soldiers informed about what is happening or what is about to happen, and show genuine concern, have far fewer soldier morale problems and can keep their troops motivated.

Training, always important, can serve the double purpose of filling empty hours while honing soldier skills.

The greatest fear of any Soldier is the fear of the unknown. NCOs can help Soldiers face and overcome those fears through training and counseling.

The "encouragement" Toppe mentions is especially important. The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) recognized this early in its deployment to the Gulf and instructed leaders to "continue to counsel Soldiers. Everybody is somewhat new to this (desert warfare). Let them know how well they are doing, what they could improve, etc."

American Soldiers historically fight longer and harder when they know why they're fighting and what is happening around them. The more battle information they have, the more informed choices they make and the more initiative they take. In the desert "keeping Soldiers informed" ranks as one of the most critical principles of NCO leadership.

Long before hostilities erupted in the Gulf, Army NCOs were finding that they had more than the Iraqi Armed Forces to contend with. They learned that the desert, with its temperature extremes, barren wastes and desolate loneliness is a formidable adversary, as well.

The Nafud, Ad Dahna and Rub Al Khali deserts of Saudi Arabia will continue to teach that preparedness is the key to survival. NCOs new to the desert environment must become adept students, learning from the experiences of others to avoid making fatal mistakes.

But those NCOs who've become graduates of the "desert school of hard knocks," either through prior training or during the Desert Shield phase of Operation Desert Storm have an advantage they must share – by evaluating their experiences then training and informing others of the lessons learned. ■

How Do You Set Their Souls on Fire?

By Master Sgt. John McLennon

Fall 1991

Leaders become great not because they possess the power to force obedience, but because people willingly and energetically follow their leadership. So…

What did Genghis Khan have in common with Mahatma Gandhi, or Mother Theresa with Adolf Hitler? What would explain their almost mystical powers to set the souls of their followers on fire? On a broader scale, what quality do great leaders possess that motivates people to follow passionately, even when doing so endangers their lives?

Of the leaders discussed here, all turned their followers into winners and made lives meaningful. They made people feel important.

Genghis Khan's victories turned his people in to great conquerors; Mahatma Gandhi showed the down-trodden how to exert power over governments without resorting to violence. Mother Theresa taught her followers that by sacrificing their lives for the poor, they became equal to kings in the eyes of Gold. Hitler used the German people's desire for a prosperous, united "Fatherland" to build his Third Reich.

Scholars searched for years to determine the secrets of leaders – were they born, chosen by God, or were there special characteristics that set leaders apart? Instead of common denominators in the character of leaders, scholars instead found extremes. Of those mentioned here, one was a warrior, one a pacifist; one a saint, the other considered a madman. Some were smart, some dumb. No consistency in personal characteristics existed.

Next, the academicians decided to list all the wise and virtuous acts of leaders. They even threw in a few vices. The list consisted of a series of contradictions. Pay attention to details, but don't micromanage. Be compassionate while being ruthless, etc. Again, the scholars fell short. They were searching in the wrong area. Instead of asking 'What makes leaders great?' they should have been asking 'What makes people what to follow?'

These leaders became great not because they possessed the power to force obedience, but because people willingly and energetically followed their leadership. They stirred emotions and harnessed a tremendous energy by fulfilling man's most basic non-biological need: the desire for a meaningful life. Despite terrible adversity, their people continued to serve them because only they fed that daily hunger for dignity, worth and a sense of meaning.

One lesson NCOs can learn from this is that great leadership cannot exist apart from the human need for a sense of meaning. Soldiers derive that sense from confidence in their abilities to succeed, respect from their superiors and associates, membership in an important group and service to an ideal greater than themselves.

First, every NCO knows the best way to build Soldier confidence it through training that allows Soldiers to take on tough challenges and to succeed. This is what makes Soldiers; it's the reason most joined the Army. Without good training they don't feel any legitimacy as Soldiers, and their roles in the Army become meaningless.

Training, therefore, is the NCO's first responsibility – the first element that makes Soldiers winners and sets leaders apart.

The second element is respect. Anytime you, as a leader, degrade a Soldier, you have violated your contract to make subordinates winners. The experiences of humiliation and a sense of meaning are not compatible. The soldier who is made to feel worthless cannot, at the same time, believe that he fills any meaningful role. Even when Soldiers behave in immature or hostile ways, your duty is to treat them with respect aby responding professionally. Then leaders enter into personal conflicts, they damage their professional relationships with their Soldiers.

The Soldier's third need is the sense of belonging to an important and identifiable group. It is in the small group, such as a platoon or squad, where Soldiers work together and know each other's abilities that the individual becomes important.

The small group gives people a sense of meaning. An NCO can increase this sense of meaning by increasing the importance of his quad or platoon. Anyone who belongs to a special circle of people must himself be special. To heighten this sense of importance, a group also must have its own identity. Thus, organizations develop their own unit T-shirts, handshakes, mottos or ways of speaking, all to make their groups distinctive. It is no accident that artillery Soldiers wear red socks with their dress green uniforms or that cavalry Soldiers wear spurs. These distinctions make their groups stand out – and therefore special in the eyes of their members.

The one thing that makes a group especially important; however, is its dedications to an ideal or principle greater than the individual himself. This leads us to the fourth element that gives Soldiers a sense of meaning. People determine their importance by measuring how much other people need or appreciate them. Then more people rely on an individual, that person becomes more important. When a Soldiers puts self-interest aside and begins to serve the needs of people in his unit, he increases his importance to others. That importance increases more when he dedicates himself to the service of the nations.

When you put meaning into your Soldiers' lives by training them in specialized skills, developing cohesion in an elite but small group and dedicating that group to the professional ethic of service, those Soldiers will form a bond and be inspired. And you will be the NCO who sets their souls on fire. ■

Master Sgt. McLennon is the NBC NCOIC, 199th Infantry Brigade (Motorized), Fort Lewis [now Joint Base Lewis-McChord], Washington.

His Name Was Bourdo

By Staff Sgt. Judith Bradford

Fall 1991

This essay first appeared in *The NCO in Their Own Words*, a 1991 FORSCOM document published by the Directorate of Public Affairs and the Leadership Office of the Directorate of Personnel.

His name was Bourdo – Sgt. Hank Bourdo. And Like the rest of us that Oregon summer, he was there for an intensive two-week course designed to turn untried, junior NCOs into full-fledged leaders. But it was Bourdo who taught us more about caring for and inspiring Soldiers than we ever could have learned from a book.

He was older than most of us and he wore his chevrons with an easy confidence. He knew all of our names long before the rhythm of repeated roll-calls had lodge in the flat back of our brains, and sometimes he could startle with his recall – laying out a piece of personal history you had discarded in casual conversation the day before. He joked, and he laughed, and he listened.

We reported to Camp Rilea on the northern coast of Oregon that brilliant Saturday morning. Several hundred of us lined up on the gravel parking lot, dressed in our greens and struggling with over-stuffed duffel bags. We were inspected, weighed, registered and assigned to one of a row of white-washed, green-trimmed buildings, our home for the next 14 days.

Our day began at 5:45 a.m. when the calloused hand of some humorless master sergeant flipped a switch and a blaze of light burned through our unconsciousness. We had only minutes to wash, grab a T-shirt and shorts and report to the PT grounds. "Fall in," the instructor bellowed, and for the next 20 minutes he led us as we worked and sweated.

Within 48 hours, we had taken over the task ourselves and were dutifully responding to the hesitant orders of whomever was assigned as squad leader for the day. Our lessons in leadership had begun.

One morning, early that first week, we assembled to find ourselves facing Bourdo. Today, the regimen would be different, he announced. He wanted us to think about the reasons for this exercise routine. Physical training was only a part of why we were there. What the Army was really trying to do, he told us, was to teach us to teach other Soldiers.

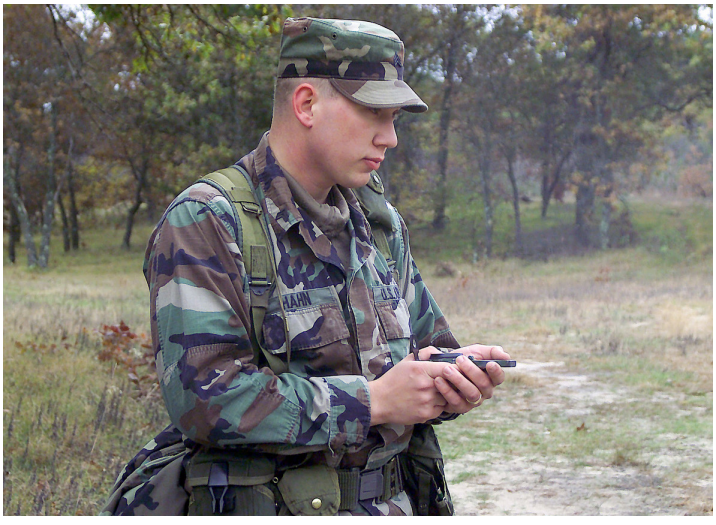
Instead of trying to out-do ourselves each morning with a regimen that left us tired and stiff, Bourdo had another idea. He focused on skill building. That was an NCO's real job, he said, and the best way to do that was to practice the art of giving commands. That morning, we performed a series of exercises, each of which would require giving a specific set of orders to move us into the proper position.

Classroom instruction took up most of our days at the camp, and when the time came for a test which would make or break us, the instructor moved aside and Bourdo took the floor.

As a human resources instructor at the Boeing Co., Bourdo had experience in teaching and testing. Now he took us in hand to prepare for the exam. "Nothing to worry about," he told us. "Taking a test is easy if you remember a few key points," and he proceeded to lay them out.

Toward the end of that day, it was clear that one young man just wasn't getting it. He had trouble figuring out which points in a lesion were key and which were not. For hours, Bourdo worked with him.

As we stood outside the classroom during a break, we could hear Bourdo, still inside, one-on-one, pressing and cajoling his anxious student. "We started together," he said, "And we're gonna finish together. You can do this. I know you can." That was his personal theme, his philosophy: "We're professionals, we can do this, and we can do it together. It's a philosophy he taught us by example; we embraced it wholeheartedly.



U.S. Army Sgt. Tim Hahn, 826th Ordnance Company, Madison, Wisconsin, reads a compass for a course heading during the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) compass course held at Bravo 1, South Post Training Area, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Oct. 22, 2002. (Photo courtesy of U.S. National Archives)

The trepidation we had about the test was nothing compared to the concern we felt about the upcoming field exercise.

We knew we would face a grueling three days, but as always, Bourdo gave us encouragement. After class on the afternoon before heading out to the field, Bourdo gathered us for a pep talk.

"We've got a lot of experience here," he told us, pointing out member of our group who has seen service in Vietnam or who had specialized combat training. "These are the people we should rely on. If you need help, we'll be there," he said. Then he suggested that those less experienced team with those who knew the ropes. The buddy system. "You're professionals," he told us again. "You'll come through with flying colors."

The exercise was all it was billed to be – tough and taxing. We marched for hours through silt and sand in full kit, two-by-two, until, calves aching, we reached our objective under a strand of tall pines. Exhausted, we dropped our gear and prepared our positions for the night. I was completing my tasks when I glanced up and saw Bourdo stringing empty cans on a wire around our perimeter. "An early warning system," he explained. A low-tech DEW line. Our instructors hadn't mentioned anything about OPFOR, but Bourdo wasn't taking any chance.

That night, as we sat doing hip-pocket training, Bourdo told us how to rig an audible trip wire. He pointed out the weak spots in our defenses where an enemy could mount an assault under cover of darkness, and he urged us to be alert.

The next day, one of our tasks was to cross an open field to reach a grove of trees on the other side. We were concealed on a small rise, the objective visible ahead. It was time to talk tactics and training. Each person was assigned a topic to teach – a lesson directly related to getting us safely to our next objective. We each took a turn as instructor, but when it came time for our prior-service Marine to tach the group, he froze. He would rather have crossed a mine field than to speak in front of an audience.

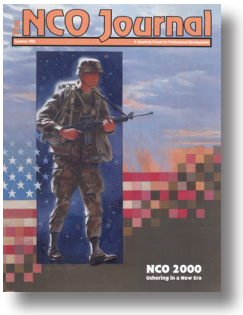
Bourdo immediately came to the rescue. "We're not some group of strangers," he told the Soldier. "We're your friends and this is important information we need. You can do it." Then Bourdo began to question him, slowly drawing the information out. Gently, as Bourdo prodded him, the Soldier grew confident. By the end of the lesson, the ex-Marine had won our applause, and Bourdo, with his care and concern, had once again won our admiration.

The three-day exercise was a challenge, but when it was over we had gained immeasurably in skill and confidence. We were tired and dirty that final afternoon, but we laughed and joked with each other as we stood cleaning our weapons. Bourdo was helping a small group of us who had failed the armorer's inspection. He carefully explained the assembly and disassembly of our rifles as we struggled to mimic the ease with which he did each task. Again and again, he made us put the weapons together and take them apart until we could do the job, if not with grace, at least with speed.

The next afternoon, brass gleaming and leather shining, we fell in on the parade ground for the final formation. It was a formal ceremony with a pass-in-review. I was never as proud of my accomplishments in the service as I was that day. Our platoon didn't win any award; we weren't first in any of the specific categories. But, in my opinion, we were the most successful of any of the graduates. We had learned first-hand that the real job of an NCO is to care about the Soldiers he leads, and we saw, through the example of Bourdo, the powerful and lasting impact one man can have on the spirit of a unit. ■

The Board

How to Survive the "Hot Seat"



By Staff Sgt. Denver G. Smith

Summer 1992

"You're going to the board!"

You've repeated these words many times in your mind since being notified. The thought of sitting in the "hot seat" in front of five senior NCOs makes you nervous. Relax. This is the normal response, but you need not keep your stomach in knots.

In the past, soldiers concentrated primarily on studying the chain of command, marksmanship, drill and ceremony, and numerous other topics. They took that knowledge before the board, but the butterflies in their stomachs kept them from answering the questions correctly.

Learning board procedures helps eliminate that nervousness and allows you to concentrate on answering the questions correctly.

Knowing the board's composition is a great place to start in your preparation. Most boards have four voting members (comprised of first sergeants or senior NCOs) and a president (normally the battalion command sergeant major). Board members ask several questions about specific topics. Their jobs are not to belittle or embarrass you; rather they want you to demonstrate what you know. Answer the questions honestly.

Before reporting to the board, knock loudly on the door and enter the room. Choose the most direct route and march to a point about two paces in front of the board president. From the position of attention, render the salute and report to the president. A proper report, for example, would be: "Sergeant major, specialist Jones reports to the president of the board." Some units use variations of this report. It would be wise to research local board procedures before reporting. Do not drop your salute until the president returns and drops his salute.

After reporting, the president instructs you to execute several facing movements. This gives all members a chance to inspect your uniform and appearance. When instructed to sit down, glance behind you to find your chair and sit down. Relax, but don't kick back. Sit in a modified position of attention sit up straight, keep your hands flat on your lap or clasped together.

Eye contact is important when addressing board members. Unfortunately, this is an unnerving thing to do. Here's a simple rule I use which I call "lock in, lock out." Once you have locked in the person you are talking to (made eye contact), lock that person out. What you are doing is looking through his eyes. This method still gives you eye contact, but you can actually "see" your study guide instead of the person asking the questions.

This technique takes practice, but it is a valuable tool if used properly. Speak up when answering questions.

Speaking loudly has two benefits. One, it conveys a sense of confidence and bearing and, two, it helps you overcome the hesitancy in your voice.

The first question is usually asked by the president. He usually asks you to tell the members a little about yourself. They don't need to know your birthplace or where you attended grade school. Start with your Army enlistment and end with your present assignment and job. Include some personal background, like marriage and family. Practice your brief biography before you go to the board to get your dates and places correct.

The president might next ask other questions or immediately direct other board members to begin their questioning. Board procedures vary slightly, so don't get upset if things don't go in the order you expected. Address all board members by their proper rank. For board purposes, there are only four ways to address NCOs: corporal, sergeant, first sergeant, or sergeant major. Also, include the question as part of your answer. For example, if you're asked: "Sergeant, the acronym PLDC stands for Primary Leadership Development Course."

The promotion board process can be one of the most stressful tasks Soldiers undergo during their military service. By understanding what the board is evaluating, and with some basic preparation, Soldiers can shine during one of the most important events of their career. (U.S. Army photo by Timothy Hale)

Avoid saying "I think," "uh" or other verbal pauses. If you have trouble recalling the answer, silently pause until you gather your thoughts. Verbal pauses indicate indecision and lack of confidence. If you can't think of the answer, a simple, "Sergeant, I do not know the answer to your question" is a better response than trying to bluff your way through an answer.

Gestures with the hands or body should also be avoided. These tend to distract board members and can be a minus. One method for eliminating hand movement is to simply grip your leg harder (without cutting off circulation).

Some questions may seem confusing. Don't be afraid to ask board members to rephrase questions. This will give you a better chance to answer correctly.

Never argue with a board member over a question. This is unprofessional and can result in your dismissal from the board. Simply research the question after you leave the board. Return to the board president with any documentation which supports your point of view or the answer.

After the questioning is complete, the president may ask if you have any questions of board members. Now is a good time to provide the correct answer for a previously asked question. If there are no questions, you will be dismissed. Stand up and render the salute to the board president. Once again, do not drop your salute until the president has properly returned the salute. Execute the necessary facing movements and march out of the room. Your supervisor will follow you out. Some units require you to sound off with your unit motto or war cry. This is unit discretion and you should ask what is required before you go before the board.

Study habits often make the difference between a successful or unsuccessful board appearance. I have included a few methods that helped me.

Alphabetize your study notes. For example, there are four indicators of good leadership. If you remember the first letters in each word in alphabetical order, it will be easier to remember the answer. For this question, you should think C-D-M-P, for *cohesion*, *discipline*, *morale*, and *proficiency*. Try this method; I think it will help.

Two categories that are usually problems are the chain of command and publications. Most people can remember them in a sequence. This can be dangerous if the questions aren't asked in sequence. The method I use is to list the publication numbers on one side of a piece of paper and the publication title on the other side. Similarly, write chain of command names on one side and the matching commands on the other. Cut these items out, line by line, then cut them apart from each other. Put these slips of paper in a box. When studying, pick out a slip of paper. If it has first aid written on it, then you should say out loud, "the FM covering first aid is *FM 21-11*." If the piece of paper has *AR 600-20* on it, you would then say "*AR 600-20* is Army Command Policy." When you get to the point where you can go through the entire box in this manner, you can be sure of answering everything about the chain of command and publications.

Another effective study method is to progressively study a list. Go to the first question and learn it. Then read the second question and dedicate it to memory. Immediately look at the first question again, without looking at the answer, and answer the question. Do the same with the second question. If you can answer both questions like this, memorize the next question. Add a question each time through. When you get to the end of your first page, you will find that at least three quarters of that page is burned into your memory.

Answering questions out loud while studying is another helpful technique. Most people can answer the question in their mind, but when it comes to speaking the answer, they hesitate.

In the text of one article, you have learned what has taken me 17 boards to learn. These are tried-and-true methods and, if used properly, will provide you with every opportunity to excel at board proceedings.

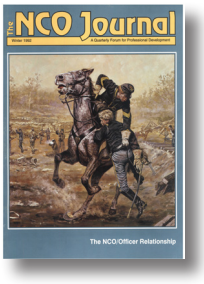
Good luck at your next board! ■

Staff Sgt. Smith is assigned to the 208th Support Battalion (Forward), near Baumholder, Germany.

Instilling Pride

By Lt. Col. Cole Kingseed & Command Sgt. Maj. Ron R. Semon

Winter 1993



NCOs who understand the importance of morale and esprit know that instilling unit pride contributes significantly to combat readiness.

Unit pride consists of four fundamental components: the establishment of a positive command climate, confidence in the members of a command, trust in the organization and a strong sense of affiliation to a specific unit.

Command Climate

Command climate is the conduit for developing unit pride and morale. Soldiers need to feel that their leaders are receptive to their needs. The fulfillment of those Soldier needs establishes a certain command climate. That climate evolves into a strong sense of identity for the command and its leaders. Only the leader, regardless

of the level, can set the stage for the development of a positive climate in a unit.

Leaders create a positive command climate by "focusing" the unit. They explain expectations of proficiency, leadership and soldiers for the next six, 12 and 18 months of training. Then, they encourage senior leaders to delegate to subordinates. They teach, coach, and mentor the officer/NCO relationship in leadership and training.

Leaders establish a positive climate by consistently and promptly recognizing good performance. Soldiers link good performance to such simple signs as handshakes, "pats" on the back, certificates of achievement, small unit leadership badges, immediate presentations of marksmanship awards at unit formations and specialty awards such as public recognition of professional excellence. For example, leaders miss an excellent opportunity if they fail to pin an Expert Infantryman Badge (EIB) to the chest of a Soldier who completes the grueling competition. Public ceremonies with dignitaries and families can follow, but the Soldier will never be prouder than the moment he earns the EIB or any badge of distinction.

Another important factor in building cohesion centers on the frequency leaders talk to Soldiers. Most leaders will readily claim they have an excellent rapport with the troops but that perception is often one-sided. In addition to normal operations, noncommissioned officers should brief their platoons and squads daily. Remember, informed soldiers perform better than Soldiers who must consistently grasp for information about training schedules, leader expectations, and unit policies.

Confidence

Confidence is the faith or belief that one will act in a right, proper, or effective way. In a military unit, Soldiers must have confidence in themselves, their fellow Soldiers and in their leaders. Patton once called self-confidence the twin brother of leadership. In Patton's estimation, a confident Soldier was a trained Soldier. Above all, units with enormous pride share the common feature of well-trained troops at every skill level. Professional competence is directly related to confidence. Competence is also a function of grade. Specialists are expected to know more about their weapons because they teach privates how to use them.

Team leaders and squad leaders have the primary responsibility to train soldiers. Fulfilling this responsibility begets self-confidence in the Soldiers and leads to soldier confidence in the leader. Self-confidence contributes to and frequently creates success. Successful completion of individual tasks manifests itself in successful completion of the unit's collective tasks and ultimately the training mission.

Soldiers must also have confidence in their fellow Soldiers. They must feel comfortable that the Soldier on their left and right can be depended upon to perform their specific tasks to standard. Gunners must know their assistant gunners are as familiar with a crew served weapon as they are. Team members must know that they may take over the team and assume the mission if casualties occur.

Additionally, Soldiers must have confidence in their leaders. Soldiers will follow a squad leader who exudes the physical and mental stamina to lead from the front. They will follow a platoon sergeant whom they know has mastered the tactical skills necessary for mission accomplishment.

Confidence in the leadership also breeds loyalty to a unit's leaders. Often, we make a great deal about loyalty from the bottom up. However, loyalty from the top down is just as important and unfortunately less prevalent. Leaders have the responsibility to ensure that subordinate leaders and Soldiers entrusted to their care have opportunities to be competitive for advancement. Demand high standards and insist they attend military and civilian schooling. Soldiers may initially not appreciate your insistence; however, they will know you care and this breeds loyalty.

Trust

Trust in one's organization is another indispensable characteristic of units known for their pride and comradeship. As proficiency increases in units that concentrate on small unit training, so does trust. The more times small units meet or exceed the standard, the more cohesion evolves. Training becomes a team effort and leadership is participative.

Leaders build trust by actions, not by words. Trust is not easily obtained, but it is easily lost the first time the command fails to lead properly or train its Soldiers. Soldiers constantly assess the dependability and effectiveness of the unit's leadership. They're the leaders' most staunch advocates and most severe critics in an ongoing process. As this trust evolves between the leader and the Soldiers, a sense of belonging to the unit and the desire to excel will prevail.

The same trust is true in senior-subordinate relationships. Commanders must empower subordinates with the authority and responsibility to execute missions. Junior noncommissioned officers perform better if they believe that the commander and senior NCO support channel have trust in their abilities to execute assigned tasks. Hold leaders personally accountable for their subordinates. There may be growing pains with this approach, but once everyone comes on board, leaders will have a winning team.

A Sense of Belonging

The final ingredient in establishing pride in a unit is the development of a sense of affiliation to a winning organization that's rich in tradition and that cares for the Soldiers in the command. Moreover, it's not enough to feel just a part of the team. Soldiers must feel that they're making an important contribution to that team.

Leaders must welcome each young Soldier and family to the command as they would want to be welcomed themselves. The leader must assign a sponsor who is receptive to the needs to a newly arrived replacement. Commanders and first sergeants should interview all newly arrived personnel. They must inculcate that Soldier in the proud heritage and traditions of the unit. It's "OK" for platoon

sergeants to proudly state their platoon has the most EIB recipients in the battalion or the best Squad Automatic Weapon gunner in the company.

Special activities that distinguish one unit from another are tools that create unit pride. Some units sponsor "home-away-from-home" events, such as unit Christmas parties, family nights at the dining facility, boxing "smokers," or unit support of a local school or charity. Consistent, purposeful unit activities such as monthly battalion runs, company teams in all post athletic leagues, maintenance competitions to determine the best driver in each category, are also useful. Formal dining ins and dining outs also contribute to the unity of the command. These activities promote cohesion and allow for family members to be part of and enjoy the traditions of the Army.

Family functions such as unit religious retreats and organization days may also create a sense of affiliation to the command. Strong family support groups also send a clear signal to the families that they're as important to the command as the Soldiers themselves. Make families proud of what their Soldiers do for the Army.

Finally, don't disregard the Soldiers in planning activities to generate pride. Some of the best ideas we observed in units came from individual Soldiers in command information classes. One Soldier asked if it were possible to obtain a distinctive battalion certificate to commemorate participation in a major international exercise. Battalion or company coins of excellence are also popular with the troops. Some companies post company honor rolls to list the names of noncommissioned officers and their squad members who won squad tactical competitions.

Make the Soldiers feel special to be members of a winning team. Solicit Soldiers' comments, let them help plan events, suggest ideas and make them part of the team. The first sergeant, platoon sergeant, and squad leader must play the role of cheerleaders and encourage the Soldiers to excel. Challenge the Soldiers to continue the proud legacy of the Soldiers who preceded them. Push the identity of the company and the battalion. You will know you're successful when Soldiers begin identifying and boasting about their squad and platoon, as well as their company and battalion.

Conclusion

Noncommissioned officers make major contributions to establishing pride in their respective units by being mindful of the qualities and characteristics Soldiers like to see in the organizations of which they are a part. It's the spirit of the Soldiers who follow and the leaders who lead that produces combat ready units. Well-trained and well led Soldiers are confident of victory. They ensure success because they have the confidence, trust and strong association to units with a rich heritage.

Does your command have such squads, platoons, or companies? You don't even have to ask the leaders, because you can see it on the faces of the Soldiers. When they salute smartly and thunder the name of their regiment or company, you have Soldiers who are proud of their heritage, Soldiers who will fight and win this nation's wars. ■

Command Sgt. Maj. Semon was CSM, U.S. Corps of Cadets, West Point, New York, when he co-authored the article with Lt. Col. Kingseed, an associate professor of history at the Academy.

Counseling is always caring, but...

Sometimes It's Just Listening and Hearing What's Said

By Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bergman

Fall 1994

A few years ago, I had an experience with a young Soldier who was very shy and withdrawn. He wasn't your typical Soldier. His APFT was average, his room was less than acceptable at times, he was slow to report for details, his uniform was lacking in appearance, etc. However, the Soldier seemed to be very intelligent.

During his short stay in Basic Training and AIT, his problem wasn't recognized. Soon after he reported to our company it became evident there was a problem. He was immediately labeled a troublemaker and an undisciplined Soldier. After seeing the Soldier suffer from abuse month after month, I finally asked my platoon sergeant if I could help. I told him that the Soldier's behavior was similar to someone else I knew. My platoon sergeant gave me permission to work with him.

At this time, he was in such a state of constant depression that he fell out of unit runs and road marches, marginally passed the APFT and weapons qualification and was just generally unconcerned with his performance.

I asked him why he was unmotivated and unconcerned with his level of performance. His reply was, "They'll just dog me out anyway, so why try." He explained that he wasn't a good runner and that he didn't like to run. I asked him if he'd like me to run with him and he said he would like that.

After a few days of checking his room and running together after hours, he invited me to his room to check out his computer. He was proud of it, and spent many hours working on programs and games. So that night I came by and brought some snacks to his room. Afterwards, he periodically invited me up to work on a program or new video game. We became close and when I visited him in the safety of his room, he talked to me about his home life and growing up. He also discussed problems he was having with his parents and other Soldiers in the company.

After about two months, there was a remarkable improvement in his performance at work and in his general attitude toward the personnel in the company. His APFT score improved dramatically and he started making the long unit runs and road marches.

Shortly thereafter, the Soldier totally shocked me. In the middle of working on a program, he turned to me and said, "Sergeant Bergman, I'm glad I met you when I did. Shortly before we met, I was thinking about killing myself."

Those words sent a chill up and down my spine. He went on to tell me that he believed that no one truly cared for him or his feelings. His own parents called him stupid and apparently nobody had treated him like a person capable of making decisions for himself. Everyone had him believing that he couldn't do anything right.

For the first time in his life, somebody actually showed they really cared about him and how he felt and how well he performed his job not just that he did as he was told.

As NCOs, we must remember the various roles that we must play in order to accomplish the mission and take care of our Soldiers. And counseling is caring for Soldiers, during good and bad times, during successes and failures.

What might have become of this Soldier, if I hadn't taken a personal interest in him? I believe we must try to remember what it was like when as young Soldiers we had some of the same problems adjusting.

As NCOs, we must show interest in our Soldiers for their own good and for our peace of mind. We have to check living conditions. We must know our Soldiers so we can identify problems before they become too large to handle. We must counsel them properly so we truly can know them. The concept Be, Know, Do is more than just words. ■

Sgt. 1st Class Bergman is chief supply sergeant, C Company, 1/10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Germany.

My Platoon Sergeant Always Made Me Look Good in Front of the Platoon

By Lt. Col. Earnest N. Bracey

Fall 1994

As a bright-eyed, newly-minted infantry second lieutenant, I was assigned in 1975 to the 31st Infantry Battalion at Fort Ord, California. Straight out of basic school and airborne-trained, I was wet behind the ears, and as green as new lieutenants get.

Although I'd successfully completed the required officer training at Fort Benning, Georgia, I didn't know very much about how to lead 34 Soldiers (in my first platoon). After all, they were from many diverse backgrounds and all walks of life – the Bronx, Birmingham, Alabama, and the Appalachian Mountains.

As I now recall, we were all brand new infantrymen. The unit had been recently activated, and I was called upon to lead and train these young men without a clue as to how to go about doing such a thing effectively. To say the least, I was frustrated and anxious, because I wanted to do well, to do my best in the company. But perhaps I lacked the confidence. And confidence is something one must have in order to lead.

It was during this time that Sgt. 1st Class Richardo Gonzales (not his real name) walked into my life and my sorry existence as an infantry officer. From the outset, I must say that I don't know how I could have survived those first two years of my military career without this particular NCO's counsel and guidance. Sgt. 1st Class Gonzales, my new platoon sergeant, was a rough and "tough-as-nails" kind of Soldier of Mexican descent, who had fought bravely in the jungles of Vietnam, for which he was profusely decorated. He often recounted to me, and other members of the platoon, a countless number of "war stories," which I loved and appreciated.

Also, as my platoon sergeant, Gonzales taught me some valuable lessons in life and about leadership. He always

made me look good in front of the platoon, especially when I went astray, or did something supremely stupid.

For example, I remember conducting a class on the proper wearing of the Army's protective mask to Soldiers in my platoon, as we were to go through a mock gas chamber within a week. Having watched the movie *Patton*, before the training class, I was full of acid and enthusiasm, so I carried a big stick.

Inevitably, when anyone would drift off to sleep (as Soldiers sometimes do), I would slam the stick I carried as hard as I could across the podium to regain their attention, abruptly interrupting my discussion. I not only got the Soldiers' attention, but some looked at me as if I had taken leave of my senses. I must have been quite a sight back then.

It was Gonzales who pulled me aside after my pitiful display, to advise me that I didn't have to scare the hell out of those Soldiers who didn't want to even listen or learn; but he told me that I must have absolute confidence (something I thought I lacked at the time) in what I was saying, to inspire confidence in others, to make it believable; and to achieve the effect I wanted. In his own way, Gonzales was a brilliant teacher and a top-notch professional. He understood Soldiers and how to gain their respect, admiration, confidence, and attention. The members of my platoon hung on his every word. Not only because Gonzales had *been there* (fought in bitter combat), but also because he always seemed to know what he was talking about and when and where to say what needed to be said. Which is to say, his training classes were a lot better and more interesting than the ones that I gave back then. But through his *example*, I was learning how to be a good Soldier, a leader.

Gonzales often said to me, "Sir, in order for the men to believe in you, you've got to know *everything* they know, and more." This sage counsel has stuck in my mind over the years, because it is and was sound advice. I must admit, I was arrogant, and back then as a new second lieutenant, I wasn't always prepared to teach those classes; mainly because I thought I knew *everything*. I didn't. But through Gonzales' influence, I was never again ill-prepared to teach a class to infantry Soldiers.

Gonzales taught me that you can never know enough; so you must go that extra mile to learn all that you can about whatever the subject matter. In other words, and if possible, you must become the resident authority.

Then there was the time that I misdirected my platoon in the field (an infantryman's nightmare) during mock battalion exercises at night. I made a grievous error, but at the time I was too stubborn to acknowledge or admit the mistake. The bottom line? I *screwed* up! It was Gonzales, quite frankly, who told me so to my face, when no one else in the platoon would, or didn't have the *cajónes* to do so. And to my amazement, when I was feeling extremely down, Gonzales told me something that my father used to quote, which is paraphrased from the Bible: "This too shall pass."

This profound statement was later to become a sort of code word between the two of us when things within the company or battalion became extremely rough, or bordered on the ridiculous. But because of Gonzales' wise counsel, our platoon was able to get back on track that night during those battalion exercises, and we successfully completed the mission.

Afterward, and over the course of several months, I was to learn more about map reading than I ever cared to know. In addition, I would later earn the coveted Expert Infantryman's Badge, which entailed reading a map and navigating on land through unknown terrain during day and night.

I believe I was able to achieve this distinct honor because

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Rollie Guinn, platoon sergeant for the Military Police Platoon, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry, talks with Iraqi police prior to a mission in the city of Hawija, Iraq, March 10, 2006. (U.S. Army photo by Russell Klika)

Gonzales took the time and patience to show me a thing or two about map reading that I never knew before. To say the least, I became proficient because of Gonzales.

All in all, it is incumbent upon all senior NCOs to help train, teach and mold young second lieutenants so that they may learn and benefit from their years of hard-earned experience and expertise. In this sense, we can all learn something from our NCOs.

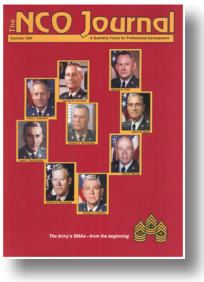
Officers must use NCOs wisely in whatever. We must also be reminded: Never give an order or task that you can't personally back up by doing it yourself.

In the final analysis, NCOs must carefully and tactfully guide the fresh, out-of-basic-course lieutenant in the right direction.

Contrary to a false premise that some NCOs are mediocre and not made-up of the *stuff* it takes to lead, the NCO plays a most important and vital leadership role in the Army today. Not the least of which is to teach knucklehead lieutenants, like I was at one time, about *how* to Soldier. With the many invaluable lessons that I learned from Gonzales, who has since retired from the military, I think I'm a better officer. I've been able to stay the course during my 19 years of active duty, promotions have been on time, and I continue to gain respect and admiration for NCOs every day. ■

Lt. Col. Bracey now serves as the chief, Community and Family Support Division, U.S. Army, Japan/IX Corps G1

Taking Care of Soldiers



By Lt. Col. Greg Kaufmann

Summer 1994

Do you remember those old documentary films from Vietnam that showed napalm being dropped on enemy positions? Do you remember how that napalm slashed and burned its way through the target area? Now, imagine sitting in a HMMWV about 50 yards from the point of impact of an F-16 crashing in to a C-141, waiting for the chute issue detail.

You hear the explosion. You see the fireball grow and move toward you. You have only a second or two to decide to duck down on the floor of the HMMWV. You feel the heat of the fireball pass over you, hear the whine of ripped metal and 20mm ammo discharging and feel the weight of something on your back.


The wreckage of a C-141 aircraft at Pope Air Force Base after being hit by an out-of-control F-16 on March 23, 1994. (DOD photo by Marcus Castro)

After the fireball passes over you, you jump out of the HMMWV to escape the fire. Next, an unknown Soldier tackles you and pounds you on the back. You learn that the entire backside of your uniform was burning, a result of a fiery fuel and the melted plastic from the cover of the HMMWV. You're on convalescent leave within 45 days.

This is a prime example of Soldiers taking care of Soldiers!

It wasn't napalm, but the fiery, fragmented remnants of the F-16 that slashed through the Green Ramp pre-jump training area and the Soldiers standing there, that left the same kind of devastation – a trail of dead, injured and burned Soldiers. The lives of roughly 100 aviation Soldiers from the 18th Aviation Brigade (Corps) (Airborne) who were there have not been the same since that day, March 23, 1994. The 82nd Airborne Division lost 23 outstanding Soldiers that day to this freak sequence of events.

Through luck, as well as the alertness of Cpt. Jessi Farrington and others, I and the other Soldiers from the brigade survived the initial fires and explosions. Jessie noticed the F-16 pilot ejecting from his aircraft and warned us, giving us the two to three seconds needed to scatter and survive.

Our survival ultimately translated into the survival of other injured Soldiers, because 18th Aviation Brigade Soldiers immediately threw themselves into the accident scene to provide first aid, comfort and assistance to injured Soldiers as they ignored exploding rounds of 20mm ammo.

The extent of injuries ranged from slight to severe – burns, cuts, broken bones, puncture wounds, gashes. Without hesitation, Soldiers immediately began applying many of the basic first aid tasks learned under the Common Task Training (CTT) program. *Every* Soldier interviewed afterwards emphasized the importance of this training, of how it just seemed to "kick in" when they needed it – a good example of the benefits of realistic, tough training to standards.

I learned many things that day about leadership. More importantly, and the reason I'm writing this now, I learned the value of discipline, training and initiative. And, I learned just how great our Soldiers are and the true meaning of selflessness.

The lasting impression of the day was the defining of selflessness through actions. In a situation that called up images of *Dante's Inferno*, individual acts of heroism were common. A Soldier flinging himself on another Soldier to shield her from the fireball, forfeiting his life in the act. Soldiers ignored their own burn and shrapnel wounds, exploding ammo, scattered fires and blinding smoke to rescue and aid others. It was to this scene of injury and death, flames and exploding ordnance, that our great Soldiers – from all the units present on Green Ramp that day – reacted. Their personal initiative serves to define what is best about our profession, what is best about our comrades, what is best about ourselves.

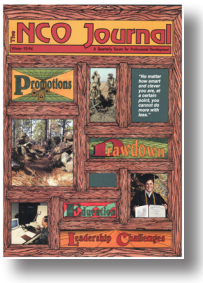
I estimate about 30% of the Soldiers present were trained as combat life savers. On *that* day, every bit of time these Soldiers spent away from the unit to attend training in the past – paid off.

Training, discipline, physical and mental toughness – these basic Soldier skills were key elements in the successful treatment of the injured Soldiers. From senior NCOs to officers to chaplains (some of them combat life savers themselves) – they were Soldiers taking care of Soldiers.

Many Soldiers live today due to the efforts of their fellow Soldiers. But when all is said and done, the training and discipline we demand of ourselves and our Soldiers determines our readiness and ability to care for ourselves. As many of our peacemaking and peacekeeping missions are so richly illustrating, it's the basic Soldier skills that ultimately are important. It's the execution of tough training to a tough standard that prepared – and prepares – Soldiers for the challenges they faced on a fiery 23rd day of March 1994. ■

Lt. Col. Kaufmann is commander, 1st Battalion, 58th Avaiation Regiment (Corps) (Airborne), Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Lasting First Impressions



By Col. Fredrick Van Horn

Winter 1994

Leaders reporting to new units should think how they're going to make that first impression work for them instead of against them. Although true for everyone, this can be especially important to platoon sergeants, first sergeants and command sergeants major.

By the time you get to your new unit, you should have corresponded with old friends and acquaintances already in the unit. You should also have talked with the leader you're taking over from. Come away from this exchange knowing something about the unit's policies and procedures, schedule, strengths and weaknesses and the expectations of the chain of command. Don't go in blind. Give yourself a break in the early going.

It's a good idea to answer those letters from your sponsor because word gets around the unit – especially when you don't answer. Send an introductory letter to your new first sergeant and command sergeant major as well. Give them some insight into your background without overdoing it. Focus on what you're bringing to the new job in terms of experience, training and education. If they know something about you before you get there, other than what others tell them, they'll feel less anxiety over your expected arrival. There's truth in that old saying "…there is nothing worse than working for a nervous boss: especially, if you are the one making him nervous."

The best I've ever seen this done was by Command Sgt. Maj. Southern Hewitt when he reported into the 2nd Battalion, 42nd Field Artillery, as the new battalion command sergeant major (CSM). I was the battalion commander and had been the commander for about three months. The CSM who was there when I took command left after about 30 days. He wasn't very effective and so I breathed something of a sign of relief when each of the four replacements failed to show up.

Then Command Sgt. Maj. Hewitt arrived. I heard a knock on my office door and asked Hewitt to come in. He moved professionally to the front of my desk, saluted smartly and said, "Sir, CSM Southern Hewitt reports for duty." He was dressed in Class A uniform. The uniform was perfect, from the highly shined shoes to the brightly polished brass on his lapels. He was slim, looked hard as nails, was clearly physically fit, and had a haircut better than mine.

In those first few seconds, I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that our battalion now had a CSM who knew what high standards were all about.

In the next few seconds, and before I could say anything, the CSM said, "Sir, my family's waiting in the care; but don't worry, as soon as I'm finished here I'll take care of them." We were less than 30 seconds in to our first meeting and he had signaled high standards and a concern for family that I knew would be invaluable assets to the battalion.

Still under one minute in this first meeting, the CSM asked me what the battalion was doing tomorrow, Saturday. With that, I knew we had a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week, 365-day-a-year leader in our unit.

At this point, I finally got to say something. "CSM, it so happens, we're running the Crailsheim International Marathon tomorrow morning; but don't worry about that. Get your family settled and report for duty Monday morning." His response was, "Sir, what time does the marathon start? Where do we meet? What's the uniform?"

The next morning, the new CSM met us at the start line. Details in hand, he was ready to run. We ran side by side for the entire 26-plus miles. In fact, we almost killed each other. I hadn't intended to run the whole distance. My plan was to come up lame at the first beer tent and call it a day. The CSM called my bluff and we went the whole distance together. In later years, he told me that he hadn't intended to run the whole distance either. His plan was to wait until I dropped out and follow suit just as "a courtesy."

We bonded solidly, and together, in the year that followed, we had a great time running a great battalion.

All of this happened because this great NCO made sure the first meeting with his new commander was done right. Other people told him about the battalion and the battalion commander. He knew standards needed some serious work in the unit and he knew the battalion commander liked to run.

With all of that intelligence in hand, he readied himself for success in that first meeting. By the time Monday (Hewitt's first duty day with the troops) rolled around, the entire battalion knew the story of the marathon.

Every Soldier in the battalion knew the new CSM and the "old man" were tight. Once that fact was established, (thanks to the foresight of the CSM) we didn't have to go through any of that mess most command teams go through where members of the unit try to turn the commander and the CSM against each other. The whole team knew that would have been energy wasted and certain death at the hands of the battalion commander, the CSM, or both of us.

Hewitt went on to become the CSM of the 56th Pershing Command, and later CSM of the 10th Mountain Division (Light). He's retired now. But he knows he can call on me for anything. All of the friendship, respect and admiration I have for that great Soldier dates from our first meeting – a meeting he orchestrated masterfully. ■

Van Horn is commandant, the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

"Top" Olivari says...

Stay In Your Lane

By Command Sgt. Maj. J. D. Pendry

Spring 1995

First Sgt. Pedro Olivari was an influential role model for me. He spoke with a heavy accent, but like others, I always listened intently.

He received a battlefield commission during the Korean War, achieved the rank of captain and had a company command. A reduction in force gave him the option of leaving the Army or becoming a sergeant again. To the Army's good fortune, he elected the latter.

He was proud of the time he spent as an officer, but was quick to let you know how serious he was about being a sergeant. He had trained, cared for and led Soldiers in peace and combat both as an officer and a sergeant.

His perspective on soldiering was unique and valuable. His advice was tested and sound. He knew his lane.

"Top" Olivari wasn't the recruiting poster image you may be painting in your mind. Instead, he was five feet, six inches tall and barrel-chested. A stubby cigar was his constant companion.

He was prone to do things that were unheard of in 1972. Every night, for example, alone and wearing canvas sneakers, he would run about five laps around the perimeter of Camp Red Cloud, Korea. He did this at a time when the focus on physical fitness in the Army was not at the forefront. I haven't seen Camp Red Cloud in a number of years, but in 1972 that was a pretty good run.

The most vivid memories I have of Olivari mentoring Soldiers and officers was usually while standing around an old diesel space heater in the Quonset hut that served as the HHC, I Corps orderly room.

Usually, some section sergeants and sometimes a lieutenant or two stopped off there after morning formation. Top never kept his own office; he just had a desk out front beside the company's clerk.

There was a room he could have used, but for whatever reason, he never did.

Top's morning usually consisted of going over his duty roster meticulously with red and blue pencils, looking at the CQ duty journal and just listening. One morning, after listening for a while to some sergeants complain about an officer who they didn't think was doing his job very well, Top got into one of his counseling sessions.

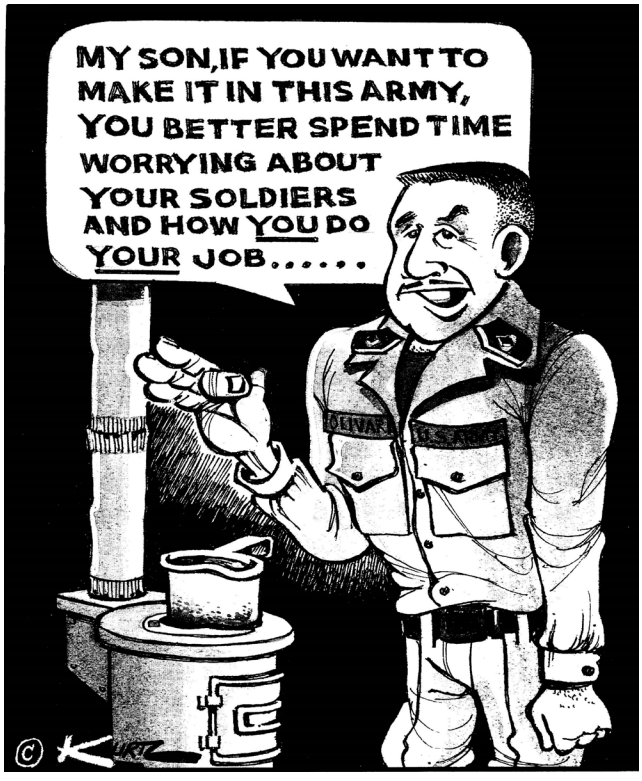
His movements were always the same and served as a signal that something was coming. He would get up from his desk, saunter over to the heater and stand directly across from the most vocal individual there. He would hold his hands out and rub them together over the stove for a few seconds.

Then he would take the cigar stub out of the comer of his mouth. Holding it between his thumb and forefinger and using his remaining three fingers like a pointer he would always start by saying: "My son," (that was how he addressed everyone).

This particular morning, he told the sergeant, "My son, if you want to make it in this Army, you better spend your time worrying about your soldiers and how you do your job. You have to know what you're supposed to do and then do it. Don't waste your time worrying about how an officer does his job. That's officer's business. If your Soldiers fail it won't be an officer's fault." What he told that sergeant was... "Stay in your lane."

Another time, after listening to a sergeant's complaints about his Soldiers being more interested in going to the clubs in the village than they were in doing their jobs – and going through his choreographed steps, he said, "My son, Soldiers go where their sergeants lead them."

I observed and was the benefactor of many of these counseling sessions. Lately, I've had reason to reflect on just how solid Top Olivari's advice still is.



In every facet of our lives, whether social, professional, before, during or after the Army, we will always have or have had a specific role to play. We always have a lane in which to operate. In team sports, we had a position to play – a lane. If we got out of our lane and into another's the team would break down and if we continued to operate out of our lane the team would fail.

In our profession, we're obligated to fulfill our role by providing leadership to, and the proper example for, our junior Soldiers to follow. Put simply, in everything we do, we have to clearly define our lane and stay in it. We have to know its boundaries and all the challenges that lie within those boundaries. If we fail to meet the challenges that are in our lane, our team will break down and ultimately fail.

If you know your lane, then staying in it is easy. When NCOs are in the structure of a platoon, squad or team, the lane boundaries and everything in the lane is generally clear to them. A lot of sergeants, finding themselves in an environment with less structure, sometimes lose focus of what is in their lane

Our lane of responsibility is spelled out in *Army Regulation* (AR) *600-20: Army Command Policy*, Chapter 3, "Enlisted Aspects of Command." The sum of these responsibilities equals taking care of Soldiers.

Taking care of Soldiers means counseling and knowing them, training them to standard, enforcing discipline and setting an example for them to emulate. These responsibilities never waiver and are always in our lane, regardless of our mission.

They are the same for a sergeant in charge of Soldiers in a personnel service center as they are for a sergeant in charge of Soldiers in an infantry platoon. Soldier care responsibilities don't change with mission – they are constant.

Above and before all else, we have to remember we are sergeants. It's when we start calling ourselves "senior enlisted advisors," or the "NCOIC" of something or other that our lanes start to get a little unclear.

In other words, when we refer to ourselves as job descriptions instead of sergeants, we start losing track of who we are and what we do. By forgetting that we're sergeants before we are anything else, we narrow our lane or focus too much. When that happens, the most important obligation and responsibility in our lane – taking care of Soldiers falls out of it.

As NCOs, we lead by example, by staying in our lane and knowing our obligations within the boundaries of our lane.

Recently, I asked an NCOIC to tell me exactly what it was he was in charge of. He answered with a detailed briefing that included the section's mission, how it was accomplished and how well it was accomplished, measured by the DA standard for accomplishing that particular mission.

During the briefing, he never mentioned his responsibilities as a sergeant to the Soldiers in the section. I was impressed with his job knowledge.

When I asked him about taking care of Soldiers, his answers weren't given with the same zeal as was his mission briefing. I asked questions about things that are in the

NCO lane of responsibility defined in *AR 600-20*. I asked about counseling. The answer offered was a recital of his unit's policy on counseling.

When I asked to see one of his counseling records, he couldn't produce one because counseling wasn't being done. When I asked about physical training, he told me, "Because of the constraints of our mission, we do it on our own." Doing it on their own meant a private now had the responsibility to develop and maintain an adequate physical fitness program—something a lot of sergeants have difficulty with.

The sergeant pushed a Soldier-care responsibility that was plainly his, out of his lane. I asked the sergeant what happened if one of his Soldiers failed the APFT or became overweight. His reply was that "...the first sergeant takes care of that."

Now the sergeant was pushing responsibility out of his lane and into the first sergeant's. There were more questions with similar replies during our discussion. When our talk was over, the sergeant had cleared his lane of Soldier-care responsibilities. Too many times, the responsibility was placed in the Soldier's lane, or forgotten altogether.

I've faced this situation in TDA and TOE organizations. I find it's not germane to one or the other. It's a clear example of a sergeant forgetting who he is and what he does. By neglecting his Soldier-care responsibilities, he wandered out of his lane and into an officer's lane. Officers have a different focus, another lane. They put the main focus on the mission at hand and concentrate on the collective picture. They do that because they know who shoulders the responsibility to provide them with trained and cared-for Soldiers to accomplish the mission.

Our failure to meet that responsibility violates our creed and breaks down the team. Our Soldiers lose confidence in us, our support channel breaks down and officers pick up the Soldier-care responsibility we neglected. When that happens, we scream like banshees because some officer is meddling in sergeant's business.

Before we do that though, we need to make sure we're not the cause of the officer being in our lane in the first place. As NCOs, it's our responsibility not only to take care of Soldiers, but to help sergeants define and stay in their lane. If we allow taking care of Soldiers to drop out of our lane, think what lesson we're teaching tomorrow's sergeants. Tomorrow's sergeant are who we will charge to look after our sons and daughters.

Remember – "My son, Soldiers go where their sergeants lead them. Stay in your lane, sergeant." ■

Command Sgt. Maj. Pendry is CSM of HHC Battalion, Fort Myer, Virginia.

The First Sergeant

Spring 1995 (inside back cover)

His duty was to create a swift, striking arm to lead the rest of the army into harm's way. His ***job*** was more difficult: to mold inexperienced boys of the peacetime North who rode horses like sacks of wheat, into lean, disciplined men who could master not only themselves, but half a ton of galloping horseflesh in some of the largest cavalry battles ever fought.

The colonels and captains and lieutenants taught tactics to the large groups of troopers like they were wooden blocks to be moved about on a board. But the first sergeant knew that these blocks were composed of men and boys with fears, and angers, and yearnings, and worries of family and homes far away. He lived day-to-day with them and was a teacher, consoler, confidant, confessor, and perhaps the toughest boss these boys would ever have, for his lessons were meant to keep them alive.

Today the first sergeant, "Top" or "First Shirt," is the man or woman who is the "commander's right hand," – his conscience when it comes to matters of leading, training, caring, and maintaining.

First sergeants are the first example for all Soldiers. They are magicians who have to be in many places at the same time. If they're not in the orderly room or inspecting the barracks, they might be down in the motor pool checking out their Soldiers, at the NCO club making final plans for the unit party or in a staff meeting.

They also can be found attending courts-martial as witnesses, checking morale in duty sections, consoling a sergeant who didn't get promoted, counseling a Soldier on a traffic violation or answering a letter of indebtedness from an angry creditor.

They must be versatile speakers, able to speak gently to commanders, roughly to troublemakers and pleasantly to civilians. They must be even better listeners.

They must be able to work 24 hours a day, seven days a week and still keep a cheerful, highly motivated attitude.

They must set examples, at times, contributing generously to charities yet still have 20 clean uniforms.

First sergeants are referral agencies, technicians, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and wizards at coaching any sport.

What really is a first sergeant? That's a secret known by every person wearing that diamond: a first sergeant is above all... a PROFESSIONAL ■

Corporals

Where NCO Leadership Begins

By Staff Sgt. David Abrams, senior journalist, NCO Journal

Summer 1995

Talk to most corporals today about pulling rank and they might tell you they're like half-powered Supermen: faster than a speeding specialist, but not able to leap tall sergeants in a single bound. The modern corporal inhabits a kind of "no man's land" in the noncommissioned officer chain: no longer a private, but not quite a sergeant. While the hard stripes are still hardening, so are these new NCOs.

Time was, however, when the "Big C" was *the Man* to all those privates in his squad and under his supervision. With more recognized authority, the corporal was the one-man buffer zone between the legendary Private Snuffys and Sergeant Rocks. He was the spout at the bottom of the funnel in line units, nearly all junior enlisted soldiers channeled their grievances through the guy with two stripes on his collar. Just as the rest of the Army has transitioned from Old to New, the "taproots" of the NCO tree have also grown.

To find some of the first corporals, we have to turn back several pages in the military history books. The English adopted the rank of corporal from the French who, in turn, got it from either the Italians or the Spanish. The term *caporale* is of Italian original *cabo de esquadra*, or "chief of the squad," comes from the Spanish. Corporals had been a permanent part of the military structure in the French Army since the mid-1500s where, along with sergeants, they taught daily drill in marches and countermarches. Later in that century, corporals began to appear in the ranks of the English county militia where they commanded 25-man squads.

According to Johann von Wallhausen, a professional soldier of the early 17th century, the corporal was like a hausvater ("father of the family") to his men, maintaining peace and friendship with his soldiers and ensuring all soldiers in the squad had ammunition and rations. In his book *Guardians of the Republic*, Ernest E. Fisher Jr. says the 17th-century corporal "became a sort of middle class in the command structure of all Western armies, both professional and militia."

In America's early years, corporals occupied similar roles in the military middle class, working as the first-line NCOs in the Continental Army. In 1813, William Duane's *A Hand Book for Infantry* noted that corporals were to keep duty and detail rosters, help train recruits in the manual of arms and show them how to care for arms and ammunition. At tattoo, both sergeants and corporals called the roll and posted guard.

In the era surrounding the War of 1812, the lines of authority between junior NCOs started to blur, with sergeants frequently assuming the role of squad leader, making corporals assistant squad leaders. At the time, sergeants were given the monthly salary of $11, while corporals pocketed $10.

Fifty years later, Gen. Silas Casey's *Infantry Tactics* changed the tactical formation of Army units and gave control of the squad back to the corporal. During the Civil War, corporals served as color guards – one of the most dangerous positions on the battlefield.

In World War I, corporals often found themselves in command of their platoons after the commanders and platoon sergeants had been killed or gravely injured. For their demonstrated bravery and leadership, several corporals received Medals of Honor, including Alvin York who was with the 82nd Division when he charged an enemy gun position and took more than 120 enemy soldiers prisoner. Another contemporary corporal of York's, Frank Dillman of the 7th Division, found himself the senior NCO in his unit and later boasted, "I felt pretty important with a whole platoon on my hands."

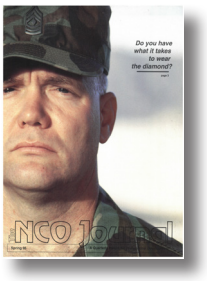
Several decades later, during World War II, the eight-man squad increased to a 12-man squad and the squad leader was elevated to the rank of sergeant, with corporals once again serving as second fiddle in the squad structure.

These years also saw a steady inflation in the NCO ranks. In December 1941, only 20% of the enlisted ranks were NCOs; but by June 1945, that proportion had swelled to nearly 50%. In time, the power of corporals in line units lessened, even though the corporal was, in theory and by tradition, a combat leader. With so many privates receiving promotions in the European and Pacific theaters, it was a case of "corporal overload."

During both the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, the corporal found himself thrust to the front of the battle. Terrain and tactics dictated that most battles be fought through small unit operations. As squad leaders, corporals guided their men through the treacherous battlefields.

Today, corporals may not always leap over tall sergeants in a single bound, but throughout history, the Army has needed corporals who have taken the first step up the NCO staircase of rank. Both war and peace have proved the importance of junior NCOs–the ones who tend their squads as fathers (and mothers) tend their children. ■

CSA Counts on NCOs to Keep the Spirit Alive



By Gen. Dennis J. Reimer, CSA

Spring 1996

"We have good corporals and sergeants, and some good lieutenants and captains, and those are far more important than good generals." –Gen. W. T. Sherman

America's Army is unique. You – the noncommissioned officer – are the reason. Secretary of Defense William Perry likes to relate a story that occurred last summer when Gen. Nikolayev, the deputy chief of the Russian General Staff, was on a two-week tour of military bases in the United States. After visiting the first base and seeing our NCOs in action, he told one of his aides:

"I know that these men and women wearing sergeants' uniforms are really officers in disguise."

But as he went from base to base and talked with the NCOs, he came to realize that they were not officers. He was stunned and told Dr. Perry after two weeks, *"No military in the world had the quality of NCOs that I found in the United States."* He went on to say, *"That's what gives America its competitive advantage."* That's why we have the best military in the world.

U.S. Army photo by Wayne V. Hall

The high quality of our NCO Corps was manifested recently when America's Army bridged the Sava River between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. This operation, the construction of the longest pontoon bridge constructed since World War II, was conducted under the most difficult circumstances. Despite freezing cold, snow, rain, mud and a 100-year high flooding of the river, the bridge was completed. Again, it was our NCO Corps that stepped in and made it happen. The world media was impressed by the technical competence, drive, determination, and leadership of our NCOs. When one reporter asked how the Soldiers endured the cold and went sleepless to complete the bridge, one young leader, Staff Sgt. Robert Butcher of the 535th Combat Support Equipment Compnay, said that the Soldiers felt their reputations were on the line. *They weren't going to let the river win.*

Sgt. Lawrence Galuski, of the 502nd Engineer Company, said, "We can't be stopped; we've had floods, high water, rain, snow—makes no difference. We still bridged it." Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Walls of the 130th Engineer Brigade said building this bridge proves America's Army is the "Best in the world."

For 220 years, NCOs have been the guardians of the Republic. In this increasingly complex and technologically advanced world more and more responsibility has been placed in NCO hands. The NCO Corps must ensure America's Army remains trained and ready today and adapts to meet the challenges of the 21st century. To accomplish this, I would like to share three fundamental truths with you.

First, the Army is people. Gen. Creighton Abrams said, "The Army is not made up of people, the Army is people." The Army can accomplish its mission if we recruit and retain the best people. Today, we have the best quality Soldiers I have observed in 33 years in the Army. But to keep these high-quality Soldiers we must allow them to build their self-respect. I remember reading a message some years ago that always struck me as the essence of the importance of the individual. It reads:

Remember me? I'm the person who goes into the orderly room and patiently waits while the first sergeant or AST (Army Supply Technician) does everything but pay attention to me. I'm the guy who goes into the supply room and

stands quietly by while the supply sergeant and his assistant finish their little chitchat. I'm the person who does not grumble while I clean rifles in addition to my own while other people wander aimlessly around the center. Yes, you might say I'm a pretty good person. But do you know who else I am? ***I am the person who never extends my enlistment***, and it amuses me to see you spending many hours and dollars every year to get me back in to your unit, when I was there in the first place. All you had to do to keep me was:

"Give me a little attention, show me a little courtesy, use me well." —Aubrey Newman (from *Follow Me: The Human Element of Leadership*)

I need your help on this. You, the NCO, are closest to our Soldiers. Therefore, your care and concern is most evident. Your personal example will have the most direct effect on our ability to retain the quality Soldiers needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Second, is public trust. By this I mean the trust the American people place in America's Army. Stop and think about what that really means. The American people trust us in a way they trust nobody else. They give us their sons and daughters and they expect us to take care of them. They do not ask what we are going to do with them. They just expect us to do what is right. That is why the opportunity and responsibility to train these young men and women to ensure they are prepared to do their mission when they deploy is so important. This is your primary responsibility. Every effective NCO leader is a skilled trainer, and every skilled trainer is an effective leader.

But I think it's important that we remind everybody that we have that trust to take care of our Soldiers, America's sons and daughters—and that trust is very important to us. I know you take that responsibility seriously.

Third, values are important. We are a values-oriented organization and we need to recognize and remember that. Values are not something that automatically happen, especially in today's society. You have to spend time talking about values, explaining to new Soldiers coming into the Army what values are all about and reinforce those values to all Soldiers on a daily basis.

Duty, Honor, Country and selfless service to the nation are more than words—it is a creed by which we live. The actions in Somalia by Master Sgt. Gary I. Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randall D. Shugart, both Special Forces NCOs who were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, epitomize the highest Army values.

During a firefight in Mogadishu, on October 3-4, 1993, Somali gunfire forced a Blackhawk helicopter to crash land in enemy territory. Master Sgt. Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Shugart fired their rifles from another helicopter to protect their comrades at the crash site below them, even though they endured a heavy barrage of fire. With Somali gunmen closing on four critically wounded Soldiers at the crash site, the two NCOs volunteered to help and fought their way through to the wounded pilot. They provided cover until their ammunition ran out. When Sgt. 1st Class Shugart was fatally wounded, Master Sgt. Gordon got a rifle from the crash site and handed the weapon and five weapons to the pilot. Master Sgt. Gordon said, "Good luck," and armed with only a pistol, continued the fight until he was killed.

Values are what made them do what they did and those are the things you must emphasize to all new Soldiers. We need to talk about those values and I ask you to do that. All of us in leadership positions must be able to exemplify values. Talk is not enough—you must set the example.

These three fundamental truths are terribly important and I need you as leaders to understand and exemplify these truths. Remember that the Army is people. Gen. Abrams captured the essence of leadership and of the NCO Corps when he said:

"By people I do not mean personnel…I mean living, breathing, serving human beings. They have needs and interests and desires. They have spirit and will and strengths and abilities. They have weaknesses and faults; and they have means. They are the heart of our preparedness…and this is preparedness—as a nation and as an Army—depends upon the spirit of our Soldiers. It is the spirit that gives the Army… life. Without it we cannot succeed."

I am counting on you to keep this spirit alive. ■

Prior to becoming the 33rd Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, Gen. Reimer was commanding general of the U.S. Army, Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia. Reimer's military experience spans command positions from company to division level and service on staffs up to Headquarters, Department of the Army.

Dealing With Failure

By Master Sgt. James H. Clifford

Spring 1997

"Every senior NCO serving today has made his or share of mistakes. We didn't reach our positions because we were super sergeants. We got here with a lot of help. Our leaders allowed us to make our mistakes and learn from them."

Have you ever gotten a good tip from an NCO on an FTX, ARTEP or Command Inspection? I've gotten plenty. Have you ever wondered where that NCO learned that tip? Ask the Soldier and you'll probably find the NCO learned from his or her mistakes. Most of us don't remember those things we did right the first time. Why is that? Of course, it's because we learn indelible lessons from our mistakes. Success seldom provides the important lessons of life.

In today's drawdown Army, many of us are becoming "zero defect" NCOs. I see this as a dangerous trend. It's not unreasonable that in a downsizing environment we fear the effect of being labeled as a failure. We also fear being labeled as indulgent of failures. Not being able to deal with Soldiers who fail has a chilling effect on mission accomplishment. A leader must strike a balance between failure and success in every Soldier and every mission.

I offer the following thoughts to NCOs to help them cope with failures in their Soldiers and themselves. First, accept it. Everyone fails on a regular basis. By accept, I don't mean condone, excuse, or ignore. I do mean expect, understand, and use it as a development tool. Every senior NCO serving today has made his or her share of mistakes. We didn't reach our positions because we were super sergeants. We got here with a lot of help. Our leaders allowed us to make our mistakes and learn from them.

Barber schools used to start students off by having them shave a balloon. Imagine how many barbers there would be if they flunked when they popped that first balloon. You only learn by doing. Allow your Soldiers to occasionally make a mistake. They will learn from it.

Today, we have new equipment, technology, and doctrine from when I first enlisted. All of that is the product of countless mistakes and returns to the drawing boards. Most ideas are "half-baked" at first. Those who do not fear making a mistake are the best at innovating new ways of doing things. Innovation and motivation are a by-product of a climate where Soldiers feel free to use initiative. Initiative, I think we can all agree, is one quality we want to encourage. Success in battle demands Soldiers be willing to take risks. A Soldier unwilling to take risks will not stay alive to complete the mission. These risks are not taken lightly. Soldiers calculate the risks, based on knowledge of the situation, training, equipment and the mission. A Soldier must be aggressive to survive. Fostering a zero defect climate destroys this aggressiveness. Soldiers who are afraid to take a risk in peace will never take a risk in war. Improper handling of a subordinate who makes a mistake may just cause that Soldier's death on a future battlefield. Our history is full of aggressive combat leaders who made their share of mistakes in peace.

Understanding and using failure as a development tool and a willingness to take calculated risks are important leadership traits. The most important, however, is an understanding that the proper handling of failure is a character builder for Soldiers. Soldiers who know they will get fair treatment are less likely to lie about their actions. If your Soldiers know you to be a fair, understanding leader, they will be honest with you. Soldiers who know their leaders are waiting for them to screw up have nothing to lose when called on the carpet. If they know there is nothing to gain from being honest, they will not be. Leaders who have a well-developed strategy for dealing with the shortcomings of their subordinates have problems with Soldiers lying to them.

This does not mean failure lacks consequences. On the contrary, failure in the Army is such a serious matter we must deal with it in a systematic way.

Failure frequently brings deadly consequences. That's why it is so important for us to understand it.

To find the balance I referred to earlier, leaders must know how to assess failures. We must balance the failure against the Soldier's potential to develop into the honest, motivated, innovative, aggressive Soldier who will survive on the battlefield.

Leaders must take into account five factors when assessing failures—the offense, integrity, attitude, the Soldier's record, and our investment in the Soldier. The first step in assessing the failure is to gather information about the offense. Was the Soldier in question at fault? If so, why? Did the Soldier have adequate training and leadership? Is there proper guidance in the form of regulations, SOPs, etc.? Did injuries occur? Was there property damage? Will there be some negative impact upon another's career, such as missed school quota or late

award recommendation? Can the Soldier correct the mistake or overcome the failure? What has happened in the past? Is this a common error? Does it happen on regular basis? Did you, or someone else, issue previous warnings?

Leaders must ask themselves these and other questions before they commend or take action. Some mistakes are serious enough that you have no choice in your reaction to them. They are regulated either by law or policy. These matters may be out of your hands. The chain of command may be responsible for initiating action. But most failures involve minor matters and are subject to evaluation. You have the power to judge and take action.

The integrity of the Soldier is an important factor to consider in assessing failure. Ask yourself these questions. How did I found out about it? Did the Soldier bring it to my attention or was he or she caught in the act? Even if caught in the act, does the Soldier take responsibility for his or her actions? Did the Soldier try to cover up the event or blame others? These are questions of character. The answers play a major concern as you contemplate your reaction. A Soldier with a strong character is worthy of your effort. Weak characters are a drain on military effectiveness and may not deserve favorable consideration.

The Soldier's attitude will either help resolve the situation or make it worse. Does the Soldier recognize the error? Is the Soldier taking positive steps toward resolving the situation? Soldiers who know their weaknesses and take action to improve are better than those who can do no wrong. Soldiers must participate in their improvement. Leaders may be able to lead their horses to water but cannot make them drink. Soldiers must be willing to soldier back from failure.

Consider Soldiers individually. Look at their prior records. All other things being equal, the Soldier's record should tell you a lot. Don't cast a good Soldier adrift based on one mistake. Consider the record. Is the mistake likely to be repeated?

Finally, consider the investment you and the Army have in the Soldier. Beyond the money spent on training, how much have you invested in the Soldier?

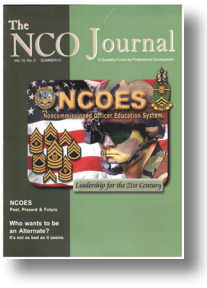
Investments grow when you consistently add to the principle and allow the interest to compound. Your efforts will only pay off if you allow Soldiers to grow.

Assessing failure is a complex issue. You can take the easy way out by creating a zero defect environment, or you can develop your subordinates. The first approach creates Soldiers who lack initiative and motivation. The second imbues Soldiers with motivation to persevere and succeed against the odds.

"Soldiers who know they will get fair treatment are less likely to lie about their actions. If your Soldiers know you to be a fair, understanding leader, they will be honest with you." ■

Master Sgt. Clifford is with the 149th Ordinance Detachment, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland.

School of Hard Knocks



By Sgt. 1st Class William W. Applegarth

Summer 2001

Noncommissioned officers cannot thrive on NCOES alone to become leaders of Soldiers. Although formal and traditional education has its place, the true final exam for NCOs is on the battlefield. Nothing is more valuable than good old-fashioned experience. By combining the two, our NCOs will be better leaders on exam day.

A student wearing a gas mask and Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) gear runs through the woods with an M-60 machine gun during a Primary Leadership Development course (PLDC) assault exercise at Fort Lewis, Washington. PLDC is designed to development the skills of junior enlisted personnel who are thought to possess noncommissioned officer potential. (U.S. Army photo by Daniel T. Wright)

The noncommissioned officer (NCO) has been a part of the Army of the United States of America since its inception and has recruited, trained, led and cared for Soldiers since those humble beginnings. An NCO is a leader whether one is a corporal or the Sergeant Major of the Army and must accept and fill this role to the best of his or her abilities.

One way to ensure that today's Soldiers are getting the leadership they deserve is through the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES).

Today's NCO Corps is the product of its members, both past and present. The Corps, with its professional Soldiers and leaders, has implemented leadership development schools from the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC) through the Sergeants Major Course.

These courses, while important training tools, are often seen as little more than a rite of passage or a hurdle to be overcome in the pursuit of the next rank and pay raise.

Senior NCOs must ensure that those personnel instructing and attending these courses understand that the material taught is a cornerstone of tomorrow's Army leadership, not merely an inconvenience.

While the formal NCOES is a vital ingredient in the development of NCOs, there is a second equally important part, known colloquially as "HK University," or the school of "Hard Knocks."

No traditional education will prepare tomorrow's NCO Corps for the challenges of leadership as well as personal experience.

In order to provide our future NCO with the tools to succeed and mature, we, the NCOs of today, must be willing to mentor and educate those Soldiers under our charge.

No traditional education will prepare tomorrow's NCO Corps for the challenges of leadership as well as personal experience. In order to provide our future NCO with the tools to succeed and mature, we, the NCOs of today, must be willing to mentor and educate those Soldiers under our charge.

Basic leadership skills including planning and executing training, drill and ceremony and counseling taught during early NCOES courses should be tempered with experience.

Soldiers being considered for promotion to NCO ranks must be exposed to the responsibilities of leadership at the unit level prior to attendance at NCOES courses.

Having these future NCOs plan, conduct and evaluate training on a regular basis with appropriate guidance and counseling from more experienced NCOs will prove invaluable to the Soldier at NCOES schools.

Any Soldier can be placed in leadership positions during regular workday activities, as well as during field exercises and Army Training and Evaluation Programs (ARTEPs).

Encourage junior-enlisted members to assume leadership roles in their daily activities, including drill and ceremony practice and conducting Physical Training. Asking them to accept responsibility for formal classes will grant these future NCOs valuable experience.

The experience gained via this training will greatly enhance Soldiers' skills in leadership, time and resource management, oral and written communication and research abilities.

These areas are generally weighed heavily in service schools (including NCOES courses) and are evaluated on the DA 1059, Service School Academic Evaluation Report. A perfect time for observing the future NCO as a leader is during unit "Sergeant's Time" training.

As junior NCOs progress in rank, senior NCOs must be prepared to challenge them with increasing degrees of responsibility.

The NCO Corps must use all tools available to develop our junior enlisted members professionally. Preparations for these training sessions will differ with each situation.

Leadership training sessions must be challenging but should not expose the Soldier to situations that he or she cannot manage.

In the event that an unmanageable situation arises during leader training, a more senior NCO must be prepared to step in and regain "equilibrium" or control the situation.

In the beginning, senior NCOs may have to resort to the "task, don't ask" method when instituting training for tomorrow's leaders.

Soldiers must be made to take responsibility and to take an active role in preparing and conducting training.

Junior-enlisted members will quickly develop new and diverse methods of training if given the opportunity.

This will often rejuvenate "stale" Common Task training, which has long been a mainstay of "Sergeants' Time" and "hip pocket" training.

With appropriate training and counseling, junior NCOs and enlisted will actively seek the opportunity to lead training.

Encourage Soldiers to develop personally and professionally through military and civilian education as well as formal NCOES courses.

As leaders, it is incumbent upon members of the NCO Corps to challenge our Soldiers to higher standards, higher education and higher levels of responsibility.

By allowing our Soldiers to become complacent and to accept the status quo we, the professional NCO Corps, do our Army a grave injustice.

The Army has a wide variety of courses, generally taught locally, with fairly lenient attendance fills.

The NCO chain of concern must be willing to allow the best and brightest among our developing junior enlisted to grow professionally through service schools, even if it means ultimately losing those Soldiers to another command.

Upon completion of courses, request, encourage or

require attendees to act as subject-matter experts, instilling a desire to prepare others for training, to hone their abilities as instructors and to mature as future leaders. It is the senior NCO's responsibility to instill in today's Soldier the desire to lead by example.

In today's Army, it is often difficult to impart to our junior Soldiers the importance of professional development.

By instilling the desire to lead others, we, the NCO Corps, are guaranteeing that tomorrow's Army will be worthy of the nation and people it serves.

Today's Soldiers need to understand that insignia of rank, skill badges, berets and other accouterments do not make an NCO special.

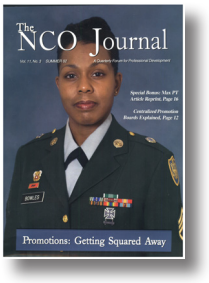
It is the NCO who makes these items special because of the knowledge, experience, technical proficiency and leadership skills these items denote.

This knowledge, technical and tactical proficiency, and leadership can only come from a mix of formal Noncommissioned Officer Education System courses and experience.

By combining the Army's formal NCOES and "education through experience" today's NCO Corps virtually guarantees that future noncommissioned officers will be prepared to face the challenges of the future, regardless of the nature of those challenges. ■

Sgt. 1st Class Applegarth is a Special Forces Medical Sergeant assigned to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. He wrote this article while assigned to C Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Sgt. John Denny's Actions Set Example of Courage



Summer 2002

Personal courage, loyalty, dedication to duty, honor, selfless service, integrity, and respect — the Army's core values — are more than just words. They translate into actions. Such actions were taken by Sgt. John Denny, Company C, 9th U.S. Cavalry in September of 1879 during the Victorio Apache campaign.

Five days of tracking the Apache Chief Victorio and more than 200 of his warriors through the deserts of New Mexico ended when the worn-out Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th Cavalry found themselves ambushed and trapped within a box canyon.

Soon after the battle started, Denny saw a wounded private lying in the open, more than 100 yards from the nearest source of cover. When Denny asked Capt. Beyer to have the troop cover him while he retrieved the private, he was ordered not to leave the safety of the rocks where most of the troop had found cover and to let the private die. Denny understood that if left in the open the wounded private faced certain death. He also understood that if he weren't killed in the rescue attempt, he would face a court martial for disobeying an order. Denny elected to do the right thing. He ran 100 yards under heavy fire to the private's position, put the private on his back, and carried him to safety.


Sgt. John Denny, 9th Cavalry (Photo courtesy of Library of Congress)

Later, the same day, a plan was devised to enable the Soldiers of the 9th Cavalry to escape the box canyon. The mission called for a small group to climb a cliff and displace the Apaches on the east side of the canyon. First Lt. Emmet, G Troop, 9th Cavalry, asked for volunteers, but most of the Soldiers knew it was almost certainly a suicide mission. It wasn't until Denny volunteered for the mission first that the other Soldiers followed suit and volunteered to go as well.

Emmet took Denny, five other Soldiers, and two Navajo scouts on the mission.

After climbing about halfway up the cliff, the volunteers found themselves trapped under heavy enemy fire. They could no longer advance up the cliff, but the Apaches above couldn't fire on the cavalry troops below with the volunteers in the middle. The vol-

unteers, however, could fire effectively enough to suppress the Apaches on the west side of the canyon, enabling the remaining cavalry Soldiers to escape to safety.

When the four cavalry troops below had escaped from the canyon, the Soldiers on the cliff fought their way down to safety while surrounded by the enemy. During the fighting one of the Navajo scouts was wounded. Denny carried the scout on his back as they descended the cliff.

Emmet said the deciding factor of the battle had been Denny's actions. "He, time and time again, kept the group focused on the mission and why they were facing certain death along the cliff. If not for the actions of Sgt. Denny, all four of the cavalry troops within the canyon would have been killed."

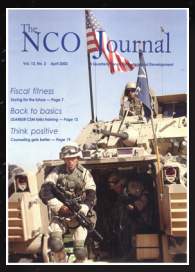
The small group accomplished their mission and returned safely to their units, losing only one Soldier to enemy fire. For his actions that day, Denny did not receive a court martial, but a Congressional Medal of Honor.

Denny's display of values was not limited to the battlefield. He practiced them throughout his career. The men of the 9th Cavalry spoke of the values Denny displayed prior to and after the battle. He continually displayed the high moral ethics of the noncommissioned officer. We should remember that the next time we see something wrong and set the standard as Sgt. Denny did. ■

Honor is as Honor Does

By Staff Sgt. Glenn Coe

April 2003



"Character is what you are in the dark." –D.L. Moody

It was dark that winter evening as I drove down Fort Monroe's Fenwick Road. Suddenly, the vehicle in front of me stopped by the curb, letting out a Marine. Even in the dark, he was easily recognizable in Dress Blues, including the white belt and white cap.

As he approached the front step of what I presumed was his residence, he raised his right arm and rendered a crisp hand salute. I looked to see if there was someone else there. He was alone, except for the colors of the United States of America proudly waving on the porch. It struck me how many uniformed personnel duck indoors to avoid the sounding of "Retreat," or the ones that drive through it, pretending not to hear the distinct bugle call.

If a thing is expedient, which usually means someone may be watching, then we do it. On the night mentioned, it was dark, the Marine's ride had pulled away and no one would have been the wiser if he had decided that he was "off-duty." Honor is as honor does. His act, simple and automatic, spoke volumes about his character, and took my mind to larger ramifications of the words "character" and "honor."

A few months ago, I heard Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David Reese, the Fort Monroe post chaplain, quote D.L. Moody as saying, "Character is what you are in the dark." It's what you do when no one sees you and when there is little chance of being discovered. The nature of those secret deeds is something that defines our character. A person's visible life eventually manifests those priorities, which resonate in the silent chambers of one's soul. Free are those who have successfully calibrated their acts and deeds with their values. A daunting task to say the least, but one worthy of our best efforts.

These pillars of principle – character and honor – have become cliché military catch phrases, but I feel that their relevance endures because of the enormous impact they have in the course of events. I saw them personified in deed on March 23, 1994. Unlike the Marine whose act of honor was cloaked under the veil of darkness, these were manifest in the bright daylight of a beautiful North Carolina spring afternoon.

As a Jumpmaster student at Pope Air Force Base's "Green Ramp," I remember hearing what sounded like a fighter jet's afterburner igniting. In actuality, an Air Force F-16 fighter and a C-130 cargo plane had "bumped" in mid-air. The pilots ejected, sending the F-16 –now a massive fireball after ricocheting off of a parked plane – careening through scores of paratroopers massed for an airborne operation.

The scene was surreal. Victims, crushed and burned, lay scattered across the tarmac amid burning vehicles. The booms of secondary explosions muffled all other noises. The first to respond were mostly fellow students at the Jumpmaster School, some of whom were trained Combat Lifesavers. The training they received never prepared them for the medical emergencies they now faced.

We did what we could; just like Maj. Larry Perino and his fellow Rangers had with the downed Blackhawks nearly six months prior in Mogadishu, Somalia.

I watched a Soldier extinguish flames on a burning Soldier with nothing but his bare hands. I saw another fran-

tically attempting CPR to save a convulsing Soldier. Senior Jumpmaster Instructor Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Bennett cleared out the classroom to set up a burn and triage site. Staff Sgt. Daniel Price epitomized the warrior ethos when he threw himself over Spc. Estella Wingfield, shielding her from the blast. She survived, but Price, a husband and father of five, gave his life for the principles that propelled him.

Without regard for personal safety, Soldiers were responding to the warrior code that had been instilled in them since their inception into the Army. These patriots reacted to the crisis, just as we all witnessed firemen, police and ordinary citizens doing on Sept. 11, 2001. Herein was the relevance of words that flow so freely from our lips, words like character, honor, moral courage and selfless service.

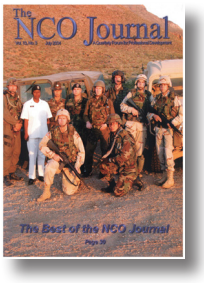
Twenty-four Paratroopers perished as a result of that incident, March 23, 1994; 100 more were injured. However, the core values of our Army and nation, born of small and seemingly insignificant acts of character and honor, emerged "refreshed by the blood of martyrs" and heroes. ■

Staff Sgt. Glenn Coe is the NCOIC, Fort Monroe, Virginia, Post Chaplain's Office.

First Sergeant Major of the Army Reflects on 60 Years of Change

By Master Sgt. Lisa Hunter

July 2004



On Nov. 11, 1940, the war in Europe filled the pages of the newspapers and 18-year-old William O. Wooldridge of Shawnee, Oklahoma, was one of the many young men lining up to join the Army.

Wooldridge didn't enlist for promises of the Army College Fund or technical training. The Army offered neither. Wooldridge joined with no expectations other than he would learn to fight and someday soon he would join the war in Europe.

"War was on the horizon when I came in," said Wooldridge, during an interview at his club, near his Santa Teresa, New Mexico, home. "Units like mine — a rifle company that was authorized 180 people — had 64. All those units were filled with draftees, who were given four weeks of basic training and assigned to a unit. War was looming, so we had to get ready and get ready fast."

Wooldridge, who will celebrate his 82nd birthday next month, talked about his Army career, a stark comparison to today's Army. He talked about how he and other NCOs worked to leave a legacy that has shaped today's NCO Corps. Although he now walks with a cane, it's his only concession to age. He still remembers with alacrity the units in which he served, the names of his first sergeants and commanders and the dates during which he served in each unit.

Young Wooldridge didn't spend time preparing for promotion boards. He didn't think of telling the board members of his long-term goal to become the Sergeant Major of the Army. His reasons were simple enough: The Army didn't host promotion boards and there was no such rank as Sergeant Major of the Army. Wooldridge would be the first in 1966. He would also become one of the key architects of the Noncommissioned Officer Education System and centralized promotion system for senior NCOs.

Wooldridge spent his first year in the Army training at Fort Bullis, Texas. All of his training was conducted on little local training areas where Wooldridge reflected on what it was like at his first live-fire exercise.

"We'd hike out there to do that. It was about 20 or 25 miles, as I recall. We'd hike out, pitch tents, do our training, and then hike back," he explained. It's very different now. I think we have a much better Army now than we did then, because of better training, better technology and more qualified trainers."

In 1940, the Army only offered enlisted schools for cooks, bakers and administrative people, he explained. The combat arms units conducted all of their training in-house. If the division commander wanted an NCO school, he had to fund it out of his own training budget.

"The only school my first regiment had was a Regimental Squad Leaders' Course," Wooldridge said. "You stayed in your company, you stood all your formations. The only difference was when the company fell out for training, you marched over to the S3, because you were going to squad leader school for two weeks."

Wooldridge likened the course to today's Primary Leadership Development Course, with the exception that it wasn't as well-organized. The company first sergeant interviewed and selected privates and privates first class to attend the course. The course itself was designed to teach Soldiers all the components of a squad, Wooldridge explained. The Soldiers learned about the squad's weapons and formations. They learned basic map reading and land navigation skills and bayonet training. "The regimental commander did that because he wanted better squad leaders. It was up to him to decide if the regiment held the course, but he had to pay for it, too."

By the time Wooldridge had served four years in the Army, he was a seasoned combat veteran. Assigned to the 1st Infantry Division in Europe, Wooldridge participated in the division's invasion in North Africa, where he faced off against infamous German Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, known as the Desert Fox for his brilliant combat tactics in the North African desert.

Wooldridge was one of thousands of young American Soldiers who invaded North Africa. The troops landed in Algeria in November 1943 and fought their way across the desert terrain against the battle-hardened German-Italian forces. Not only were the Soldiers inexperienced, their commanders' tactics reflected their inexperience as well. The American forces had no combined arms training.

"We didn't know how to use tanks," Wooldridge said. "When the 1st Armored Division came on shore, [Tunis, Tunisia] fell the next morning. Then we assembled to move on towards Kasserine Pass. I remember leaving town and seeing all the tanks. They didn't go with us. The tanks were sitting at crossroads as roadblocks, which was sort of dumb, but we didn't know how to use them."

The American forces moved on toward Oran. "Oran was defended by French and Italians, so there wasn't much opposition. We just surrounded the town and everybody quit," Wooldridge explained. But Kasserine Pass turned out to be a different story.

"When we got to Kasserine, we got hit by German tank/infantry teams, Rommel's Afrika Corps. They just ruined us. They hit us in the high ridge," he explained. "We got knocked back several miles before we could even understand what was going on. But the withdrawal was very well done because of the discipline of the unit. We fell back as we were trained to do. Fall back on the left; take positions. Fall back on the right. We just walked right out of there.

"We lost quite a few people. We lost our entire artillery battalion because it was overrun. But then Gen. Harmon, who was a tanker, brought some tanks up and put a stop to that and drove the Germans back into the pass. We went back to take it a few days later, the tanks went with us. And they went with us during the rest of the war. That was the first experience of combined arms. Now it's all part of our basic doctrine. It's not a matter of getting up here and saying, 'send me some tanks;' they are already with you."

As soon as the 1st Infantry Division finished their missions in North Africa, they moved onto their next objective: the invasion of Sicily.

As the first Sergeant Major of the Army, Sgt. Maj. William O. Wooldridge began instituting many changes that affected the NCO Corps, including the establishment of the NCOES systems and centralized promotion boards. (U.S. Army photo)

On July 10, 1943, Wooldridge and his fellow Soldiers took part in the second largest invasion of the war, the largest being the D-Day invasion at Normandy, France. During their campaign in Sicily, the American forces took many Italian prisoners of war. The invasion was the precursor to the fall of Italy's leader, Benito Mussolini, on July 23, 1943.

Wooldridge knew that he would not return home until the war was over. On June 6, 1944, he waded ashore on Omaha Beach as a member of the 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, the only combat-experienced unit that landed at Normandy that day. Wooldridge attributes his survival to his experience and training.

"We'd invaded North Africa in '42 and Sicily in '43. We still had about 40% of the Soldiers at Normandy," the SMA explained. Wooldridge said the seasoned platoon sergeants and squad leaders provided sound leadership that was vital to their success, along with the fact that his unit hit the beach about two hours after the invasion began, so they faced lighter opposition.

He explained that during the invasion, each Soldier carried a 64-pound pack of equipment tied into a horseshoe shape in addition to his weapon and basic load of ammunition. The Soldiers had learned from the North Africa invasion that the pack was a hindrance, making it more difficult for the Soldiers to run, maneuver, fall down out of the line of fire and get up quickly.

"The orders from the regiment was when the front

of your landing craft drops, throw your horseshoe pack overboard," he explained. "We never took it with us, so we weren't burdened with the extra weight."

The D-Day invasion was only the first of many battles to come. Wooldridge earned two silver stars for gallantry in action in 1944. The first he received for combat in Aachen, Germany, where he was wounded. The second he earned during the Battle of the Bulge Campaign later that year.

Wooldridge finally left the European theater in May 1945. He continued his career, getting promoted if he happened to be in the right place at the right time. At the time, promotions were decided at the unit level. If a Soldier happened to be in a unit when a promotion became available, he would be considered for the promotion.

As an E-6 platoon sergeant, Wooldridge PCS'd to Germany to serve with the same company with which he had served during World War II, Co. K, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, but he was not assigned as a platoon sergeant. Instead, he was assigned as the platoon guide, subordinate to the platoon sergeant, even though he was the senior NCO.

"Even though I was senior to the guy running the platoon, I became his assistant because he was there before me. Fortunately, it didn't last long; the first sergeant moved him. So, I moved right back in as platoon sergeant and then three or four years later, I became a first sergeant," he explained. Wooldridge remained in Germany throughout the Korean War and returned to the United States in 1954. In 1965, he was appointed division sergeant major of the 1st Infantry Division and deployed to Vietnam with the division in August 1965. A year later, in June 1966, Wooldridge was appointed to a new position the Army had just established: Sergeant Major of the Army.

Wooldridge hosted the first Sergeants Major Conference at the Pentagon in November. The Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Harold K. Johnson, issued his guidance to improve the NCO Corps and left it in the sergeants' major hands to make it happen.

"He said we need to improve the Noncommissioned Officer Corps. We've got to make it better educated, more functional, and give it more responsibility," Wooldridge said. "He wanted it to work. He knew what he wanted, and he was going to kill everybody to get it."

Sgt. Maj. of the Army William O. Wooldridge talks to Soldiers of the 9th Infantry Division after awarding them the Combat Infantry Badge for their service in 1967 in Vietnam. (U.S. Army photo)

From that sergeants major conference, the top recommendation was the need for an NCO education system.

"I told the Chief of Staff that we had been wanting that all of our careers; the Army just never saw a need for it. They thought we learned everything we needed to learn in the unit.

"He said, 'You're going to get your education system. Not immediately, because all of the monies are going to Vietnam.'" The funding for NCOES was approved in 1969. The system was set up much as it is today. NCOs went to school to prepare them for the next level of responsibility, squad leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and sergeant major. The first class of NCOs graduated the Sergeants Major Course in 1972, the year Wooldridge retired.

Pvt. Wooldridge

"We knew this was just the beginning; we knew there would have to be changes along the way," he said. "NCOES has changed the NCO Corps 100 percent. It has changed the noncommissioned officers' training, thinking, and abilities 100 percent. It's made us what we are today." Not only has NCOES provided NCOs with standardized training, it has improved the NCO/officer relationship, Wooldridge said. "In my time, officers never considered you as part of decision-making. They made the decisions and they issued the orders. It was very rare to find an officer who would consult a noncommissioned officer on those decisions before he made them."

Out of that same conference came the recommendation and decision to centralize promotions for senior NCOs.

"In my time, you just shipped out and went to a unit and that unit did with you what they wanted to. If they didn't have a slot for your MOS, they put you doing something else," he explained. At the time, Department of the Army would issue allocations to the units and the unit leadership selected whom they wanted. At the conference, the sergeants major proposed establishing an office that would control assignments, promotions, and training for E-8s and 9s.

"It just changed the whole world for us. It got us out of the old business that you got promoted if you were lucky enough to be in a unit that had an allocation. Otherwise, you didn't get anything. A lot of people would lose when allocations were issued because they were enroute to a new duty station, because they weren't considered," he said.

"If we changed the system, then we would promote the best, not just those who happened to be in place. I think it was one of the best things we did for the senior NCOs."

"Anything you do is temporary. Changes are necessary. The Army's mission is to be ready to fight wars; it doesn't have any other mission. It does a lot of things between wars, but its mission is to be ready to fight. When you have to go to fight, it changes everything, particularly all of the administrative procedures that are in effect."

During his tenure as SMA, Wooldridge helped build an NCO Education System, centralized promotion system, and witnessed the establishment of yet another new rank: command sergeant major. Wooldridge left the Office of the Sergeant Major of the Army in August 1968. He again returned to Vietnam as the Sergeant Major of the Military Assistance Command-Vietnam. He returned to the United States a year later and retired on Feb. 1, 1972.

More than 30 years after his retirement, Wooldridge still plays an active role in the NCO Corps as an unofficial mentor to sergeants major of the Army and Sergeants Major Course students. He frequently visits the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, where he has become something of a grassroots celebrity. Sometimes a faculty advisor will invite him to be a guest in one of the student group rooms; other times he just stops by to get a haircut and visit with today's noncommissioned officers.

Ironically, he doesn't live in the past. He is up-to-date on policies, regulations, and anything that impacts the NCO Corps. His pride in how the NCO Corps has evolved is evident. He has been happy to watch the seeds he planted nearly 40 years ago grow. He seldom gives advice, unsolicited or otherwise. When he does offer his opinion, it's often based off of his personal experience and yet what he says seems to hold true today as much as it did 60 years ago, because while training and doctrine may change, the means to motivate Soldiers and lead them successfully in combat has not changed over the years.

"It's very different now. I think we have a much better Army now than we did then, because of better training, better technology and more qualified trainers," he said. "American GIs are very independent. They're sort of rascals in that way. They make very good Soldiers if they have the proper leadership and training. You have to teach them what their mission is and how they're going to accomplish that.

"You are dealing with people. We give units numbers and talk about how great they are, but numbers don't mean anything. People make a unit. If a unit is worth a damn, it's because it has good people. If it's not very good, it's because it doesn't have good people."

Wooldridge travels to Fort Bliss occasionally. He may pause to watch a company formation or change of command along the way. He often remarks on how proud he is of today's NCO Corps, but he's concerned that today's NCO Corps is getting away from some of the basics that have made them so successful in past wars. And, while he's happy to see the NCO Corps evolve and grow in their leadership and training responsibilities, he still believes in the basic tenets that make it possible for America to win wars, particularly leadership and discipline.

"If you can't lead them, you can't fight them. Discipline makes a great difference when you've got nothing between you and an enemy but your rifle; it takes discipline to manage that," he explained. "The discipline is necessary to determine whether they are going to lean forward in the foxhole or if they are going to follow you over the edge." ■

Noncitizen Soldiers Deserve Our Highest Respect

By (13th) Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston

January 2005

I want to share a story with you. It is the story of a young, courageous patriot who came to the United States seeking opportunity and was so thankful for his freedoms that he chose to join the Army to help defend them. The Soldier's name was Sgt. Catalin Dima. He came to this country to work and start a new life. An Army Reservist with the 411th Engineer Brigade out of New Jersey, Dima felt compelled to join the service with a desire to give back. The 411th was mobilized to rotate into Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

I met Dima's roommate and good friend, Sgt. Henry Chin-Hong, while visiting troops in Iraq on August 12 of this year. Dima, a specialist at the time, had asked his roommate to come see me to express some issues he was having getting his paperwork through the immigration process to become an American citizen. He was very anxious to be a U.S. citizen and hoped I could help. Chin-Hong told me the problems and, in the weeks after, my staff worked with Immigration and Naturalization Services to help the process along.

On October 3, then-Specialist Dima, along with numerous other Soldiers, were sworn in as American citizens in the very palace where Saddam Hussein used to live. Dima was overjoyed. His roommate tells how he walked into the trailer where they lived that day and wouldn't stop screaming "USA, USA."

Chin-Hong wrote to me shortly after the ceremony to tell me about Dima's great accomplishment. I was overjoyed and humbled that my assistance helped this American Soldier become a citizen of the United States. He deserved it. He was defending the very country and the people he was trying so hard to be a part of.

U.S. Army Sgt. Catalin Dima shortly after becoming a U.S. citizen in Baghdad, Iraq. (Courtesy photo)

Dima was the type of individual who followed President Kennedy's famous phrase, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Chin-Hong told us of the late-night stories by Dima and the hardships he suffered in his native Romania. Dima would talk about how as a Soldier in the Romanian Army, he would have to deliver pizzas at night and live in a basement with his family. Dima couldn't understand why natural-born Americans weren't just walking on air with all the opportunities they had available to them. Chin-Hong recalls Dima telling him that he loved President Bush and would vote for him forever if it were possible because the President allowed him to become a member of the greatest society the world has ever known.

I received an email from Chin-Hong a few weeks ago. He wanted to inform me that Dima had been promoted to sergeant on November 11. He also wanted me to know that Dima died that same afternoon from wounds suffered in a mortar attack on his convoy. His best friend, Chin-Hong, was injured as well but survived his wounds.

Dima left behind his wife, Florika, and three children, Christian, Angela and John. All are under six years of age.

He gave more in his 39 days of citizenship than most Americans give in their whole lives. He is an American hero. He deserves to be remembered and recognized with all the great heroes of this century. He lived the Soldiers Creed and the Warrior Ethos every day. He always placed the mission first, never accepted defeat, never quit, and never left a fallen comrade. He was an expert and a professional. He was an American Soldier. ■

Outcome-Based Training & Education

Targeting the Intangibles

By Staff Sgt. Mary E. Ferguson

Fall 2008

The staff sergeant sprinted to his connecting gate to discover his flight was delayed. He collapsed into the first chair he could find, very aware that the delay was all that stood between him and R&R leave. A nearby conversation distracted him from his own frustration. The noncommissioned officer turned around to so see a group of privates. Fresh out of initial entry training and en route to their first units, they gabbed away about what they'd just accomplished. He wanted to catch a nap while he waited, but he couldn't help but think that these green privates weren't much different than those he'd led for the past six months in Iraq – so he kept listening. One private bragged that his whole platoon managed to get a first-time-go on the qualification range. "It was too easy, and we were off the range by noon," he said. Another private replied, "Wow, we were out there for days; firing, walking to our targets, discussing, adjusting and firing more – again and again." The NCO waited for a comeback, but while the others kept talking and sharing what they'd learned and applied in their training, the once bragging private now hid in silence. On paper, he'd met the standard, and fast, but he really had no clue "how" he'd done it because he'd simply been told what to do the whole time: his trainers never explained

or expected him to understand why. The veteran imagined that the private's silence was probably a bit embarrassing as they lounged around in the airport's cushioned chairs, but as a combat experienced NCO, he knew that the new Soldier's lack of confidence and understanding could be deadly on the asymmetric battlefields of Iraq or Afghanistan.

Confidence, awareness, initiative, accountability, and the ability to think through and solve problems – these intangible attributes are the training outcomes the NCO subconsciously searched for when listening to the privates' conversation. Based on combat experiences and feedback from warriors like him, Army leaders have discovered that these attributes are what Soldiers need to succeed on today's ever-changing and often unpredictable battlefields, and they've spent the past few years focusing on educating Army trainers on why and how to achieve these intangible outcomes.

Field Manual (FM) *3-0: Operations,* describes the full-spectrum environment Soldiers currently operate in as one of persistent conflict that requires adaptive and thinking warriors. Drafts of *FM 7-0: Training for Full Spectrum Operations,* recognize that the Army's traditional training and education, primarily designed for conventional warfare, may need to adapt in order to develop Soldiers who are confident in today's full-spectrum operational environment, which is asymmetric versus conventional in nature.

The Army's traditional input-oriented approach to training would suggest that the way to meet these new training needs would be to come up with lists of additional tasks or rewrite

U.S. Army Soldiers with the 197th Infantry Brigade participate in an adaptability practical exercise using an obstacle course during the U.S. Asymmetric Warfare Group's Asymmetric Warfare Adaptive Leader Program, hosted at Fort Benning, Georgia, Sept. 30, 2012. (U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Sonise Lumbaca)

What exactly is OBT&E? AWG describes it as a way or method of training that emphasizes the development of an individual based on operational expectations in regards to necessary tangible skills and desired intangible attributes, ultimately producing Soldiers and leaders who can improvise and adapt their knowledge to solve problems when facing altered situations.

But how does a drill sergeant or a squad leader translate that definition into something he or she can use to produce more confident and accountable Soldiers, and why should a brigade command sergeant major encourage his or her NCOs to use OBT&E? These are the questions AWG advisor Morgan Darwin attempts to answer through his OBT&E workshops. The retired command sergeant major conducts the training for NCOs and senior leaders.

During an August workshop at Fort Benning, Darwin asked the cadre and Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course students in attendance to write down five characteristics or traits they'd like to see in their Soldiers. Words such as confident, knowledgeable and responsible filled the room as they shared their lists. Darwin said, "NCOs consistently list these as traits [they] want in their Soldiers, but what is it that we [as trainers] focus on in training - we focus on the task, conditions and standards–not these intangible traits."

He explained that historically Army leaders have conducted a mission analysis, which generated a task list and training was then conducted on those tasks. Today's missions are too complex as they incorporate often unpredictable combat, civil and humanitarian aspects – "You just can't simply create a task list for real life today – hitting 23 out of 40 rounds in target for qualification was good enough when we fought as division-sized elements versus the Soviets, but is it really good enough for a squad operating in Anbar Province today?"

Under the OBT&E methodology, it's more important for training to result in a Soldier feeling confident about operating his or her weapon or navigating from one point to another for example, while still being able to quickly assess a problem such as a weapons malfunction or an obstacle in their path and solve that problem without losing sight of other interrelated tasks happening on the battlefield.

Darwin used the example of training Soldiers on the task of applying SPORTS [Slap, Pull, Observe, Release, Tap, Shoot] in response to a weapons malfunction. The example reflects the difference between an input-based method of training and OBT&E. "In the input-based system, [the trainer] gives Soldiers a task – correctly conduct the steps of SPORTS, conditions – given a malfunctioning rifle, etc., and a standard – complete in five seconds," he said. "Soldiers can successfully complete the task to standard without ever really knowing why they conducted any of the steps, or how it's actually applied in combat – maybe once the Soldier has corrected the malfunction, [he or she] shouldn't automatically perform that last step and shoot, but should instead perform some other interrelated task."

He added that by explaining the "why" and "how" of the

task, then putting it into a combat-related context and determining the task complete when Soldiers understand and can confidently execute it in that context, the trainer has taken the existing task of applying SPORTS and deliberately used it to develop both tangible and intangible attributes in their Soldiers. "This outcome is more important on today's battlefield than Soldiers being able to conduct SPORTS in five seconds."

Darwin's explanation is complemented by retired Maj. Donald Vandergriff's day-long Adaptive Leaders Methodology workshop, often held in conjunction with the OBT&E workshop.

"OBT&E is more philosophical in nature, a way of looking at an overall approach to training, whereas in the adaptability workshop, I'm providing these trainers with tools like tactical decision games, and discussing how to facilitate those games in a way where they can be used for employing OBT&E," Vandergriff explained.

Vandergriff's adaptability workshop first engages attendees by putting them through a tactical decision game that requires them to personally employ intangible attributes like critical thinking while remaining self-aware, asking questions and eventually finding and justifying a solution to a problem. He then asks them to create and facilitate their own tactical decision games. By using the OBT&E method, their focus as a trainer is on ensuring the way they facilitate helps produce the desired outcomes in participants. Vandergriff emphasized that there really are no fundamentally wrong answers or ways to facilitate during his workshop, as long as facilitators' methods lead to the desired outcomes—increasing participants' adaptability and critical thinking skills.

Both experts acknowledged that whether trainers realize it or not, many throughout the Army are already using OBT&E to develop intangible attributes in their Soldiers, but Darwin said, "It's still not the institutional norm that's needed for this cultural shift in training."

As a catalyst for achieving that goal, AWG developed the Combat Application Training Course. It serves as a vehicle for demonstrating OBT&E in a practical way.

By applying the methodology to marksmanship – a basic Army skill – CATC reveals that when a trainer combines the standard rifle marksmanship POI with an outcome based mindset, Soldiers leave the training better shooters, but more importantly they understand how and why their weapon works the way it does, take accountability when it comes to weapons safety and maintenance, and are confident with operating their weapons in unpredictable situations, said retired Sgt. Maj. John Porter, a CATC instructor.

According to its mission statement, CATC uses mentorship and a principle-based training program to demonstrate a safe and effective training method that enhances Soldier responsibility and accountability.

AWG instructors first taught the course to 82nd Airborne Division Soldiers at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, during their pre-deployment training in 2006, and then to 101st Airborne Division Soldiers at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and brigade combat teams at Fort Hood and Fort Bliss, Texas. For a little more than a year now, CATC has been consistently attended by cadre of training institutions at both Fort Jackson and Fort Benning to include the Army's newly consolidated Drill Sergeant School at Fort Jackson.

"More than 1,200 folks have gone through the course at Fort Benning alone. Sometimes we'll have 10 in a course; sometimes we're turning people away," Porter said. "If we have more than 40 in a class, then we really can't be true to the methodology we're trying to demonstrate."

The course's instructors are quick to tell students that if they walk away from the training thinking it was a shooting course, they didn't get it at all.

U.S. Army Pvt. Getaur Jashari, an infantryman with Team Eagle, Task Force 2-7 Infantry, fires an M136 anti-tank 4 rocket launcher at a simulated enemy target while 1st Sgt. Michael McKenzie, first sergeant of Team Eagle, serves as assistant gunner during a live-fire squad movement exercise at a training area in Pabrade, Lithuania, May 6, 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jarred Woods)

"Sure, it'll make somebody a better shooter, but its purpose is to demonstrate a different method of training that can be applied to other basic skills like navigation, maintenance, driving or safety," Porter said.

The course is delivered in two programs. The five-day basic program and the 10-day advanced program, which builds on the basic program and incorporates Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) and room clearing fundamentals. The basic course is grounded in first achieving a mastery of fundamentals such as weapons safety, maintenance, functions and malfunctions, ballistics, operations and coaching; mastery meaning an understanding of the "hows" and "whys" of each fundamental. Using that same idea of mastery, each day of the course builds on the previous day never losing sight of mastered fundamentals, and always exercising safety as a training enabler versus disabler.

The students begin by wearing eye and ear protection but no other gear so the instructors can actually see what they're doing wrong as they fire their weapons at targets from different distances. They first fire just five rounds, then walk to their targets and discuss why their rounds hit or missed the targets in certain areas. The instructors are there to provide feedback and answer questions, but they encourage the students to consider the "hows" and "whys" of the fundamentals they've already mastered and then confidently decide which adjustment s to make to solve the problem at hand, Porter said.

"This method encourages Soldiers to constantly ask 'how' does this or that work or 'why' do we do the things we do," said Staff Sgt. Alvin Fields, a cadre member who mentors new infantry lieutenants at Fort Benning's Infantry Basic officer Leader Course. "I've deployed twice to Iraq and twice to Afghanistan – I mean, its marksmanship, something we all do; you'd think after years in combat, we'd know everything, but this course really opens your eyes to how much you know, but don't really understand or feel confident about."

Porter explained, "There's no such thing as advanced fundamentals: there's just basic fundamentals done well and applied in different situations," which is why the course replicates stresses of combat through timed position and movement shooting while also incorporating shoot/no-shoot and weapons malfunction scenarios.

"You really have to put it all together in the drills, remembering the fundamentals even though you have other things to deal with and decisions to make," said Sgt. 1st Class Walter Perez, a drill sergeant at Fort Benning who attended the five-day course. "Going through the course, I can really see the value in using this method of training: I can feel myself getting more and more comfortable and confident as the course goes on."

Perez, like the majority of the training cadre and drill sergeants at Fort Benning and Fort Jackson, attended the couse to understand the OBT&E methodology so he can now utilize it when training other Soldiers.

"I send all of our new cadre member to CATC, and we're in the process of working an abbreviated form of the course into our Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course curriculum so even more NCO's will be exposed to this way of training," said Command Sgt. Maj. William Ulibarri, the U.S. Army Infantry Center command sergeant major. "I already see the difference as our drill sergeants and NCOs are applying what they've learned. When I go out to the ranges today, the level of mastery and confidence has increased incredibly versus when I'd visit them just a year ago."

Ulibarri and USAIC are in the process of assuming an even greater role in CATC as all but one of the AWG instructors move on to other posts, leaving USAIC NCOs to instruct the course at Fort Benning.

"The demand for the course and workshop continues to increase: Army G3 has embraced the idea; the new *Field Manual 7-0* will call for the OBT&E methodology; and the list goes on if initiatives all across the institutional Army," Darwin said. "I believe that the American Soldier is more adaptable than any creature on earth; it's the [way] we train that needs to change. But [OBT&E] is not an experiment; it's growing Army-wide and on a wave that's just two to five years from hitting the shore."

Until then, AWG officials predict, and Army leaders hope, that NCOs and other trainers will target the intangibles in their Soldier by continuing to discover way to implement OBT&E across the training spectrum. ■

Developing Great Leadership

By Sgt. Nicholas E. Teague

1st Battalion, 78th Field Artillery Regiment

October 2009

Leadership is a word often used in the United States military. The acronym, *LDRSHIP*, represents the Army's seven values, which we must use and apply to call ourselves Soldiers. We develop into leaders throughout our careers. We recruit, train and appoint new leaders. We plan and carry out operations under the direction of our command and staff leaders. But, how does one define and become a great leader?

A great leader is someone who helps others do and become more than they ever thought possible. Developing great leadership is about unlocking potential. It is not about telling people what to do, but inspiring them to achieve and lead by example. The quality of leadership makes the difference between a team that is passionate about what it's doing versus one that is simply following orders.

Good leadership isn't hard to achieve, but a truly great leader stands out above all other leaders. A great leader does not make false assumptions, is understanding and humble, and accepts that there's always room for improvement.

A great leader is someone who helps others do and become more than they ever thought possible. Developing great leadership is about unlocking potential. It is not about telling people what to do, but inspiring them to achieve and lead by example.

To be a great leader, one must be an effective leader. An effective leader can make things happen the right way. When something is wrong, they will solve the problem in a timely manner instead of letting it continue unresolved, making a situation more complex.

But there are many factors that can stand in the way of becoming an effective leader. One of the most dangerous misconceptions about leadership is thinking that a leader knows it all. Another is the idea that an efficient leader is also effective, which is absolutely incorrect.

My mentor once told me: *"The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership. One should never yield to temptation and sacrifice effectiveness for efficiency."*

An effective leader must keep in mind that human frailty comes into play whether you are a private or a command sergeant major. So while the ultimate decision and responsibility may lie with one individual, it is incumbent upon that individual to gather information and trust others' points of view before developing a plan of action.

Great leaders also must be open to change. A leader should not think that their way is the only way to accomplish goals. As Napoleon stated, *"There are no bad regiments; there are only bad colonels."* Especially when working with team building, a leader must be able to take advice and appropriate criticism to better the way a mission will operate and get it accomplished.

Some people have only one style of leadership. But they must be willing to change as their leadership style may not always work.

Flexible leadership can be difficult; however, it is great because it involves being able to adapt according to the situation and the status of the team. An example is taking charge when a team is forming, but playing the role of coach when a team is managing itself well. It takes knowing which battles to fight, and which to let pass. It allows room for error and opportunity to make corrections and solve problems. Another aspect of flexibility is being creative and thinking of new ways to approach problems or situations. However, in saying that, we must remember to present our personal ideas to our subordinates and superiors before applying them in order to win the fundamental support of our team.

When doing this, the idea will often be viewed as a positive change.

Author John Maxwell says this: *"The pessimist complains about the wind. The optimist expects it to change. The leader adjusts the sails."*

If we keep this in mind, it will help us develop into flexible leaders, which will bring us that much closer to great leadership.

There are many qualities that people will notice about future great leaders, including the ability to listen. Potential leaders of greatness have a "holding court" quality about them. When they speak, people listen. Some people talk a great deal – they give a speech – but nobody listens.

Leaders must have a great amount of mental toughness without acting "mean" and understand that no one can lead without being criticized. Most people would prefer a tough-minded leader who will work for the benefit of the team and is a positive influence on the team.

Leadership creates a certain separation from one's peers. The distance comes because leaders carry major responsibilities, often the weight of an entire organization. A poten-

tially *great* leader must recognize this pressure is normal and not be afraid to seek out developmental counseling from their mentors.

To be a *great* leader, period, a person must have a leader's spirit, which consists of the drive, willingness and motivation to lead. After all, becoming an effective leader takes hard work. If you're not prepared to work hard at developing your leadership skills, or if you're not sure you want to lead, you'll struggle to be effective. People who struggle with this may feel depressed, and perhaps lose sight of their personal goals and their team's goals.

There must be a sense of purpose.

As stated by Gen. Creighton Abrams, *"There must be a willingness to march a little farther, to carry a heavier load, to step out into the dark and the unknown for the safety and well–being of others."*

This statement illustrates that leaders must show spirit, even in times of doubt.

A great leader must maintain that sense of purpose in the face of adversity and setback. Your position, whether as a commissioned or noncommissioned officer, is not a precursor or a barrier to the appropriate development and expression of vision. In the military, rank is often viewed from a socialist's perspective by newer Soldiers. They cannot step up to the challenge and lead. In other cases, they are intimidated by superiors and are afraid to reach out and seek guidance and mentorship to develop their leadership vision.

A great leader has the ability to motivate, to inspire, to boost the morale of others. When subordinates feel this motivation, they, too, will demonstrate strength. We rely on these characteristics so immensely that absence of these skills can cause a devastating drop in confidence in subordinates. In turn, they will no longer trust their leaders.

John Quincy Adams said, *"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."*

The ability to motivate is an essential tool for all leaders to have in their toolbox. A good leader with a positive attitude and a vision can motivate anyone – even those who may feel dissatisfied with their jobs. Subordinates must be included in all parts of the process, every step of the way. Teamwork is the key here, not hierarchy, especially when "One Team, One Fight" was once the Army motto. Now, however, our motto signifies that there is strength in teamwork: "Army Strong." That said, people must still be treated as individuals. Always acknowledge their importance and show them respect. They're people first, Soldiers second. Superior work must be encouraged, recognized and rewarded. Leaders must motivate and boost the pride and morale of their section.

A great leader will have an outstanding ability to communicate, which is imperative if the mission is to be completed successfully. Effective communication will greatly speed up the progress of the tasks at hand. Speaking and writing are certainly important, but perhaps a more important element of communication is the ability to listen. We all know what it is like to have a conversation with someone who is not listening. The next time you engage in a conversation, truly make an effort to listen. You'll find yourself enjoying and learning from the people with whom you associate. Not only does this show your concern for others, but it also shows compassion and understanding.

Leaders must lead by example. All of us have had a role model, someone we've admired, and someone who has influenced us by their actions, ethical standards, ideals or achievements. We cannot make someone fear us and then expect to have their loyalty.

Gen. Dwight Eisenhower said, *"I would rather try to persuade a man to go along, because once I have persuaded him, he will stick. If I scare him, he will stay just as long as he is scared, and then he is gone."*

As Soldiers, we may tend to forget the influence we have on those with whom we live and work. We tend to think only leaders are influential. But all of us, intentionally or not, constantly project our personal vision – the way we think life should be lived, our code of personal conduct – to everyone we meet.

A great leader will have an outstanding ability to communicate, which is imperative if the mission is to be completed successfully. Effective communication will greatly speed up the progress of the tasks at hand.

Our conduct in the work environment surrounds us like the air we breathe. Almost subconsciously, we absorb the examples of others. We're influenced, changed in some way. The changes may be small – almost unnoticeable – but over the course of time, the effects may be far reaching and profound. We're different people because of what we see; we've changed others by what we do.

Great leadership is set by example and is straight forward. We don't need to advertise ourselves as great leaders or ask others to do so. Leaders are subject to constant scrutiny. We hope and expect they will maintain high standards and diligence of their position. But, being human, we are also imperfect.

Gen. Omar Bradley stated, *"Leadership in a democratic army means firmness, not harshness; understanding, not weakness; generosity, not selfishness; pride, not egotism."*

We must support our superiors and encourage them to support us.

Quite often; however, the demands of leadership bring out the very best in us. Arriving at a new duty station, we attempt to forecast what can and cannot achieve. But, settling in, we see the desire of the troops to excel, to perform the mission proudly and we're encouraged to match that desire with increased commitment. This is what makes leaders and units perform beyond their perceived limita-

tions, beyond what they thought themselves capable.

A great leader will be continually decisive. How often do we hear people say, "I wish they would just make a choice, any choice!" There are very few sources of irritation more frustrating to subordinates than the indecisive leader, one who cannot efficiently lay out a rational and logical course of action. Perhaps equally frustrating are leaders who keep changing their decisions or go back on their word, reflecting the most recently applied pressure or criticism of their previous decisions.

We must not be afraid of ridicule, nor must we fear making an error and being replaced.

Gen. Omar Bradley said, *"Leadership is intangible, and therefore no weapon ever designed can replace it."*

Great leadership is needed on and off the battlefield. It rests in our hands to carry onward the finest of our military traditions and be an example of a great leader to the Soldiers of the past, the present and the future. ■

Sgt. Teague hails from Kingsport, Tennessee. He is assigned to 1st Battalion, 78th Field Artillery Regiment, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Teague has an associates degree in biblical studies from New Life Bible College and Seminary. His aspirations include obtaining a doctorate in christian counseling within the next six years, going to Army parachutist training, and going to combat sometime in his career. His greatest aspiration is to be the sergeant major of the Army.

Our Warrior Ethos: An Essay

By 1st Sgt. Tammy Treat

119th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

October 2010

I started this journey alone. I walked into a recruiting station and joined the largest organized force this planet has to reckon with. The magnitude of it is awe-inspiring in its own right. Our nation is the great masterpiece in which we enlisted to protect.

Just the sight of an American flag or the sound of our anthem is enough for me to feel that rush of adrenaline, which is so many things mixed into a singular concoction of emotion that I can only try at best to dig deep within my soul to verbalize it all.

When I see our flag, I feel strength. When I raise my right arm to render a salute to it, the feeling is one of such intense respect; it is a phenomena which I cannot fully describe. I look at those who stand beside me. I think the emotions they feel are the same. We are not connected to each other by marriage or birth. We come from different backgrounds, cities, faiths and cultures. We do not look alike nor do we sound alike. We have varying degrees of social standing and education. So how is it that you can take the everyday, common American and turn that body and soul into a warrior who is willing to give up his or her life for that of a fellow Soldier?

We are a family of fighters. We become proficient in our Warrior Tasks, our Battle Drills and even our occupational specialties. We drill muscle memory into every inch of our being so we can maneuver as one. It is a single thread that binds us — a value and belief system average Americans have come to trust as a sacred protector of their land. That thread is so complex, stubborn and strong that I cannot imagine it ever being broken.

Our Army values guide our way on every journey, every mission in which we set out to tackle. That is why it is so important for our successors to fully understand the stepping stones we have laid before them. The history and the progression of the noncommissioned officer should be ever-prevalent in our subordinate's minds as they are the future leaders, mentors, and coaches.

Those leaders before me shared their knowledge and skill in order to see that I, too, would be there for the next generation. If I do not ensure those who follow in my place know the things I know, and live the same values as I live, then I have failed.

The relative rank I wear on my chest is not that of power, but of wisdom and experience. I am an enforcer of standards. As a first sergeant, my mission is Soldiers. I am to keep those under my care physically and mentally fit and willing to fight the fight. My mission is to train my team so that they can take my place once I am gone, to mentor them into well-rounded, trustworthy leaders who genuinely care. I am to coach them into becoming experts in all that they do. By doing all of this, I will know that they have not been left behind and have been given what they need to succeed.

I believe the Army values entail essential qualities of character needed to build an effective team of warriors. When I see someone walk by me wearing our uniform, I judge that Soldier. I assume the nature of the person wearing it is that of a trusted, dignified, tough and loyal individual. I feel that silent, unspoken understanding between us, that we are brothers and sisters in arms and that we are here to protect one another no matter the circumstance.

When I look at each and every member of my team, the emotions that run through my blood make my chest extend out in pride. I have memories of pre-mission prayers or crying with a fellow Soldier on the anniversary of our brother-in-arm's death. In my heart, I know these sacrifices were for the betterment of our nation. We must drive on and strive for excellence so the losses we have suffered won't be for naught.

The Warrior Ethos is an attitude and a state of mind. It takes a special internal strength that only a warrior can understand. That is what we are: warriors. The loyalty, enthusiasm, and inspiration of those before me will never be forgotten. I have internalized the values they instilled upon me, and it is all now part of my nature; part of my own existence.

Through the heat of the battle or the calm of the storm, the lessons I have learned toughened my soul and the bonds I have built will be forever. I can truly say I will never accept defeat. I will never quit, and when I look back on my career I will know that I gave it my all and I will stand proud. ■

Full-Spectrum Brainpower

A New Dimension of Readiness

By Andrew S. Korim

October 2011

Soldier! You don't think! You do and die!" Back in the spring of 1945, that's what draftees of 2nd Platoon, B Company, 213rd Infantry Replacement Training Battalion, at Camp Blanding, Florida, heard their platoon sergeant, Tech. Sgt. Hernandez, bellow in response to the explanation of "I thought..." after a serious error in the execution of a task. Hernandez, a seasoned leader from the early days of the Pacific Campaign of World War II, was charged with training us for combat in Japan.

The personal, memorable lesson I learned from Sgt. Hernandez that day occurred when my mind failed me, and my arms inserted a defused training mortar shell in the mortar tube wrong end first. After I was corrected, Sgt. Hernandez ordered me to double-time around the training area for 10 minutes with my rifle (an 11-pound M1) extended over my head.

The pain in my arms and legs remains etched in my memory 66 years later. The lesson learned: Keep your mind focused on what you are doing. In those days, words similar to those of Lord Alfred Tennyson were drilled into the Soldier's mind with frequent chanting while on a march: "Ours is not to reason why. Ours is but to do and die."

In contrast, though not as rhythmic, the variable demands of the operational environment confronting NCOs today dictate a focus on reasoning and judicious discretion:

- Ours is to think critically, logically, analytically and creatively to gain pre-emptive or counteractive advantage over forthcoming events — whatever the mission and whatever the context may be.
- Ours is to apply knowledge, lessons learned, proficiencies and common sense to dominate, exploit or neutralize the challenges that come with perplexity, adversity and uncertainty.
- Ours is to continually gauge, size up and weigh the ebb and flow of the unique dynamics of each encounter to determine the optimal opportunity to execute decisive action.
- Ours is to reason how to achieve mission success, for those before us never settled for less.
- Ours, more than "theirs," is to be predisposed to a regimen of continuous learning to grow brainpower capabilities commensurate with the demands of full-spectrum operations.

How to achieve these NCO brainpower efficiencies becomes the issue.

Back in the 1940s and 1950s, typically the only source of education for noncommissioned officers was through basic training, occupational specialty schooling, field experience and the correspondence courses of the U.S. Armed Forces Institute. While in Japan during the spring of 1950 just before North Korea's invasion of South Korea, the College Level Examination Program test was administered to those of us interested in attending college upon completion of our enlistments. Without doubt, a huge number of NCOs abandoned a career in the Army to take advantage of the educational opportunities made available to veterans under the GI Bill.

Though not comparable to commissioned officers' education and development, today's NCOs have many more opportunities to elevate their level of educational attainment beyond high school through the military's educational infrastructure and tuition assistance programs at civilian colleges.

With the Internet and technology like smartphones and tablets, the classroom can go to the NCO anywhere in the world instead of the NCO going to the classroom. The internet offers NCOs deployed in remote locations the

opportunity to reinforce ongoing experiential learning, Structured Self-Development and college coursework. With the culture of learning evolving within the NCO Corps, an NCO without an associate degree will soon become an obsolete leader. Indeed, obsolescence is not consistent with efficiency, success or survival.

Though self-development has historically been an off-duty, personal educational activity, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III significantly departed from this practice recently with a charge to all leaders: Dedicate time in the weekly schedule for individual Soldiers to work on their SSD courses. This departure from the past is another building block in the culture of learning that is evolving within the NCO Corps.

A predictable conclusion is that, in the coming decades, the NCO will be doing the heavy thinking that, in the past, was the turf of the educated officer corps. Building the NCO Corps' intellectual muscle and immunity to brain freeze will become the issue of the second decade of the 21st century.

In what should be viewed as a heads-up for the NCO Corps, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. David M. Bruner, offered an insightful perspective on brainpower and the distinctive roles of training and education in the Summer 2009 issue of *The NCO Journal*:

- "Leading requires a lot of brain power, a lot of will power and a lot of training and education."
- "The only factor that enables us to adapt, that is to pick and choose which habitual mental process to follow and which to override, is education. Training and drills enable us to react. Education enables us to adapt."
- "We as an NCO Corps must recognize that an adaptable leader's most important tool is his mind. PT is conducted every morning to keep in physical shape. We must exercise our minds as well."

These insights show the contrast in the roles of training and education, which are often erroneously treated as synonymous. Each maximize the utility of contrasting functions of the mind, namely the programmable automatic sensory reflex function, the training domain in which you act without thinking, and the intellectually demanding thoughtful discretionary function, the educational domain in which you think before acting.

To enhance understanding of the value of education as the expanded source of discretionary capabilities in NCO leader development, TRADOC clarifies the distinction between the role of education and the role of training in the report *Serving a Nation at War: A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities*, prepared by TRADOC's Futures Center in 2004:

- "Just as training must reflect the hard certainties of the conflict before us, individual Soldier and leader education must address its uncertainties."
- "The need to teach Soldiers and leaders how to think rather than what to think has never been clearer. To defeat adaptive enemies, we must out-think them in order to out-fight them." As Soldiers move from private first class up the NCO hierarchy, their span of responsibility and control over Soldiers and military assets naturally increases, as does the amount of brainpower needed to function effectively, efficiently and with the precision, confidence and authority of a leader.

To maximize individual NCO performance and the readiness capabilities of the NCO Corps, the accelerated and continuous development of critical thinking, reasoning and discretionary deliberative capacities becomes a dominant priority.

Getting an education or acquiring functional brainpower assets is a cumulative learning process. This process consists of blending experiential learning, self-study and formal instruction with a focus on building an expansive bank of diverse knowledge, talents and know-how. The ingredients to accomplish this come from personal life experiences that include routine social interaction, curiosity about the dimensions of reality, work experiences, lessons learned from extraordinary occurrences and the study of the intellectual disciplines.

Parallel with and integral to building one's resource bank is developing one's proficiency in communication. This includes vocabulary mastery, orderly thought construction, reading comprehension, effective written and oral presentation, information management, precision in verbalization, and navigation of Internet resources. The capability to understand and exchange courtesies, intentions and commands in strategic foreign languages was advantageous to an NCO in the multinational environment of World War II, the Korean War and even more so in the contemporary multinational operational environment of Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the process of acquiring an education, reasoning and deliberative capabilities such as speculating, deducing, inferring, hypothesizing, imputing, analyzing, synthesizing, concluding, deciding and conceptualizing become a top priority for the NCO. Also developed are key functional mental transactions such as anticipation, correlation, inquisition, formulation, imagination, verification, evaluation, assimilation and introspection.

U.S. Army photo illustration by Spc. David M. Gafford

To be of prime value to the NCO as a leader of 21st-century warriors, education must be shaped to produce applied intellect. Specifically, learning must be consciously focused on acquiring performance capabilities essential to the efficient execution of the roles, responsibilities and duties of an NCO. Leader education has the burden to develop one's finesse in traversing the maze of problematic, destabilizing and unanticipated dimensions of each mission. Among the brain-powered navigational tools needed in such unchartered terrain are talents to continuously clarify, exploit, reconcile, mitigate, degrade and neutralize contingencies (often audaciously) as appropriate within the parameters of the rules of war.

In a world where continuous conflict, instability and strife are the harsh reality, and peace is an abstraction, the NCO's compelling obligation is full-spectrum operational readiness with brainpower being the catalytic asset that converts manpower, firepower and cyberpower into on-point customized modules of land power. In fact, had today's opportunities for an NCO to acquire a college education been available to me in the 1950s, "U.S. Army Retired" would follow my name. ■

Andrew S. Korim, whose Army service spanned from 1945 to 1952, was a sergeant in the 181st Military Intelligence Detachment (Counterintelligence Corps), attached to the 1st Marine Division in Korea. Throughout his career, he was a major proponent of community colleges and NCO education. Now in his 80s, he is retired and lives in Sarver, Pennsylvania.

Battling Toxic Leadership

By Jennifer Mattson, NCO Journal

June 2012

An Army survey confirms what most NCOs already know — toxic leadership destroys units' morale and leads to highly qualified Soldiers leaving the Army. NCOs can teach junior Soldiers how to identify toxic leadership to help purge it from the ranks. Units can also implement a culture of mentorship so that junior NCOs understand the importance of a positive leadership style.

The *CASAL: Army Leaders' Perceptions of Army Leaders and Army Leadership Practices Special Report* published in June 2011 solicited feedback from officers, warrant officers and NCOs who are on the pulse of Army leadership.

"The presence of toxic leaders in the force may create a self-perpetuating cycle with harmful and long-lasting effects on morale, productivity and retention of quality personnel," the report said.

The survey contained a few surprising and alarming results. It found that toxic leaders accomplish their goals more frequently than constructive leaders, and that toxic leaders are perceived by their peers to achieve a higher level of leadership responsibility and move through the ranks at a quicker pace.

In addition, 83% of respondents said they had directly observed a toxic leader in the last year. On the brighter side, 97% said they had observed an exceptional leader. With the prevalence of toxic leaders in the Army, noncommissioned officers have a duty to help their junior Soldiers identify and stop toxic leadership and encourage exceptional leaders.

Identifying a Toxic Leader

Toxic leaders aren't simply those who yell or make Soldiers do something they don't want to do. Rather, the Army defines toxic leaders as those who put their own needs or image above their subordinates', who micromanage their subordinates and who are insecure in their own positions.

Toxic leader types

ABSENTEE LEADERS are disengaged from the unit or their Soldiers.
INCOMPETENT LEADERS may not have the skills necessary to lead or may simply not care enough to exhibit those skills.
CODEPENDENT LEADERS lead by taking on more work, don't correct substandard performance and cover up problems rather than facing them.
PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE LEADERS are unsure of whether they can meet the standards, so they procrastinate and take out their frustration on their subordinates.
BUSYBODY LEADERS jump from one project to another without direction to their subordinates but instead prefer to be the center of all decisions.
PARANOID LEADERS are constantly worried about their leadership, micromanage and cannot tolerate criticism.
RIGID LEADERS are inflexible and do not allow for a difference in opinion.
CONTROLLER LEADERS involve themselves in every decision and will not delegate authority to subordinates.
COMPULSIVE LEADERS are prone to violent outbursts, which are unexpected and unexplained to the compulsive leader's followers.
INTEMPERATE LEADERS are those who lack self-control and overindulge.
ENFORCER LEADERS seek only the approval of their superior without regard to their subordinates.
NARCISSISTIC LEADERS mistreat, manipulate and exploit their subordinates in order to promote themselves.
CALLOUS LEADERS do not care for their subordinates' wants or needs.
STREET FIGHTER LEADERS are fiercely competitive and build gangs of supporters to silence dissent.
CORRUPT LEADERS focus only on money and power and how to achieve both.
INSULAR LEADERS separate themselves and their followers and will go to great lengths to protect their gang at a high cost to those outside of it.
BULLY LEADERS hurt others, put them down and invalidate their opinions.
EVIL LEADERS physically hurt others to the point of committing atrocities.

At the company level, feedback from Soldiers is critical in helping identify a toxic leader, said 1st Sgt. Michael Lindsay, first sergeant of Headquarters Support Company, I Corps, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington Lindsay wrote a paper on toxic leadership and has implemented a training program to alert his Soldiers to the presence of toxic leadership.

"There are different ways to get feedback, including command climate surveys, open-door policies and sensing sessions," Lindsay said. "But the most effective is when the first sergeant gets out of his or her office, talks with the Soldiers and watches how their leaders interact with them and others."

Though the company's leaders should be involved in their unit, they need to monitor their junior leaders in a way that empowers them, Lindsay said.

Characteristics of a toxic leader

- **Incompetence**
- **Malfunctioning**
- **Sense of inadequacy**
- **Malcontent**
- **Irresponsible**
- **Cowardice**
- **Amoral**
- **Insatiable ambition**
- **Arrogance**
- **Deception**
- **Malevolent**
- **Avarice and greed**
- **Selfish values**
- **Malicious**
- **Egotistical**
- **Maladjusted**
- **Malfeasance**
- **Lacks integrity**

Source: *Toxic Leadership in the U.S. Army* by Col. Denise F. Williams, March 2005

"There must be a balance," Lindsay wrote. "The company leadership must not come across as micromanaging its subordinates, but should be interested in the daily operations of the company, the morale of the unit and the training of its Soldiers."

Combating Toxic Leadership

Lindsay identifies three approaches to assist junior Soldiers and NCOs in combating toxic leadership. "I believe through general education, professional development programs and mentorship programs, we can significantly reduce the number of leaders who are toxic to the unit," Lindsay said.

The pre-emptive approach includes general education of Soldiers, such as how to identify traits and characteristics of a toxic leader. The professional development approach includes using the existing NCO Professional Development programs to delve into how to properly mentor, counsel, develop and assess the unit's Soldiers. This can be done in conjunction with sergeant's time or through on-the-spot training.

The last approach involves directly mentoring and counseling a toxic leader.

The senior leader should mentor toxic leaders on a plan of action and how to change their leadership style. Lindsay said he found that when he corrected NCOs and counseled them on what attitudes or behaviors were enabling toxic leadership, they were able to become more positive leaders. ■

NCOs: Training Lieutenants One at a Time

By Retired 1st Sgt. Cameron M. Wesson

November 2013

In 1988, I was serving as a fire team leader when our platoon received another new lieutenant to serve as our platoon leader. He would be the platoon's second new lieutenant in less than a year. I knew what would transpire after his arrival — inventories, inspections, training, training and more training to prepare him for the coming company and battalion field exercises. I didn't like the seemingly constant rotation of new lieutenants; however, I didn't have to. All I had to do was execute the orders that were given to the best of my ability.

What astonished me was that it never seemed to bother our platoon sergeants. They would take possession of the new lieutenants and start the process of training them without a word, or, at least, not one that I heard. They would train them in the job that they would have to perform when the platoon went to war.

One day, I asked our platoon sergeant how he could train lieutenant after lieutenant without so much as a grumble. He looked at me and then his eyes hardened. When he replied his voice carried a tone of dead seriousness, "It's my job. It's my job to get him ready when we have to go to a two-way shooting range. If I don't do that and don't do it right, he ends up dead and we all end up dead."

He let that implication sink into my thick head for another minute and then finished, "And when you become a platoon sergeant, you'll do the same. If you don't, you'll let him down, your Soldiers down and probably get your platoon killed."

My platoon sergeant was not simply outlining his responsibility of training and mentoring the new platoon leaders, he was also telling me what would be expected of me when I became a platoon sergeant.

The Role of the NCO as a Subordinate Trainer and Mentor

Field Manual 7-22.7 states, "The platoon sergeant helps the commander to train the lieutenant." Though training and mentoring are not exactly the same, they do have similarities. The various dictionaries define a mentor as an "experienced or trusted adviser" or "an experienced person in an organization or institution who trains and counsels new employees or students." A new lieutenant, in most cases, falls into the category of a "new employee."

Army Regulation (AR) *600-100: Army Leadership*, defines mentorship. It states that, "Mentorship is the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect."

With these explanations, you can make the association that the platoon sergeant is a trainer and mentor to the lieutenant. This conclusion is based on the certainty that the platoon sergeant has more knowledge and experience in an area of expertise and that the lieutenant is searching for that same knowledge and experience in that area of expertise.

Some might argue that the relationship is not truly "voluntary" as unit assignments are directed based on Army and unit needs. The facts point out that military service is chosen and with that service the relationship is voluntary, also. It's voluntary because the platoon sergeant understood that by accepting the position they have implicitly agreed to the task of training the lieutenant and the lieutenant has agreed and understands that the platoon sergeant has more experience than they have… and they need it!

The NCO as a Role Model

AR 600-100 states that, "Leaders are role models for others. They are viewed as the example and must maintain standards and provide examples of effective behaviors." It further emphasizes what trust provides in that, "When leaders' actions occur within a mentorship relationship, their potential impact is greatly magnified, both for the individual and for the Army. This increase is due to the high degree of trust and respect that characterize a mentoring relationship."

The ranges of behaviors displayed by trainers and mentors are vast and varying, and you can think back on your career for examples. What behaviors, attributes, characteristics and values did some role models exhibit that influenced you in your career and made them a mentor to you? Did they lead by example? Did they take the time to show the correct way to accomplish a task? Did you respect them? Was the person someone that you could trust? Were they positive role models?

Foundation of Trust and First Line of Defense

The Army understands that the new lieutenant will need assistance and training in their duties as an officer. They have been educated that they are to trust their NCOs, specifically their platoon sergeant. Remember though, this trust is not blind. It is a trust that has been instilled in them by others in their commissioning process. They have been told to lean on their platoon sergeant, and platoon NCOs, for advice and listen to their counsel. Don't violate or misuse this trust.

A Collective Task

The company commander is ultimately responsible for the training and mentoring of their lieutenants. The commander also has numerous other responsibilities and requirements to manage. They remember that when they were lieutenants, they relied on platoon sergeants and the platoon's other NCOs, for training and mentoring. Now as the commander, they again utilize these resources, specifically the platoon sergeants, to support them in accomplishing the critical, collective task of training their lieutenants.

Why? The Army understands the importance of subordinate mentorship, sometimes referred to as "bottom up" mentorship. It has created a dual-rank structure that supports this relationship and bond. This relationship structure ensures that officers have an NCO working with them at the same organizational level. Lastly, at the platoon level, who knows the most about platoon operations? The platoon sergeant and platoon NCOs do.

The reality is the Army relies on this structure and on the forming of the subordinate-to-senior bond. At the platoon level, this dual structure, and the bond, is critical in shaping the lieutenant. When done correctly, this relationship bond and the trust it generates is carried by lieutenants throughout their careers. This trust further builds the foundation that lieutenants will be expecting and will count on from the other NCOs who support them for the rest of their career.

I conducted a small and informal survey of 20 commissioned officers that I currently work with. They ranked from major to colonel and all of them indicated that NCOs played a significant role in training and mentoring them. The question posed was: As a lieutenant, which unit NCO did you consider your best source of mentorship — platoon sergeant, first sergeant or sergeant major? Sixteen of those officers responded that their platoon sergeant had been their best source, while four answered with first sergeant.

Again, this straw poll was very small; however, the results indicated that 80 percent of these field-grade and senior officers regarded their platoon sergeant as their subordinate mentor. Almost everyone had positive memories of the relationship and relayed a story that provided further proof of a positive relationship and how it shaped them. Not surprisingly, many had stayed in touch with each other through the years and even credit their platoon sergeant for continuing their service.

Mission and Objectives

In all missions, there are objectives that are expected to be accomplished to make the mission successful. These objectives are developed into objective statements. This statement provides for the desired ***effect***, the ***target***, the ***action*** and the ***purpose***, or ETAP.

The desired effect in this case is to train and mentor. The target is the lieutenant. The action the Army desires is a junior leader capable of leading his or her platoon. The purpose is accomplishing the mission and caring for Soldiers.

The objective statement for this is — train and mentor lieutenants to lead and care for their platoon to accomplish their assigned mission. Sounds simple, right? With the right resources it can be. The largest resource is the NCO Corps and those NCOs willing to accept the challenge.

Challenge

Who will be regarded as the greatest mentor to your lieutenant? To say that it depends may be correct; however, the variables to the challenge are constant. The variables are the situation, the mentee and the mentor. The situation is success or failure, or life and death. The lieutenant, or mentee, is there to learn, gain experience and be successful. That leaves the platoon sergeant and the platoon NCOs, the trainers and mentors.

NCOs should ask themselves these questions: Will you serve as that role model? Will you provide that foundation of trust, support, encouragement and personal guidance? Will you be that benchmark NCO for that lieutenant to use for the rest of their career?

An NCO's commitment to the task can have a huge impact on the Army. That impact is not only shaping those lieutenants and the officer corps, but also for those young Soldiers watching you execute the task, because those Soldiers are the NCO Corps and platoon sergeants of tomorrow. ■

Cameron Wesson is a retired first sergeant with more than 21 years of active duty experience with extensive leadership assignments in the infantry and logistics career fields. He has had numerous overseas deployments that include Central America, Korea, Europe, the Balkans and Southwest Asia. He is currently a Department of the Army civilian and serves as the deputy director for the U.S. Army Information Operations Proponent, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

The Importance of a Leader FTX

By Master Sgt. Roger Matthews

U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (Class 64)

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The job of new commanders and new first sergeants is to develop a cohesive, mission-ready team capable of accomplishing missions across the full spectrum of operations. These challenges are compounded by the various cultures, values and norms of unit organizations. However, there are tools available to make this transition into command easier and to help move the organization in the right direction.

I found that one of the most effective tools is to conduct a leader field training exercise (FTX). This type of exercise can set the stage in presenting your command philosophy, training objectives and the way ahead for the company. Furthermore, a leader's FTX can synchronize the leaders' objectives and common operating picture with that of their subordinates. The FTX builds confidence, teamwork and cohesion while providing a unique opportunity for a company to transition into a well-rounded, knowledgeable and trained unit.

On June 1, 2009, I became a first sergeant. I worked diligently for 16 years to earn this rank and had reached a goal I set when I joined the Army in 1993. After my change of responsibility ceremony, I walked into the 172nd Chemical Company headquarters prepared to execute the duties entrusted to me. As I sat in my leather chair and looked around my office, I reflected on the great leaders I've encountered in my past. I wanted to be the best first sergeant for each Soldier within my company.

I conducted my first "close of business" formation on the Friday after I assumed the first sergeant duties. As part of the formation, I brought a .50-caliber machine gun from the arms room. I put the weapon in front of the formation and asked for volunteers. I wanted them to clear the weapon, break the weapon down and put it back together. But the platoon sergeants came forward and informed me that our machine guns had remained in the arms room without use since before any of them could remember.

For the next 90 days, I handled situations of all kinds and constantly found myself bogged down by the rigors of paperwork and Soldier concerns. However, I never forgot about that Friday. I soon learned that my objectives for this job were not going to come to fruition unless I personally made the time to accomplish them.

Therefore, I watched how the company operated. I took notes on command climate concerns, lack of discipline, leader technical and tactical competence, and a multitude of other unit situations. Then the platoon sergeants and I started to develop a plan to fix my concerns. We wanted to take every NCO to the field for three days to set the stage for success for our company. I discussed the plan with the commander. He was so in tune with our plan that he wanted to include our platoon leaders. The commander and I developed a three-day leader FTX that revolved around our command philosophy, our training objectives and the way ahead for the company.

Philosophy

Our first goal when conducting the FTX was to frame and implement a common command philosophy. First, the commander and I sat down and reflected on exactly what our expectations and goals were for the unit. We framed these expectations and goals in accordance with the "Be, Know, Do" principles. Slowly, a command philosophy started to form that captured our thoughts. We reviewed our higher headquarters' command philosophy to ensure that it met their intent as well.

Lineage and Honors

Second, I wanted our Soldiers to take pride in our unit. I noticed in my initial observations that many Soldiers thought of our unit as a place they had to come to pass the day, and many did not take any pride in their unit.

To counter this thought process, I researched the unit's lineage and honors. Our unit had a rich and wonderful history, but that history was unknown to our Soldiers. I captured this history on a nice plaque that the commander and I unveiled during the FTX. We ensured that being aware of this history was part of the command philosophy.

Unit Motto and Logo

Finally, the commander and I realized that our unit did not have a motto or logo. So we asked for volunteers in the company to think of potential new mottos and logos. Through a combined effort, led by the commander, our unit came up with a new motto and logo that would be the sounding board for our Soldiers in the future. During the FTX, the commander and I dedicated the evenings as a time for our leaders to come together and discuss our developed philosophy, our unit lineage and honors, and our motto. Together, these products provided an opportunity to instill pride and purpose into our unit.

Training Objectives

Another goal when conducting the FTX was to train our leaders in the unit's Mission Essential Task List. This included individual and collective training tasks that many of our leaders overlooked when developing training. Specifically, I wanted a place away from Soldiers where I could help our leaders learn the tasks that they may have not been confident in. I kept thinking back to that Friday where our company did not have the technical knowledge of our primary weapon system. We used Day 1 and Day 2 to teach these tasks. The commander and I broke these tasks down into "shoot, move, communicate, adapt and survive."

Shoot

For our shooting tasks, I brought out every weapon system that the unit worked with and ensured every leader could work them proficiently. In the low-stress environment during the FTX, the leaders responded well to the training and were able to admit their weaknesses to their peers. In return, those who understood the weapon systems conducted one-on-one training with those who did not.

It was amazing to see the progress our leaders made during these two days. This training was the first time I felt our leaders were developing confidence in their craft. For each training event, I personally certified every leader, including the commander. He wanted to show the other leaders that he was not above the training.

U.S. Army Pfc. Anna Jordan, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), plots points on a map during a Field Training Exercise at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, March 24, 2014. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. William Marlow)

Move

For our moving tasks, I informed our leaders to leave their personal GPS at home. I taught our leaders how to use the military's GPS along with the Blue Force Tracker system and a map. We required each leader to maneuver in their vehicles more than 50 kilometers of terrain in their vehicles and reached several checkpoints along the way. Many became lost, but we took the time to address their mistakes. Prior to the FTX, many NCOs and officers relied on their Soldiers to get them to the objective and never concerned themselves with land navigation. But after the FTX, their confidence soared once they learned how to use the systems available to them.

Communicate

Our next task was communication. We needed to ensure our company leaders could operate their radio systems. However, their initial knowledge of the radio systems was as limited as that of our shooting and moving systems. Many leaders could only operate our radios on the most basic of settings. In fact, some of our leaders did not know how to turn the radio systems on. We taught them how to build man packs, troubleshoot vehicle systems, load frequency hop and secure data, and raise antenna systems. As in the shooting and moving tasks, we certified each leader in operating this equipment, but in a low-stress environment away from their Soldiers.

Adapt and Survive

Adapting and surviving were taught as one task. During this training, I reiterated to our NCOs and officers that many of these skills are perishable. For example, I taught them how to use hand grenade simulators, pyrotechnics, flares and smoke grenades. Many had never seen or used trip wires. I taught them how to set up triple-strand concertina wire. Finally, on the last day of the FTX, the commander and I set up a stress-fire and reflexive-fire range. Few leaders had ever participated in these types of advanced ranges. We instructed each leader how to plan, prepare and execute both ranges. In addition, we showed our leaders exactly how to train by example. Many left the ranges and the FTX feeling more confident in their craft.

The Way Ahead

Our final FTX goal was to set the stage for how our unit would function in the future. We dedicated our early mornings to discussions on this topic. This time provided the commander with a chance to focus our leaders on how to plan training. He worked with each leader, showing them how to use installation resources. In addition, he provided standards for his weekly training meetings. He showed the flaws in the current training outlines and provided a basis for future planning. I took this time to provide the framework for our daily, weekly and monthly battle rhythms. I re-introduced a monthly professional development program requirement for every leader. In addition, I discussed how our unit would conduct promotions, Soldier and NCO of the Month boards, monthly counseling requirements, counseling packets, evaluation reports, physical fitness training, the weight control program, charge of quarters duties and a multitude of other requirements the commander and I found to be substandard.

Finally, I talked about the concerns I found during my initial 90-day observation assessment. These issues included examples of bad leadership at all levels. It also included disciplinary concerns with our Soldiers. I noticed a genuine lack of discipline within the ranks, from not saluting officers

or not standing at parade rest when talking to NCOs. There were uniform concerns, haircuts out of tolerance and a failure to maintain equipment. This time provided me with the opportunity to discuss how I would operate as a first sergeant. Although not all leaders agreed with some of the foundations we laid, they did understand the way ahead for the unit.

The FTX set the stage and focused our leaders on the way ahead for the unit. It was crucial in building confidence, teamwork, cohesion and a common operating picture for our leaders. The FTX set the stage for a unique transition of our company into a well-rounded, knowledgeable and trained unit. ■

This Month in NCO History

Sept. 20, 1863 – The Youngest NCO Earns His Stripes

By Pablo Villa, NCO Journal

September 2015

In the waning hours of the Battle of Chickamauga, a Confederate colonel on horseback happened upon a 12-year-old boy in a Union uniform lugging a sawed-off rifle.

It was a muggy afternoon Sept. 20, 1863. Union forces were hastily retreating after their failed campaign to force the Confederates out of Chattanooga in the region along the Chickamauga River in northwest Georgia and southeastern Tennessee. With the Confederates in hot pursuit, young John Clem — one of 10,000 Soldiers younger than 18 who served in the Union Army — was separated from a fleeing group and could hear a horse approaching from behind.

"Drop that gun," barked the Confederate officer atop the horse before demanding Clem's surrender.

Clem calmly turned around and raised his rifle. He quickly shot the colonel off his horse before sprinting back to the safety of Union lines. The act was the culmination of a series of impressive feats showcased by the drummer boy of the 22nd Michigan Infantry. During the two-day Battle of Chickamauga, Clem was said to have ridden an artillery caisson to the front and wielded a musket trimmed to his size to fight Confederate troops in hand-to-hand combat. Despite losing the battle, Union officers promoted Clem to the rank of sergeant, making him the youngest Soldier to be a noncommissioned officer in the U.S. Army.

Though newspaper articles of the time reported Clem's actions during the battle, there are no Confederate records of a colonel being wounded. Nonetheless, Clem was later decorated for his actions by then-Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, who would go on to become chief justice of the United States.

A month after the Battle of Chickamauga, Clem was captured by Confederate cavalrymen in Georgia. Confederate newspapers used his age for propaganda purposes, illustrating how desperate the Yankee cause was "when they have to send their babies out to fight us." Clem returned to the Union Army through a prisoner exchange and fought with the Army of the Cumberland until he was discharged in September 1864.

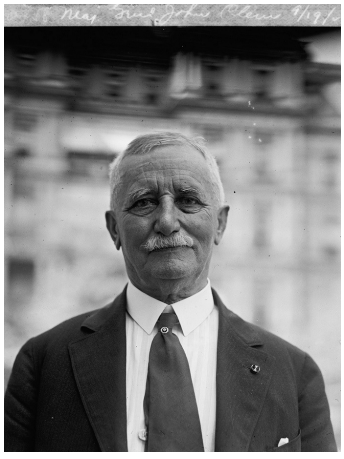
Clem was born Aug. 13, 1851, with the surname Klem in Newark, Ohio. He ran away from home at age 9 after the death of his mother. Not much is known about Clem's actions between then and the time he was allowed to enlist in the 22nd Michigan in 1863, though he was reportedly

allowed to tag along with the unit when it was mustered into service in August 1862. A popular Civil War song, "The Drummer Boy of Shiloh" by William S. Hays, was written for *Harpers Weekly* after the Battle of Chickamauga. It was reportedly inspired by Clem.

After the Civil War, Clem graduated high school in 1870 in Ohio. A year later, after failing the entrance exam to the United States Military Academy, he was appointed second lieutenant in the 24th Infantry Regiment by President Ulysses S. Grant. Clem was promoted to first lieutenant in 1874.

In 1875, Clem successfully completed artillery school at Fort Monroe, Virginia, and was sent to the Quartermaster Department, where he was promoted to captain in 1882. He spent five years as chief quartermaster at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, before retiring in August 1915 at age 64 and after 45 years of service. As was customary for American Civil War veterans who retired at the rank of colonel, Clem was promoted to brigadier general. Clem was the last Civil War veteran to serve in the U.S. Army. On Aug. 29, 1916, he was promoted to the rank of major general while on the retired list.

Clem married twice. His first marriage, with Anita Rosetta French, came in 1875. After her death in 1899, Clem married Bessie Sullivan in 1903. The couple had three children. Clem died in San Antonio on May 13, 1937. He was 85. The youngest NCO in the history of the Army is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. ■



**Photos courtesy of the U.S. Army Military Institute.*

NCOs Challenged, Rewarded by Training in Multinational Environments

By 1st Sgt. Tyler Bell

2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division

June 2016

A multinational environment provides a noncommissioned officer (NCO) in the U.S. Army with a fulfilling yet challenging mission at home station, overseas or on the modern battlefield. To be successful, one must be doctrinally sound, flexible, adaptable and professional.

A recent call-for-fire class with a partner nation at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) provided an example of how all of these tie into one training event. The class was scheduled for 90 minutes. However, about 15 minutes into the class, it became evident that it was going to become a map-reading session. To use the time efficiently with the limited number of English speakers, the class broke into two groups. One group focused on the basics of map reading while the other continued to follow the established lesson plan. This is one of the unique abilities of the Army's NCO Corps. Our core competency training allowed the instructor to teach the lesson plan as well as conduct other training to a high standard without hesitation.

Although the original lesson was altered, new training was conducted on demand to meet the needs of the Soldiers, in addition to the call-for-fire class initially started. As a result, the trained unit came out of that class with two distinct groups of certified trainers who were able to go back to their units and train on map reading as well as calling for fire.

To make Soldiers effective in combat, the crawl-walk-run method is essential to training. The trainer must understand the unit's tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Obtaining copies of the partner nation's doctrine, translating it, and understanding it thoroughly beforehand is crucial. Unlike most U.S. military units that go through a large-scale training

exercise, the majority of multinational units are not working toward the validation of their TTPs or tactical standard operating procedures (TACSOP). They may not even have a strong grasp of their training objectives. If they do, you must strive to learn them before you put together your training plan, along with any training objectives identified by the command team in advance, if applicable.

By pre-planning the intended training, as well as remaining flexible throughout the unit's progress, the instructor will enable the unit to get the most from the training. Again, try to base the training or classroom instruction off the partner nation's doctrine, if available.

Understanding partners' leadership is critical to understanding the nature of the decisions being made during the training. Are the junior leaders allowed to make decisions or is it all top-driven from the commanders? This can often turn into a friction point for a trainer. A lack of understanding of units' command structure and order flow can discourage and confuse both the unit and the trainer.

During a mounted react-to-contact lane, this lack of understanding was demonstrated quite painfully. A platoon-sized element was on patrol with the platoon leader in the mounted element, and the company commander was at the headquarters. When the platoon became engaged in an unblocked ambush from small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire, the platoon leader sent up reports to the commander and waited to receive the next order. However, the commander wanted more information than was necessary to tell that unit to move out of the kill zone. Because of the lack of decision-making authority, the platoon sat in the kill zone for more than 10 minutes and continued to receive the barrage of fire. During the after-action review, the platoon leader was questioned about his decision to stay in the kill zone, to which he responded that he was neither given the order to break contact nor was he given a new position to occupy. The U.S. military is structured in such a manner that this scenario should never occur because leaders are empowered to assume command and control when necessary. An in-depth understanding of the mission attained through briefs and rehearsals ensures that the transition occurs seamlessly.

When employing unit elements from different nations, conducting mission analysis and proper planning are crucial, especially in a multinational training environment. When a Czech Republic artillery battery falls under a hybrid Bulgarian-American mixed battalion, under an American brigade, the command and control relationship becomes difficult to manage. The key to success is understanding how different units operate.

Again, this goes back to learning their doctrine before execution. Given the command structure stated above, one may already know that it takes the Czech artillery battery about 10 minutes from the receipt of a fire mission to rounds-on-target. Would that be a good option for targets of opportunity? Most likely not, when you have the American battery that can provide fire support much faster. Knowing this, the trainer may be able to recommend a superior course of action for each element. Maybe the Czech battery can cover time-on-target and pre-planned missions for different phases of the operation, while the American batteries can focus on counterfire and targets of opportunity. It is unreasonable to expect units from different backgrounds and capabilities to be able to accomplish the same mission. However, knowledge of units' operations can help everyone find their place.

Try to pinpoint friction points that may arise because of cultural differences. Look for things a U.S. unit may overlook. A multinational unit may stop training and become engaged in 20 questions, all of which can be attributed to training scenario limitations. Cultural differences play a significant role when working with multinational partners. Time permitted, it is best to have training resources lined up well in advance. The Training Support Center (TSC), Class IV yard, and Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) will become a best friend. An example of a "show-stopper" would be ensuring dummy weapons are available for a simulated cache, rather than the unit's Soldiers' or the opposition force's weapons. One may run into the issue of a partner nation unit asking, "Why do we have to give the weapons back to them? We have found them. If they are given back they will be able to use those against us later." There is sometimes no clear translation for "training purpose and training purposes only," which is why there is the TSC.

Then-Sgt. 1st Class Tyler Bell facilitates a hot wash with a Czech Republic artillery battery after conducting a Situational Training Exercise lane at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center. (Photo courtesy of 1st Sgt. Tyler Bell)

Plan as much specialty training as possible into the schedule — for example, Call For Fire Trainer (CFFT), High Mobility-Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) Assistance Trainer (HEAT), Engagement Skills Trainer 2000 (EST 2000) and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) awareness training. Finally, check with the home station/training area for a list of available training enhancers. If video assets are available and one can plan a script from a partner nation's doctrine, consider making a training video to send to the units. Never miss an opportunity to take pictures of the group and the training taking place. The assets the U.S. military has at its fingertips for training are cutting edge, and most of it is mandatory training for Soldiers. These training events are held in high regard by many of the Army's partners and going through it together can strengthen the bond among units.

Ensure that during the planning process the unit understands the right questions to ask when working in a multinational environment. What assets are available to help accomplish the mission? Indirect Fires, Close Air Support (CAS), military working dogs, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)/ Information Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) are all examples of assets that can be brought to the fight. Some units may only plan for what they have and not inquire as to what is available.

It's important to help multinational units develop their NCO corps. Suggest the idea of empowering their NCOs as the U.S. military does. Teach them how to certify the intermediate leaders as trainers. That way they will be able to teach the junior enlisted and subsequently build trust in their NCOs. In turn, this will instill trust in their leaders such that they no longer need to actively manage the training at that level.

Introduce them to the 8-Step Training Model and teach them how to properly use it. Work on the concept of rehearsals all the way down to the team level. Rehearsals are a powerful tool, not only for war gaming, but also for leaders to ensure everyone is on the same page. A good tactic to use during rehearsals is to call on members of the team and ask them to go over a battle drill, or ask them the communication PACE (Primary, Alternate, Contingency and Emergency) plan. This does several very important things. First, it disseminates the information to the rest of the group so they are aware of the plan or drill. Second, it reassures you that this soldier has paid attention and is ready to execute to mission. Finally, it allows lower enlisted Soldiers to be a part of the rehearsal by having an active role in briefing their leaders, peers and subordinates.

Placing an emphasis on safety throughout training is one of the most important leadership responsibilities at all levels. When working with our partner nations, one will often find that some of the safety measures the U.S. Army has in place are not observed. It can be difficult to impress upon our partners the importance of high standards for safety. Some of this is because of lower standards, but most of it is directly related to a lack of equipment and the knowledge that such measures can be put in place to reduce often fatal accidents. Enforcing that all personal protective equipment (PPE) is not only worn, but worn properly is paramount in ensuring safe operations. Introduce equipment and ideas that may be new to these units, such as the Gunners Restraint System. Pre-combat checks and pre-combat inspections (PCC/PCI) are a great way to empower the lower ranks in the preparation process.

Expectation management is critical when working in an ever-changing multinational environment. A unit or trainer must ask, "How much of a lesson or training exercise do you think you will accomplish?" and, "What are the significant takeaways you want to come of the lesson/training if you get derailed for one reason or another?" The practice of educating, coaching and observing will allow the trainer to draw conclusions and create expectations for the partner nation. One way to manage expectations for training is to give the unit a mission and sit through its planning process. After the mission is planned, rewind and walk through it. Ask leading questions and tweak the plan slightly by suggesting doctrinally sound guidance. It may be surprising how many units take the plan and develop it. Then help with preparation and be engaged during rehearsals. Take a step back, observe the mission and oversee an AAR afterward. You will find a lot of the U.S. military doctrine does not mesh with these units' command structure or culture. Keep in mind how a unit uses our TTPs and starts to blend them with its leadership style. This is a great way to see if a unit is learning and adapting to the threat environment. Always force units to create a standard for their battle drills. They will probably become a hybrid version of our battle drills.

The end state of all the lessons and training is to update or create a TACSOP for the unit to use and add to. Most of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Doctrine does not cover actions below the company level. It's the trainers' responsibility to force the action of implementing these guidelines to partner nations, along with providing as many resources as possible to aid the unit in building its TACSOPs. Before disseminating any information, consult the foreign disclosure regulations (what can and cannot be released and to whom) for any products, TTPs or doctrine. There are a few options to ensure the right information is released. The trainer should contact a Foreign Discloser Representative (FDR) at battalion or a Foreign Discloser Officer (FDO) at brigade or division.

Some kind of a gift exchange after the training is complete is commonplace. Many U.S. units rely on the Certificate of Achievement (CoA) as the standard. A multinational counterpart will more than likely have something that is representative of its country or unit. If it can be arranged to present them with something that represents one's state along with a CoA, it will be received with great respect. In turn, unit patches are always acceptable and are looked upon the same as a military coin.

Embrace the willingness to learn, the thirst for knowledge and the challenges presented in the multinational communi-

ty. It is an ever-changing environment, the partnerships and bonds made with these brothers-in-arms is a rewarding experience that will endure. If you challenge yourself and your team to take on the responsibility of preparing and shaping the future of combat operations, one will find that members of both parties emerge as stronger leaders. ■

First Sgt. Tyler Bell is the battery first sergeant of A Battery, 1-7 Field Artillery, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. Bell has served in the artillery for 14 years, 10 of them in the 82nd Airborne and two and a half as an observer/coach/trainer at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center. Bell was recently selected as a Dagger Brigade Distinguished Leader.

Hard Lessons for New Sergeants

By Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Hendrex, Special to the NCO Journal

February 2017

When given the opportunity, how do you relay a lifetime of experiences to young NCOs? What would be important for them to know today? What would be important to know at the end of their careers?

I recently had the opportunity to discuss those experiences with the 10th Mountain Division, NCO Academy Basic Leader Course graduating Class 04-16 at Fort Drum, New York. Whether it's a BLC Graduation, an NCO induction ceremony or opening a Leadership Professional Development session, how do you convey these lessons in such a condensed time period?

The events these senior NCOs have been through cover a vast and impressive period. Those experiences include Special Operations, inspiring a history of family service, deployments in the desert and covert missions closer to home. Whether earning awards through their solitary actions or leading a team under arduous conditions, these Soldiers all became senior noncommissioned officers and achieved an almost unprecedented level of success during their careers in the U.S. Army. Before I share their words with you, context is extremely important. I would like to tell you briefly about these five Soldiers and why I think they are worth listening to.

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class William Tomlin, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, is awarded the Silver Star by President George W. Bush at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 22, 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Timothy Dinneen)

Sergeant Maj. William Tomlin III grew up in a suburban Connecticut neighborhood. The infantry called to him, and he never looked back. While in Helmand Province in Afghanistan in early April 2007, then-Sgt. 1st Class Tomlin was the acting platoon leader for his scout platoon. After three straight days of fighting, 300 Taliban attacked his 45-man element. The six-hour enemy attack reached within 15 meters of their location and continued to press forward. Tomlin consolidated their remaining ammunition, and his persistence and leadership during their counterattack turned the tide of the battle. He was awarded the Silver Star.

Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Cortes, known as "Pup," was a member of a Special Operations unit. He became part of history as a member of the first High Altitude Low Opening team to jump into Afghanistan to support the Northern Alliance. In June 2003, he was sent on a mission to find two missing Soldiers in Iraq. Then-Sgt. 1st Class Cortes drove upon an enemy force preparing an ambush site. His two-man team, heavily outnumbered, engaged the enemy element at close range, their nontactical vehicle being disabled by enemy fire. Ignoring his wounds, Cortes continued to engage, killing several enemy fighters and forcing the remainder to retreat. His efforts not only prevented the enemy fighters from killing his element, but also reduced their ability to conduct future ambushes. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions.

Sergeant Maj. Brendan O'Conner was 7 years old when his father was killed in the Vietnam War. Raised in a family with a deep history of military service and surrounded by the valorous actions of his forefathers, he chose to follow in their footsteps and earned an officer's commission from the Valley Forge Military Academy. In 1994, he resigned his commission and

enlisted as a Special Forces medical sergeant. In June 2006, O'Conner's team was in southern Afghanistan, where it was ambushed by 250 Taliban fighters. During 17.5 hours of intense battle, two of his team members were severely injured and his team leader was killed. He took command of the team. Eventually, he and his Soldiers killed 120 Taliban fighters before withdrawing under the protection of air support. O'Conner was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Sergeant Maj. Tony Pryor, a Special Forces team sergeant, was a good-old boy from rural Oregon. Thick-necked, with ham hocks for hands and the strength of a silverback gorilla, he was often referred to as "Bucket." While in Afghanistan on a late evening in January 2002, he and his team were clearing al-Qaida and Taliban forces from a compound and conducting site exploitation. In the darkness and the heat of the battle, Pryor was separated from his team and found himself clearing rooms alone. Soon after getting separated, he encountered a charging enemy and eliminated the threat. In the next room, he came upon an additional three fighters. In the melee, a fourth struck him from behind with a board, breaking his clavicle. The enemy then jumped on his back, dislocating his shoulder and knocking off his night-vision goggles. Pryor continued to fight, eventually killing all four. For his pure Soldier instinct, for engaging the enemy and continuing to lead, he was awarded the Silver Star.

Sergeant Maj. Joe Vega is the Hollywood-version of an operator: chiseled physique, a master breacher and a demolition expert. He played key roles in the capture of a South American dictator and the death of a Colombian drug lord, and he conducted operations against a Somali political leader who hindered international relief efforts. The last operation was made famous by the movie *Black Hawk Down* depicting the 1993 operation called "Restore Hope." He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions. Later in Iraq in 2003, he was awarded a second Silver Star. Vega's missions during his time in a Special Mission Unit are not releasable. The award simply states, "For his ability to consolidate and reorganize under extreme duress." I am grateful for his guidance and friendship.

It was a true honor to serve with them all. The advice below is a combination of the five senior NCOs' own words of what they think is important for Soldiers today and throughout their military careers:

- Stay motivated.
- Volunteer for assignments; don't ever quit. You will fail — get up and try again.
- Your reputation, the examples you set, will cast a long shadow. You will either inspire others or de-motivate them by your actions.
- Be the guy with real experience, not just the theoretical or book knowledge.
- Don't go after the wounded, have them push themselves to you.
- You learn more from your mistakes and misses than you ever will from your successes.
- Maintain a warrior's mindset in everything you do.
- I cannot define what an act of valor is, but I do know what cowardice looks like.
- Yelling is not an effective training tool; your training should develop solid basics and initiative.
- Soldiers will do great things if there is trust.
- Every experience is important to an NCO's development, and every event is an opportunity to counsel.
- Good leaders are valued over time.
- As a leader you must constantly give hard problems to solve — this develops Soldiers.
- Lead from the front. It's everything.
- Focus on the things that matter: fitness, values and training.
- Humility: Don't just be the loud guy; it almost always identifies false bravado. Don't be afraid to bring up your own faults.
- Remember — it is never about you; it is always about the Soldiers.
- Never ever be the crab. Don't go sideways or backward, only move forward.
- Be honest in everything you do. Grow to hate liars.
- If more Soldiers did their jobs and demanded a higher level of execution, there would be significantly less need for valorous acts.
- Take responsibility, take charge and take the initiative. You must make it happen.
- Wear your body armor!

Soldiers may never experience the extreme living conditions or firefights the aforementioned Soldiers were engaged in. That fact does not decrease the importance of embodying the Army Values on a daily basis. As described above, use every opportunity to build trust with your Soldiers, peers and superiors alike. Nurturing that trust will serve Soldiers well today and throughout their time in the Army. This is especially true in a world of uncertainty that is more chaotic now than at any time in my military career. You will be called upon and, usually, at the most inopportune time. Ensure you and your Soldiers are ready. ■

Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Hendrex has been selected to serve as the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) command sergeant major. He recently completed his tour as 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division. He served as a fellow at the CSA Strategic Studies Group and is the director of NCO Academy Mission Command recently formed under the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy. He served with the five NCOs mentioned in the article in the Asymmetric Warfare Group and interviewed them in the summer of 2014.

**Sgt. Aura Sklenicka, a public affairs officer NCO at Fort Bliss, Texas, contributed to this article.*

Leadership in the Social Media Age

By NCO Journal Staff

January 2018

Many people rely on the internet to obtain information, receive news, shop, conduct business, play games, watch films and television, and communicate. Within this realm, social media has served to personalize experiences and afford individuals the opportunity to share them with others. The ability to instantly connect with a network of loved ones and friends, as well as engage with total strangers about similar interests, is perhaps the platforms' greatest strength.

For military members stationed overseas, deployed to forward areas, or aboard ships, social media is an invaluable morale tool that provides a welcome connection to families back home. From an organizational standpoint, employing social media offers ways to share information with other units as well as interact with neighboring civilian communities.

Is social media prone to misuse or abuse? The unfortunate answer to this question is, "Yes." Using the internet and social media brings risk to individuals, businesses, and other public organizations. It can be a conduit for unwanted access to private, personal, and corporate information, and this of course presents even greater security concerns for government and military entities. Nevertheless, social media is an integral part of everyday life, and its benefits can be appreciated even as we work to offset potential risks. For the Army, these are ongoing challenges that noncommissioned officers regularly confront.

Getting In Step with Social Media

In 2007, the Department of Defense blocked social networking sites, such as MySpace and YouTube, on military computers.[1] After revisiting the prohibition in 2010, the DoD rescinded the directive, having determined the benefits of this ever-growing method of communication and information exchange could be embraced while taking proper steps to mitigate risk.[2]

This cleared the way for military personnel to access emerging social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter from DoD computers, and encouraged units and organizations to explore means of leveraging the power of these venues for important activities such as unit communication, training, family support, and community outreach.[3]

Today, the government and military's presence on social media is entrenched. For the Army, this effort is spearheaded by the official U.S. Army Social Media website. Designed as an information portal, it is the primary aid for all Army personnel to better understand their "role in Army social media" and provides easy access to policies, guidance, education, and training in order to "create an environment where trusted information is disseminated to the Army family and the public."[4]

Social Media as a Leadership Tool

The newest generation of Soldiers have no memory of life without the internet or social media. Communicating with friends in private or public online spaces is second nature to them, but by no means are they alone. Statistics and comparison of demographics between the military and the total U.S. population suggests more than 90 percent of the active duty force across all service branches makes regular use of social networking sites.[5]

For Army leaders, social media represents a unique means of extending their influence. It allows for the rapid, concise exchange of information and ideas with Soldiers and their families, as well as the press and the general public.[6] Unit commanders and senior NCOs use resources such as Facebook to hold "virtual town halls" online. Such platforms offer an effective means of communication with Soldiers and families who may be geographically dispersed.[7] They can also be employed to conduct training, conferences, or other professional gatherings when assembling the intended audience at a physical location is less desirable or unfeasible from a time or cost perspective.

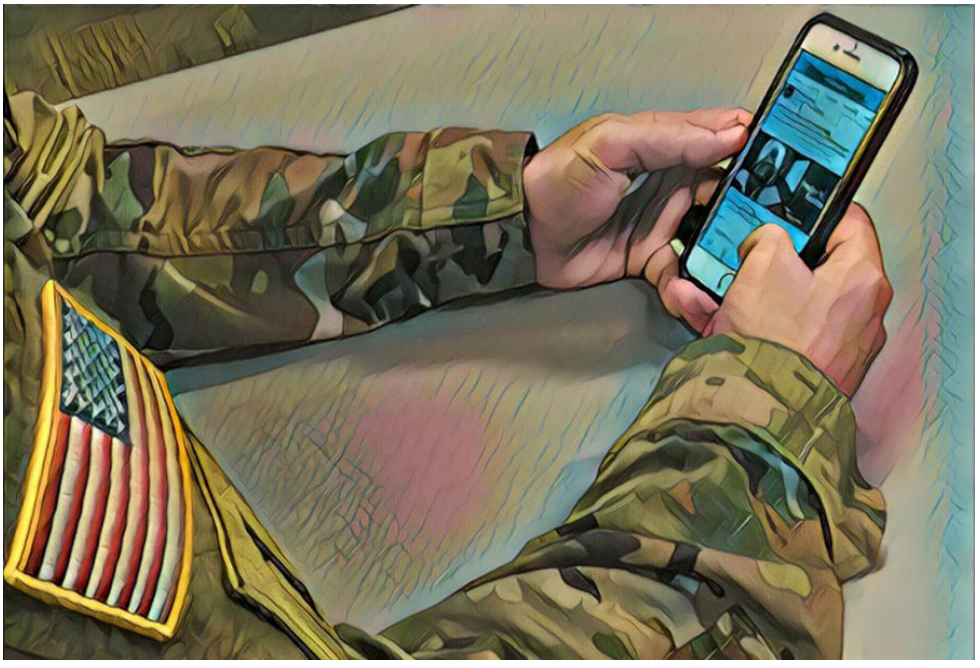
At the local/tactical level, NCOs have at their disposal an easy means of staying in direct contact with their Soldiers. For those still learning to embrace social media, this can pose a challenge when exploring it as a communications option with subordinates. Even if one does not actively participate in social media forums and other activities, it is still important to understand how younger Soldiers in particular view these platforms.

"Facebook is an extension of the barracks," said 1st Sgt. Aaron R. Leisenring, 1st Battalion, 111th Infantry Regiment, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, during the NCO Solarium II event at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Many of the event's participants, including Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey, made similar observations.[8]

"We used to go to the barracks and check on the Soldiers," said Dailey. "Of course, that's still true, but there's also Facebook now. You have to be in there."[9]

Social Media as a Leadership Challenge

While social media makes it much easier to interact with their Soldiers, NCOs must bear in mind even this form of constant connectivity is not a substitute for true leadership.



Social media is a powerful tool that allows noncommissioned officers to extend their leadership influence. This includes teaching Soldiers how to exploit its advantages while upholding Army values. (Graphic by *NCO Journal* Staff)

"[Social media] is not how we lead Soldiers," said Sgt. Maj. Boris Bolaños, senior enlisted advisor for the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, during the "State of NCO Development Town Hall 4" presented by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command in March 2017. "It is a way to facilitate communication, but the most effective way to communicate with Soldiers is face to face."[10]

Bolaños' comments were made in response to questions regarding online activity and conduct. NCOs carry the responsibility of ensuring their Soldiers acquit themselves at all times as professional representatives of the Army. This obligation includes online activities, where the proliferation of smartphones and other mobile devices within the ranks has made it easy to share inappropriate comments or post information that violates operations security.

Posters may not even realize they made an error. On occasion, mistakes might not be so innocuous. Such missteps can range from sharing photographs of individual Soldiers or unit activities which may violate OPSEC, to engaging in derogatory, inflammatory, or harassing and bullying behavior.

"At the end of the day, it's about those decisions and actions that our Soldiers make on and off duty when no one is watching," said Bolaños. "How well do we know our Soldiers? How well do we know what they're doing? It goes back to the aspect of leadership, which sets the credibility and foundation for trust."[11]

With such concerns in mind, the Army has issued clear policies defining expectations for online behavior. The most recent reiteration of these policies is an All Army Activities message, ALARACT 075/2017, Professionalism of Online Conduct, which charges commanders and leaders to "reinforce a climate where current and future members of the Army team... that online misconduct is inconsistent with Army values and where online-related incidents are prevented, reported, and where necessary addressed at the lowest possible level."[12]

While there is a desire to strike a balance between Soldier's private lives and professional responsibilities, it is important to remember that upholding the Army ethic is not a part-time or situational undertaking.

"I don't think we're saying not to go to [certain websites], but we're asking people to remember that they're professional Soldiers, 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said TRADOC Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport while speaking at the NCO Solarium II. "You can't just turn your values on and off just because you're on one of these social media sites."[13]

Risk to operations security is another obvious concern social media presents. Addressing this ongoing threat requires planning and training not just for Soldiers but also their families and friends. Everything from a spouse or parent's post announcing their loved one's pending deployment, to photos of a Soldier or a unit's location with attached geographical location data, are examples of disclosing sensitive information.[14]

"Geotagging" is often an automatic feature available on smartphones and digital cameras. Once uploaded to a publicly viewable social media site, photos that include this data are no different from supplying a ten-digit grid coordinate to indicate where it was taken. The potential to unintentionally disclose sensitive information is a very real danger.[15]

NCOs, as the first line of Army leadership, must recognize issues like these as ongoing concerns, and develop planning and training in order to teach their Soldiers how to better extend their situational awareness into the online space.

Conclusion

Properly utilized, social media is a formidable tool which allows the Army to connect with a global audience. NCOs must recognize that it is also an important part of their Soldiers' lives as well as those of their families. While there are risks which must be acknowledged and challenged, they can be reduced through proper training and education. Resources such as the Army's social media site are available to assist NCOs with learning to exploit social media's advantages while teaching Soldiers how to uphold Army values.[16] ■

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Defining & Assessing Lethality

By Sgt. 1st Class Zachary J. Krapfl

Asymmetric Warfare Group

February 2019

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley's *Modernization Priorities for the United States Army* (2017) "has one simple focus: make Soldiers and units more lethal" (p. 1). With that in mind, the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* definition of lethality is "capable of causing death" ("Lethality," 2018). Despite being clearly defined, how does the institutional Army doctrinally define Soldier lethality? And what should be the metric which encompasses the marksmanship, physicality, and mentality aspects of it?

Lethality is a Line of Effort (LOE) for Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG) Operational Advisors (OA). OAs are charged with identifying material and nonmaterial solutions to enhance a Soldier's deadliness on the battlefield. However, in order to enhance it, we need to clearly define it as it applies to the institutional U.S. Army and develop a metric to assess individual Soldiers and units.

The U.S. Army currently uses standards to determine an individual Soldier's level of fitness. Attributes such as flexibility, strength, endurance, and stamina can be assessed to determine the degree of individual fitness as well as overall unit fitness. But to be truly effective across the U.S. Army, there must also be a measurement of individual and unit lethality.

The proposed rubric (*Figure B*) is merely an attempt to generate discussion on how this subject could be measured for our Soldiers and formations. The intent of this article is not to concretely define lethality or promote the offered rubric as a new Army-wide standard, but simply highlight this current gap in doctrine and push for progressive change.

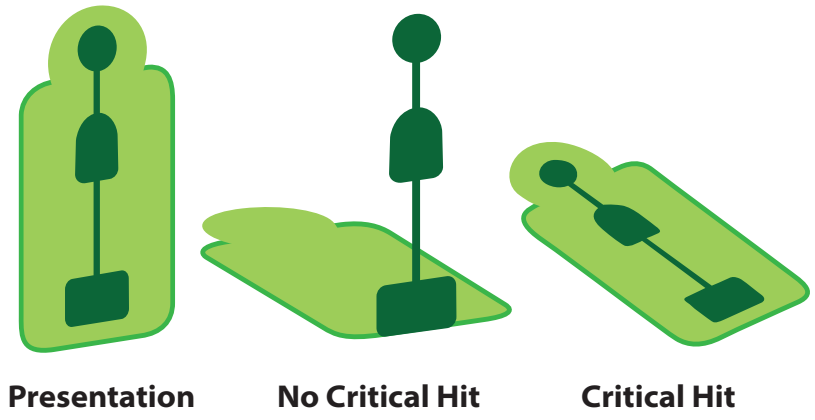

Figure A. Adapted targets designed to reward kill zone shots. (Graphic by Sgt. 1st Class Zachary J. Krapfl, Asymmetric Warfare Group)

Marksmanship

As a thought experiment, ask yourself which Soldier you would prefer to have in your formation: an expert marksman with a perfect score, or a Soldier who hit only 50% of their targets? At face value, logic would dictate most leaders would select the "expert" over the unqualified Soldier. However, upon further examination, what if you learned the expert shooter had forty glancing blows versus the unqualified shooter's twenty center-mass kill shots while correcting multiple weapons malfunctions?

The current U.S. Army 300-meter Field Fire Qualification (FFQ) only rewards registered hits, with zero premium on hit location, lending it to be a subjective measurement in terms of an actual kill rate. For instance, many units award a shooter an "alibi" round if they have ammunition left over due to stoppages or user error, obscuring the lack of weapon proficiency and focusing only on rifle marksmanship under ideal circumstances.

The U.S. Army 300-meter FFQ encompasses one facet of lethality, but is limited in its capability to adequately judge overall individual Soldier lethality because the ability to employ a weapon system is only a fraction of a more comprehensive process. It is not capable of replicating the challenges Soldiers face on today's modern battlefield: a complex operational environment requiring a balance of adaptability, mental acuity, tactical and technical expertise, strength, endurance, and a suitable acceptance of violence to name a few.

There are, however, ways to enhance the U.S. Army 300-meter FFQ, such as engineering and equipping specialized targets which reward kill shot accuracy over the glancing blows that will only anger an enemy in combat instead of stopping them completely—and permanently. *Figure A* demonstrates a proposed design for a target that captures lethality to a greater degree than the current marksmanship test.

Critical Zone

One idea to prioritize marksmanship is to implement the *critical zone* concept using special targets. The existing target structure is not an accurate measurement of combat accuracy because of the previously mentioned glancing blow scenario as opposed to the kill shot preferred hit. In *Figure A*, if a Soldier shoots and impacts a *noncritical zone*, the outside target falls and the *critical zone* remains standing. If a Soldier shoots and impacts a *critical zone* ("T-Box," breast plate, pelvic bone, spinal column), the entire target falls and the shot is a success in terms of lethality.

The only other modification, aside from targets, is the scoring criteria. The ammunition allocation should remain at 40 rounds, but the total possible hits should increase to 80 as each round in the critical zone will be counted as two hits.

In addition to modifying the U.S. Army 300-meter FFQ, it is pertinent to include a "stress shoot" event. The relative calmness of traditional marksmanship ranges needs to merge with a sense of controlled chaos by introducing physical and mental stressors. A possible solution is to combine a physical event with a known distance (KD) accuracy qualification utilizing a 25-meter, E-type silhouette target with rings at 100-, 200-, and 300-meter distances. The event can be accomplished with as little as 30 rounds. The 25-meter E-type silhouette's three, four, and five point scoring rings can provide criterion which captures lethality.

Engineering and equipping ranges with specialized targets and conducting stress shoots will not entirely address

A U.S. Army combat engineer assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade participates in a fitness event as part of "Battle for the Castle," in Vicenza, Italy, Dec. 14, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Henry Villarama)

lethality in the marksmanship field, but it is a start towards improvement and progress.

Physicality

Being a Soldier is a physically demanding profession. Maneuvering to and from positions of optimal vantage quickly is equally as important as a Soldier's ability to effectively engage enemy combatants with a weapon. Therefore, in order to enhance lethality, physicality must also be prioritized accordingly.

The current Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) is designed to test a Soldier's "cardio fitness, strength and endurance" ("Army Physical Fitness Test," n.d., para. 6). The APFT serves its purpose with respect to the aforementioned areas but is not indicative of the physical requirements posed by combat. Soldiers who have deployed understand combat does not discriminate based on age or gender, nor should the physical assessment.

The Army's unveiling of the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) negates the gender and age bias of the APFT. The ACFT will serve as a better overall metric when determining a Soldier's physical prowess ("Army Combat Fitness Test," n.d.). The ACFT is not without drawbacks though. The ACFT requires a significant amount of equipment, manpower, and time. In addition to the APFT or ACFT, supplementing those with a Combat Physical Fitness Test (CPFT), a tactically focused physical event, could be beneficial in determining an individual Soldier's overall lethality.

Individual Lethality Assesment Metric					
Army Physical Fitness Test					
Event	Possible	Score	Points	Total Possible	Total Score
Push Up	100	82	100	300	286
Sit Up	100	82	100		
2-Mile Run	100	14:00	86		
U.S. Army 300 Meter Rifle Field Fire Qualification with Dual Hit Targets					
Event	Possible Hits	Single Hits	Kill Shot	Total Possible	Total Score
Prone (S)	40	18	12	80	56
Prone (U)	20	9	7		
Kneeling	20	6	4		
Combat Physical Fitness Test					
Event	Standard	Score	Points	Total Possible	Total Score
Six Foot Wall	Go / No-Go	Go	25	100	100
Dummy Carry	Go / No-Go	Go	25		
4-Mile Run	Under 40 Minutes	Go	50		
Known Distance Accuracy Qualification					
Event	100 Meter (Score / Possible)	200 Meter (Score / Possible)	300 Meter (Score / Possible)	Total Possible	Total Score
Prone (S)	10 / 10	19 / 20	18 / 20	150	131
Rounds	2	4	4		
Kneeling Barricade	20 / 20	17 / 20	5 / 10		
Rounds	4	4	2		
Standing Barricade	25 / 25	12 / 15	5 / 10		
Rounds	5	3	2		
Military Occupational Skill (MOS) Skill-Level Test					
Event	Questions	Possible Score		Possible Score	
Exam	50	100		92	
Individual Lethality Assessment Composite Score					
Total Possible Points					730
Individual Soldier Score					665
Percentile					91

Figure B. Mock assessment with arbitrary scores to showcase a potential metric rubric. (Graphic by Sgt. 1st Class Zachary J. Krapfl, Asymmetric Warfare Group)

An example of a CPFT is the one AWG OAs complete during the Operational Advisor Training Course. The event includes a two-mile run to a turnaround point in which they scale a six-foot-wall, then another two-mile run and a 180-pound casualty carry for 50-meters which concludes the event. The CPFT is conducted in operational camouflage pattern uniforms, helmets, and plate carriers. While the APFT and ACFT are great evaluations for physical fitness in garrison, and by no means is this an argument against them, but supplementing them with a CPFT would provide a much better assessment as to whether a Soldier, or entire unit is combat ready.

Mentality

It is incumbent upon leaders to mentally prepare their Soldiers for combat. Inducing stress during training is one of the most beneficial ways to prepare Soldiers for the rigors of combat. Preparing aggressive Soldiers for today's battlefield landscape is multifaceted and requires a balance of understanding in areas such as: Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), Rules of Engagement (ROE) and Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC).

A written MOS skill-level examination is one means to ensure a Soldier's understanding of their duties and responsibilities. For example, an infantry fire team leader should be intimately familiar with the capabilities and characteristics of each weapon system at their disposal. Knowing the maximum effective range of a M320 Grenade Launcher Module may seem trivial during a training exercise, but not knowing it could be detrimental during combat.

In addition to MOS-specific skill-level assessments, it is also vitally important to understand when lethal intervention is legally justified in accordance with the ROE and LOAC. Wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria honed the skills of a perceptive and adaptive enemy that is eager to exploit our weaknesses. A Soldier's understanding of the ROE and the principles of LOAC is essential and can be measured with a multiple choice test over specific hypothetical scenarios. As stated in *Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations* (2018), "The strategic environment is uncertain, contested, complex, and can change rapidly, requiring military leaders to maintain persistent military engagement" (Joint Operations, p. 2).

Assessment

With each of the areas contributing to individual Soldier lethality addressed, we must develop a metric to assess it in order to improve it. An example metric (*Figure B*), with arbitrary scores, provides commanders with a graphical snapshot of an individual Soldier's lethality:

Events

- APFT: Pushup, sit-up, and two-mile run graded according to the male 17-21 age group standards
- CPFT: Two-mile run, six-foot-wall climb, two-mile run, and 50-Meter 180-pound casualty carry
- U.S. Army 300-Meter Field Fire Qualification with Critical Zone Targets
- KD Accuracy Qualification: Utilizing 25-meter E-type silhouette with rings at 100-, 200-, and 300-meter distances
- MOS Skill-Level Examination: 100-point test to determine tactical and technical proficiency knowledge

Unit Lethality

An individual Soldier lethality metric can serve as a baseline for Soldier evaluation. However, additional metrics will need to account for units that close with and destroy enemy forces, or deliver firepower and destructive capabilities to the battlefield. The infantry will need to prescribe specific assessments for mortar and sniper sections, as well as the mechanized infantry. Other branches such as Air Defense Artillery, Armor, Aviation, Engineer, Field Artillery, and Special Operations Forces will each require a uniquely tailored metric to capture unit lethality.

The U.S. Army's Objective-Task (Objective-T) concept and the individual Soldier lethality metric are complimentary. Objective-T will indicate the level of unit readiness in regards to their Mission Essential Task List (METL), while the individual lethality metric substantiates lethality. METL proficiency does not equate to lethality, yet will set the conditions to enhance it. Likewise, lethality alone does nothing to promote tactical and technical expertise.

The battlefield is a dynamic environment which rewards lethality with survival. Leaders should have a fair indication of how capable their Soldiers are prior to conducting military operations. They can only do this by defining lethality as it applies to the U.S. Army, and developing a metric to substantiate it. ■

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Pregnancy or Promotion

By Sgt. Maj. Kacie K. Dunn

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In the last decade, the U.S. Army has made a large push to modernize programs that assist pregnant Soldiers, from standardizing maternity leave policies to exemption from the Military Lethality policy following child birth. However, a policy still exists that hinders a pregnant Soldier's promotional timeline.

This article addresses the current promotional obstacle, the Select-Train-Educate-Promote (STEP) program, and proposes solutions to keep our pregnant Soldiers' careers on track during and after pregnancy while still meeting the Army's mission: "To deploy, fight and win our nation's wars by providing ready, prompt and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the joint force." (Department of the Army, n.d.c, para. 1).

The Evolution of Change

In 2016, the Department of Defense opened all military occupations and positions to women without exception, making it one of the most progressive organizations regarding women's equality in the world (Department of the Army, 2015; Rosenberg & Phillipps, 2015). Additionally, in 2016, the U.S. Army released *Army Directive 2016-09* (Maternity Leave Policy), standardizing maternity leave across all branches of service, guaranteeing 12 weeks of leave to mothers (Murphy, 2016).

In 2018, women who are nondeployable due to pregnancy, or recent birth, became protected from involuntary separation under the military's "deploy or get out" policy (Shane, 2019). The intent of the policy is to separate Soldiers from the U.S. Army who are nondeployable for more than 12 consecutive months (Copp, 2018).

U.S. Army Spc. ShaTyra Reed, 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, shares a moment with her daughter Amore near Fort Bragg, North Carolina, April 25, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Hubert D. Delany III)

In 2019, in order to help split parenting duties of newborns between both mother and father, the U.S. Army released *Army Directive 2019-05* (Army Military Parental Leave Program), which replaced *Army Directive 2016-09*, and afforded leave for both parents of a child (Esper, 2019). Under the Army Military Parental Leave Program, the 12 weeks of nonchargeable leave, traditionally given to mothers, breaks down into two parts: six weeks of convalescent leave and six weeks of caregiver leave that can be split between either parent. This provides each parent an opportunity to take equal amounts of nonchargeable leave to bond with their child, or allows them to split the six weeks of caregiver leave however they choose (Esper, 2019).

And most recently, in February 2020, *ALARACT 016/2020* allows a 12-month deferment from deployment after the birth of a child (Department of the Army, 2020). This is another positive step towards modern parenting, but the Army's STEP program creates a disadvantage and promotional delay for pregnant Soldiers.

Current policy dictates all Soldiers on temporary profiles prior to attending noncommissioned officer professional military education (NCO PME) cannot begin their course—especially if pregnant (Department of the Army, 2019e; n.d.a; n.d.b). Because of the rigidness of the STEP program, it prevents pregnant Soldiers from being eligible for promotion because they cannot attend their required NCO PME for the duration of their pregnancy and postpartum recovery—on average 15 months (Department of the Army, 2019a; Tann, 2015) (see Figure 1).

According to *Army Regulation (AR) 40-502: Medical Readiness* and *Department of the Army Pamphlet 40-502: Medical Readiness Procedures*, once identified as pregnant, doctors place the Soldier on a temporary profile with increased restrictions. After delivery, the doctor issues a 180-day postpartum temporary profile that exempts her from an APFT or being held to height and weight standards (Department of the Army, 2017; 2019a; 2019c; 2019d).

However, implementing exceptions to policy to allow pregnant Soldiers to attend NCO PME, or promoting them

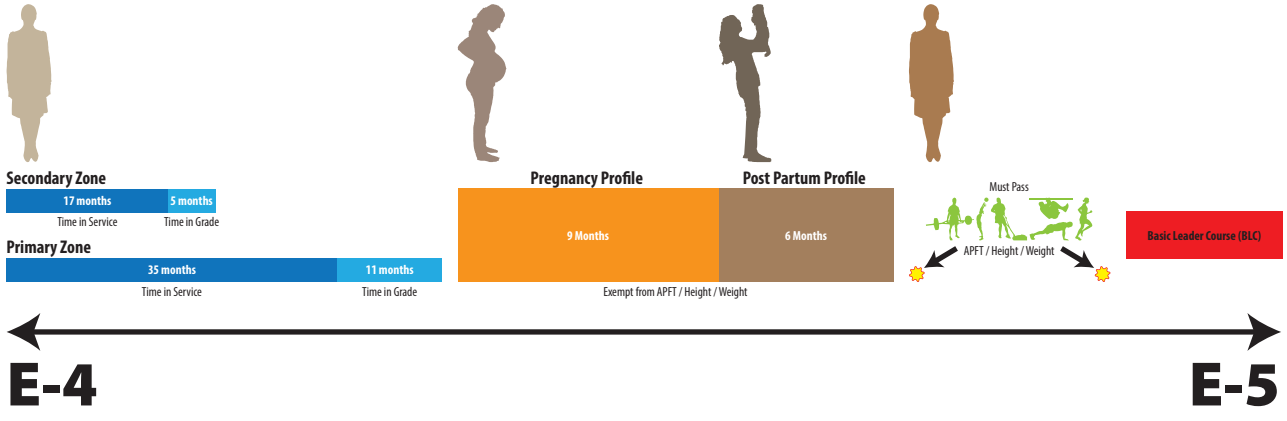

Figure 1

prior to obtaining military education, balances the STEP program for the Army across the board.

The Example

To illustrate the impact that pregnancy has on a Soldier's promotion timeline, compare the rank of specialist to sergeant and the delays associated with pregnancy (see Figure 1). According to *AR 600-8-19: Enlisted Promotions and Reductions*, in order to be eligible to attend the promotion board, a specialist must have 17 months time in service (TIS) and five months time in grade (TIG) for the secondary zone. Also, they must have 35 months TIS and 11 months TIG for the primary zone (Department of the Army, 2019b). They must also have a current passing record Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), meet the U.S. Army's height and weight standards, and complete Distributed Leaders Course — level one (Department of the Army, 2019b; Myers, 2019).

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Brandon Valle and 2nd Lt. Brandie Valle share a family moment with their daughter after earning their U.S. Aviator Badges during an Initial Entry Rotary Wing graduation ceremony at the U.S. Army Aviation Museum, Fort Rucker, Alabama, Feb. 28, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by Kelly Morris)

Once the specialist attends the promotion board and attains a promotable status, they must then complete Basic Leader Course (BLC) and earn the required amount of promotion points prior to pinning on the rank of sergeant (Department of the Army, 2019b). Yet the total cumulative timeline a pregnant Soldier is potentially on a temporary profile and unable to attend NCO PME is one year and three months (nine month average for the pregnancy and six months for the postpartum temporary profile) (Department of the Army, 2019a; "How Many Weeks," 2018). An additional child could result in two years and six months on a temporary profile.

The current NCO PME requirements state:

> *"Soldiers who are pregnant prior to the start of the course may not attend BLC until medically cleared. A Soldier who is diagnosed as pregnant while attending BLC may continue, but she must provide written documentation from her medical provider stating that she can participate in all physical course requirements"* (Department of the Army, 2019e, p. 12).

Hypothetically, with this requirement in place, a pregnant Soldier may delay reporting her pregnancy in order to attend NCO PME, which may place both the mother and unborn child at risk.

Historical Challenges

***All references to previous NCO education systems will be referred to as NCO PME.**

Prior to adopting the STEP program in 2016, the U.S. Army operated on a system independent of NCO PME completion for promotion (Lopez, 2015). Completion of NCO PME was only required to obtain the next rank. An example of this is the completion of BLC to be eligible for promotion to staff sergeant, but not for promotion to sergeant (Lopez, 2015). Having the ability to be promoted prior to attending NCO PME allowed Soldiers who were unable to attend, due to deployment or pregnancy, to continue their career progression. In high operational tempos, this promotion system allowed commanders to allocate Soldiers to NCO PME and defer existing school dates based on unit mission requirements.

However, this promotion system placed a great burden on the U.S. Army by allowing over 14,000 NCOs to lead Soldiers without receiving the proper level of training through the NCO PME system (Tice, 2016). In addition, when commanders deferred Soldiers' school dates or when Soldiers were unable to attend school based on mission requirements, deployments, or pregnancy, there were no tracking systems in place to ensure NCOs attended NCO PME in a timely manner (Vergun, 2016).

Improving the Foundation

Upon the release of the STEP program, NCOs of all ranks expressed concern that reasons beyond Soldiers' control would hinder promotions. Former U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport responded to these concerns by saying, "We understand that Soldiers have to be deferred from attending school for many reasons, but we want to add some discpline to the process" (Tice & Tan, 2015, para. 15). However, the STEP program had zero exceptions to policy and a backlog of promotions began to replace the backlog of uneducated NCOs (Seaton, 2016; Tann, 2016).

Taking Care of Soldiers

In September 2018, the U.S. Army instituted an exception to the STEP program's *AR 600-8-19: Enlisted Promotions and Reductions* (Department of the Army, 2018). The NCO PME deferment policy allows operationally deployed Soldiers, who are fully qualified for promotion, to defer NCO PME up to 24 months after they return home (Tann, 2018). As it pertains to deployed Soldiers, Davenport said, "They're doing everything, they're fit, they've knocked out their SSD [now known as DLC], they're doing everything right, but they

don't have the opportunity to attend NCO PME like those in the states or home station" (Tann, 2018, p. 2). So what about pregnant Soldiers who are doing everything right, knocked out their DLC, stayed physically fit, and do not have the opportunity to attend NCO PME? Without granting an exception to the NCO PME policy for pregnant Soldiers, unintentionally, the U.S. Army is asking female Soldiers to make a choice between promotion or pregnancy.

Air Force Policy

The following Air Force policy demonstrates a service branch waivering temporary profiles for pregnant military students. *Air Force Instruction* (AFI) *36-2656*, paragraph 4.7.3.1 states that Airmen can obtain a waiver to attend school while on a temporary profile approved through the school commandant; however, their current fitness assessment must be valid through the graduation date (Department of the Air Force, 2018).

In an email interview, U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Christopher Moore (Air Force Officer of Special Investigations, Field Support Squadron Superintendent) stated:

"Pregnant Airmen are approved in all cases where it is safe for the member to attend the course. It is only if there are complications or if they were scheduled to be in the course around their expected delivery date that a commandant would not approve the waiver. It is very common for pregnant Airmen to attend school." (2019)

Proposed Solutions

***The following solutions and ideas are by no means complete and comprehensive plans. They are meant to initiate a conversation toward waivering pregnant Soldiers to attend NCO PME without a long promotional delay.**

A one-size-fits-all solution to waiver pregnant Soldiers on a temporary profile is difficult because schools vary in length. A waiver to a one-month long BLC course is easier to imagine than a waiver for the 10-month long Sergeants Major Course where the birth of the child is guaranteed to happen during the course.

In terms of the APFT requirement, if the Air Force pregnancy policy were to be adopted, then the test on record must be valid through the graduation date and the entrance/course APFT could be waivered since the Soldier showed that under normal circumstances they can pass an APFT. Or if a course APFT is required, it can be deferred for one (or two) years post graduation — depending on the timing of the pregnancy and postpartum profiles.

A second option could be to allow a 24-month NCO PME deferment to pregnant Soldiers who have all other requirements completed, much like the previously mentioned deployed Soldier policy where a Soldier can be promoted to the appropriate rank but has 24 months to complete the associated NCO PME (Tann, 2018).

A third option could be that instead of class/unit physical training, pregnant students are put on a personalized Pregnancy/Postpartum Physical Training Program (P3T). This way there is a physical portion to the course but it's tailored to the medical needs of the pregnant Soldier. The P3T program is supported in multiple Army regulations to include *AR 350-1*, *FM 7-22*, *AR 40-502*, and *DA PAM 40-502* (Army Public Health Center, 2019; Department of the Army, 2012; 2017; 2019a; 2019d).

AR 350-1 states:

"Commanders will ensure that all eligible Soldiers participate in the PPPT Program and that personnel are available to conduct the physical training portion of the PPPT Program for the pregnant/postpartum Soldier in a manner that is consistent with the content, standards, policies, procedures, and responsibilities as set forth by the Public Health Command..." (Department of the Army, 2017, p. 194).

A final recommendation would be to establish a medical pregnancy progression cutoff. For example, they must be able to finish their NCO PME before the 28-week mark (start of third trimester). This is when *DA PAM 40-502* begins placing restrictions on responsibilities and availble working hours. This timeline is by no means perfect, but would protect pregnant Soldiers so they have time in their third trimester to obtain all the prenatal medical care and appointments needed, especially if complications in the pregnancy arise (Cardini et al., 2019; "The Third Trimester," n.d.).

Conclusion

Creating exceptions to policy requires vast amounts of planning and foresight. Parenthood shouldn't negatively impact the U.S. Army's mission of ensuring national and global security, but also shouldn't delay a pregnant Soldier's

U.S. Army Soldiers conduct Pregnancy/Postpartum Physical Training in accordance with the P3T program. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Army)

career. The U.S. Army is on a talent management mission to attract and retain the best and brightest Soldiers across the nation. Implementing exceptions to the current policy and allowing pregnant Soldiers to attend NCO PME in order to be promoted in a timely manner ensures equality and long-term retention across the board. ■

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Diversity is Our Army's Strength

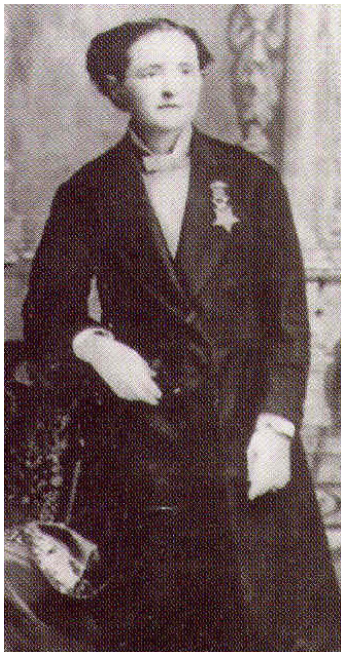
By Sgt. Maj. Alexander Aguilastratt

U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

October 2020

The U.S. Army is focused on preparing for large-scale combat operations. Its training, equipment, experience in combat, and the quality of its Soldiers make it effective and lethal. The diversity within the U.S. military's forces must grow and adapt to the diversity of the United States. The cultural and ethnic differences of its Soldiers are the unique assets that our adversaries lack. Diversity in the U.S. Army is its strength and combat multiplier.

"The diversity of America's Army is a source of power and influence, especially in the political aspects of war and competition" (Birmingham, 2017, p. 1)



Medal of Honor recipient Mary E. Walker. (Image courtesy of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society)

America embodies the message that different cultures can and will unite for a common purpose. In the case of the U.S. Army, the objective is to fight and win our nation's wars, and "…support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic…" (Department of the Army, n.d., para. 1).

To convey how powerful diversity is, a study conducted by the Boston Consulting Group in 2018 found that businesses who focused on and expanded their diversity had higher revenue due to increased innovation. According to Anna Powers (2018) at *Forbes*, "...diversity means diversity of minds, ideas, and approaches—which allows teams to find a solution that takes into account multiple angles the problem, thus making the solution stronger, well rounded and optimized" (para. 2). This article will focus on the history of diversity within the U.S. military, current international and domestic threats to diversity, and programs and solutions put in place to protect and safeguard its diversity.

The Foundation

Diversity is present in every aspect of the U.S. Army, from recruitment and retention to combat operations. According to the PEW Research Center, "As the country has become more racially and ethnically diverse, so has the U.S. military. Racial and ethnic minority groups made up 40% of Defense Department active-duty military in 2015, up from 25% in 1990" (Parker et al., 2017).

The U.S. Army has a history of diversity with minority groups and women serving in every major conflict from the American Revolutionary War to the present ("The Army and Diversity," n.d.). Even when not allowed to serve in an official capacity, the men and women of this country, from varied backgrounds, contributed to the greater good.

From the Tuskegee Airmen (African American aviators and support crew serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII) to Medal of Honor recipients Dr. Mary E. Walker (an Army surgeon serving in the Civil War) and Master Sgt. Roy Benavidez (a Vietnam veteran of Native American and Hispanic descent); their actions proved members of any race, gender, and background are capable of the highest levels of bravery and honor, paving the way for the full integration of today's Army.

International Threats

Concerning the current super power threats to the U.S., according to Gen. John Hyten, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Russia is the most significant threat just because they pose the only existential threat to the country right now" (Macias, 2018, para. 2). If the U.S. and Russia were to engage in a conflict, neither could use their arsenal of nuclear weapons without triggering a nuclear apocalypse (Magni, 2020). But what truly makes Russia dangerous to the U.S. is not their assortment of nuclear weapons, or even their conventional capabilities, it's their ability to engage in indirect action strategies and asymmetric responses across multiple domains (Boston & Massicot, 2017).

Future U.S. Army Soldiers take the Oath of Enlistment during the Air and Sea Show at Miami Beach, Florida, Sept. 17, 2019. (U.S. Army photo by Lara Poirrier)

Russia's most recent asymmetric tactic has been to train young German militant right-wing extremists (neo-Nazis) in close quarters combat, weapons handling, and explosives ("German far-right youth receive combat training," 2020). Furthermore, Germany has recently decided to disband and overhaul its special forces unit, the KSK, because it was discovered to be heavily infiltrated by neo-Nazis (Bennhold, 2020). While these two incidents may not be related, they can't be dismissed because both are connected to the same far-right group. This might suggest Russia is covertly responsible, or at least played a role in the infiltration of Germany's special forces, rendering them combat ineffective.

What is troubling is that the KSK is a unit that has worked side-by-side with U.S. units throughout the world, providing them multiple opportunities to influence and recruit the U.S.'s military personnel. And if Germany's elite special forces unit can be infiltrated and radicalized, units globally are at risk—even U.S. Army's Green Berets.

The New York Times reported a former Green Beret captain was arrested for espionage. "He turned over sensitive military information and the names of fellow service members so Russia could try to recruit them" (Goldman, 2020, para. 2). Another example of U.S. radicalization is the Soldier who conspired with a neo-Nazi group to kill members of his own unit until his plan was discovered (Becket, 2020). These events prove unconventional attacks on the U.S. from any nation or terrorist group are possible, especially with the ease of contact through social media platforms.

Tuskegee Airmen Marcellus G. Smith and Rosco C. Brown conduct maintenance on a Class 44-C P-SC#11 aircraft at Ramitelli, Italy, March 1945. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)

Domestic Threats

The U.S. must remain vigilant about protecting its diversity, not just from international threats, but also from domestic racial hate groups, religious extremists, and gangs (Johnson, 2011; Myers, 2020). From Timothy McVeigh to Nidal Hasan, radicalized veterans with weapons and combat training pose a danger to society. Violent and racist groups such as the "Boogaloo" and "09A" continue to thrive, and are known to be supported by several radicalized military service members (Myers, 2020).

The Way Ahead

The U.S. Army has put programs in place to ensure all Soldiers, Civilians, and Family members, regardless of race, gender, or background are protected against bigotry and prejudice. The Army currently has the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program to prevent discrimination and provide proactive training and education, and the Sexual Harassment Assault Response Prevention (SHARP) program to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assaults. Both of these programs work to ensure a healthy, fair, and cooperative work environment so the U.S. Army can continue to fulfill its mission of protecting the nation at full readiness.

Furthermore, in order to promote fairness and remove any conscious or unconscious bias from promotion board panel members, the U.S. Army has redacted all information

regarding race, ethnicity, and gender from both officer and enlisted record briefs. As suggested by Sgts. Maj. Jason Payne and Francine Chapman (2020), "These steps toward a blind centralized evaluation system (BCES) will curb personal preferences based on Soldiers' physical characteristics, promote diversity amongst the Army's enlisted and officer population, and better identify the most talented individuals for advancement based on merit" (para. 1).

Finally, to protect military personnel against radicalization from hate groups, religious extremists, and gangs, Congress is proposing a program in the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act bill that would track extremist behavior and gang affiliations (Myers, 2020). This program would create a database that tracks investigations and criminal actions conducted by each radical organization to better monitor what's happening in the U.S. military.

U.S. Army graphic.

Conclusion

As the U.S. gears up for a return of the great power competition, the margin for error against near-peer adversaries grows smaller. According to author Jason Lyall (2020), who studied 850 armies over the span of 250 years, "Victory on the battlefield over the past 200 years has usually gone to the most inclusive armies, not the largest or best-equipped ones. Inclusion, in other words, is good for military effectiveness" (para. 2).

Diversity, like any other tool or system, must be maintained and exercised frequently. It should be celebrated and practiced from the most junior-ranking private, to the highest-ranking officer, and protected from those who do not share the Army Values. By investing in its people, the Army will continue to overcome all challenges and accomplish any mission. ■

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Bridging the Officer-NCO PME Divide

By Maj. George J. Fust III (75th Ranger Regiment) & Sgt. Maj. Jeffery D. Howard (Sergeants Major Academy)

June 2021

"The enlisted personnel have neither the intellectual skills nor the professional responsibility of the officer. They are specialists in the application of violence not the management of violence. Their vocation is a trade not a profession. This fundamental difference between the officer corps and the enlisted corps is reflected in the sharp line which is universally drawn between the two in all the military forces of the world. (Huntington, 1985, p.17).

Originally written by Samuel Huntington in 1957, the above passage could not be more wrong today. The U.S. Army's asymmetrical advantage has always been its Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Corps. As the backbone of the Army, they are the critical link that enables the execution of mission command. If the Army rejects Huntington's claim, why then does the institution continue the artificial divide between NCO and officer professional military education (PME)?

Right, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Tim Peterman validates the 15-degree rule with one of his Soldiers during a combined arms live-fire exercise at Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii, May 19, 2018. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Ryan DeBoo)

A Missed Opportunity

Currently, curriculum overlap exists between the Command and General Staff College (CGSC, the educational institution responsible for mid-career officers) and the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (SGM-A). Both schools focus on the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP), leadership, and expectation of roles, yet zero formal links exist between the two institutions, making missed opportunities for interaction and collaboration.

Throughout each 10-month course, neither school attempts to bridge the officer-NCO PME gap, even though conditions at these schools are optimal for students to learn from each other. These courses provide ample opportunities to develop understanding and foster teamwork between officers and NCOs well in advance of the time they may serve together. Day one at a new unit should not be the first time senior NCOs and newly-minted field grade officers interact.

Given the necessity and new capabilities of remote learning during the past year because of the global pandemic, geographical distance is no longer an obstacle. The following section proves collaboration between the two schools can be accomplished to the benefit of both officers and NCOs.

The Collaboration

While studying an article at the SGM-A, Sgt. Maj. Howard realized he had served with the article's author, Maj. Fust, during a previous assignment. He used his personal relationship to set up a guest lecture at the SGM-A, which allowed for both officer and enlisted viewpoints to be heard and discussed.

The topic of the lecture was the role of senior enlisted NCOs in civil-military relations and today's policy environment. An important conversation, but certainly not limited to just NCOs (Nielsen & Snider, 2009). The conversation needed the experience and perspective of both officers and NCOs, yet CGSC and the SGM-A's current instructional design does not formally facilitate this type of collaboration. The opportunity that presented itself was in the form of a guest lecture and question and answer session between a CGSC student and an entire SGM-A department. This collaboration demonstrated the effectiveness and possibility of future interactions between the two schools.

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Walter Winborn of Iowa City, Iowa instructs ROTC cadets from Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois in assembling and disassembling the Browning Automatic Rifle at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, June 21, 1951. (Photo courtesy of Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office)

While preparing for the interaction, Fust considered the unique perspective of sergeants major. The collaborative event also exposed the sergeants major to an officer's unique perspective. Both parties left the engagement with a new mental model and frame of reference. Imagine the impact if this template spread across multiple centers of excellence. The benefits would multiply exponentially, helping to strengthen trust and build understanding within leadership teams prior to unit arrival.

Numerous touchpoints exist at all military institutions for officer-NCO interaction. In the case of Howard and Fust, a text message and accommodating SGM-A staff were the only necessary requirements. A more deliberate collaborative plan between the two schools could generate many inclusive training opportunities and also meet curriculum objectives.

Conclusion

The U.S. Army's asymmetrical advantage is the NCO Corps. Strengthening the connectivity and understanding between officers and NCOs on fundamental topics such as MDMP, leadership styles, expectations, training, and operational experience is critical. The creation and expansion of institutionalized opportunities between CGSC and the SGM-A can only strengthen the Army at little to no cost. At a minimum, it would increase awareness of different viewpoints and help foster teamwork and trust, both of which are critical to success in today's complex operational environment. ■

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Why We Write

By Sgt. 1st Class Hector M. Najera

Joint Multinational Readiness Center

July 2021

More than 240 years ago, Prussian Baron Friedrich von Steuben volunteered to assist the early Continental Army. What he encountered were independently operated state militias lacking uniformed discipline, structure, and training. Baron von Steuben trained these troops to drill, lead, and teach, turning them from independent militias into a powerful and professional army. In the process, he laid the foundation for the noncommissioned officer (NCO) Corps. The most important aspect of Baron von Steuben's contribution; however, came when he reflected on his experiences and wrote the *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, commonly known as "The Blue Book" (Giblin, 2018).

For nearly two and a half centuries, Baron von Steuben's guidance has continued to shape the U.S. Army and the NCO Corps. We still see his influence in *Training Circular* (TC) *7-22.7: The Noncommissioned Officer Guide*, and *TC 3-21.5: Drill and Ceremonies* (Department of the Army, 2020; 2021). He taught our predecessors lessons in professionalism, standardization, discipline, leading, and teaching – all of which are still important in today's Army. He did this by using a necessary and important skill: writing.

As NCOs, we routinely communicate with subordinates, peers, and seniors to discover creative and more efficient methods of accomplishing tasks. These discussions sometimes make their way into written standard operating procedures (SOPs), battalion- or brigade-level tactical SOPs, and continuity books throughout the Army. The ability to create discussions geared toward progress and efficiency is important, but the ability to shape them into solid arguments and write them down to be shared with others is equally important.

Recently, the Army overhauled the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development System (NCOPDS) to place a greater emphasis on professional writing by including graded essays and reports into Basic, Advanced, Senior, and Master Leaders Courses. Writing is a fundamental aspect of being an NCO and is included in the NCO Common Core Competencies (NCO-C3) under "Communication." The NCO Leadership Center of Excellence (NCOLCoE) states, "Competent NCOs are effective communicators. NCOs cannot lead, train, counsel, coach, mentor, or build teams without the ability to communicate clearly. This competency includes: Verbal (Public Speaking/ Military Briefings) and Written (English and Grammar) communications" (NCOLCoE, n.d., para. 7).

Call to Action

While many current NCOs have contributed written guidance at the unit level, I urge you to consider writing professional articles for the greater good of the force. Extend your sphere of influence and reach Soldiers and leaders beyond your formations.

As an NCO and Observer, Coach/Trainer (OC/T), I had the pleasure of meeting leaders from different types of organizations. They were smart, passionate, and absolute experts in their craft. They routinely share ideas on how to improve Army systems and processes while brainstorming among themselves during chow or smoke breaks. Their ideas would be plausible, effective, and oftentimes ingenious. However, they would often die at the end of the conversation instead of taking flight or being expounded on by others in a force-wide discussion. Writing can preserve your thoughts, ideas, solutions, and present them to all echelons to learn, buy-in, or help progress your ideas even further.

I have observed in many Soldiers a hesitation to write and put themselves out there. Below are some common reasons holding Soldiers from writing and submitting or publishing their work:

- **Lack of confidence in your writing ability.** The best way to gain confidence in your writing ability is to write and submit. Even if you get rejected, you'll learn something. You don't have to write a doctoral dissertation or novel. Write what you're passionate about and the publication's team of editors will guide you through the rest. It is actually an enjoyable process involving a back and forth about your work along with ideas and edits that shape your work for big Army.
- **Preconceived notion that no one cares about your topic.** No matter what you write about, or how small and niche the topic, there is someone out there who cares about the subject. Even smaller specialized articles have the power to change the Army for the better.
- **Belief that it won't change anything.** Every article has the potential to make a positive impact on Soldiers. That article you write on how to efficiently use the Digital Training Management System may be the solution a Soldier halfway around the world at Grafenwoehr, Germany, desperately needs. Your article won't change the Army overnight, but it can positively affect other Soldiers at their level, which

will change the Army in the long run. A Soldier out there may need your professional expertise.

Positively Affecting the Army

The following are examples of articles I believe made a positive impact on the Army.

1. Sgt. 1st Class Zachary J. Krapfl wrote about how to more accurately measure lethality in his article, "Defining and Assessing Lethality" (Krapfl, 2019). He created a rubric for his own scoring system and even invented a new type of marksmanship target that more accurately rewards critical kill zone shots.
2. Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Mascia wrote "Leading Generation Z: Abandoning the Zero Defect Mentality," which outlines how to properly plan for and adjust to the generational shift occurring since millennials now lead Gen Z (Mascia, 2020).
3. I personally wrote an article outlining negative trends OC/Ts observed with a list of solutions so units could do well during their combat training center rotations in "NCO C3: Required Competencies for CTC Success" (Najera & Williams, 2020).
4. Sgt. Maj. Kacie K. Dunn detailed the NCO Professional Military Education policies that previously held back female Soldiers from advancing at the same pace as their male counterparts in her article, "Pregnancy or Promotion" (Dunn, 2020). While this article may not have single-handedly pushed the Army to its current temporary promotion policy, shortly after it was published, the Army unveiled its current promotion policy, which uses one of the solutions provided in the article and better aligns with policies used by other military services.

These articles are important, not because they'll win a Pulitzer Prize, but because they were written by Soldiers who want to improve and progress the Army forward, as all NCOs should want to do.

Career Development

Professional advancement can also be a significant motivator for Soldiers to develop their writing skills. Writing consistently can improve your confidence and critical thinking skills, which will assist you in your next NCOPDS course. Writing and publishing can also benefit your NCO Evaluation Report (NCOER) as getting published, sharing your ideas, and broadening your sphere of influence certainly sets you apart from your peers. Lastly, writing opens opportunities for awards. The DePuy Writing Competition, Eisenhower Professional Writing Competition, and even local competitions such as the United States Army Garrison (USAG) Bavaria Suicide Prevention Writing Competition often come with awards, cash prizes, or a mixture of both. Winning, or even placing, can positively impact your NCOER as well.

Tips for Success

Once you decide to write a professional article, I would like to share some tips to help you be successful.

- **A3 – Aim, Audience, Articulation.** What is the aim of your article? Have a clear understanding of what it is you want your audience to take away from your writing. If you don't know, they won't know either. Who is your audience? Audiences can vary from broad—"leaders" such as NCOs and officers, specific level leaders such as squad leaders or section sergeants, or specific jobs/roles such as the training room NCO. Know who your audience is, what they should do or be responsible for, and why they should care. This will help ensure your article stays on track and the information is conveyed. Be direct, to the point, and tailor your language to your audience.
- **Understand the publication requirements.** Each professional journal has unique publication standards related to length, topic, references, and prior publication. Understand your target audience and the aim of your paper, decide which publication best suits that paper, then review the submission guidelines.
- **Pick a topic you are passionate about.** This cannot be overstated, especially if you are preparing to write your first article. Many people dread writing, but it becomes significantly easier when your topic is something you are passionate about. Writing an article is not a requirement — you are doing it because you have something to contribute or have a solution to offer. The topics you can choose from are virtually endless.
- **Introductory paragraph.** The intro is arguably the most important section of your article and includes the thesis statement at the end of the paragraph, which states the main point or claim and supporting or discussion points. If someone isn't interested after reading the intro paragraph, they probably won't finish the article. Discussing observations in support of the problem, why the problem is worth writing about, and how you can address the problem is fairly standard. Theoretical, empirical, and doctrinal implications can help strengthen your article's introduction. Appealing to your audience's emotions by getting them "hooked" or engaged is also incredibly effective.
- **Understand you are making an argument.** Generally, your article can be argumentative, analytical, or explanatory. Most are augmentative where you attempt to convince the reader there is a problem and you have a sound solution. Consider the supporting evidence you have and use it throughout your paper to convince the reader. Think of it as using hard facts (sources) to support your argument instead of a "because I said so" (argument with no sources). You can also start with your strongest point first in an attempt to capture interest, or build up towards your strongest point so as to end on a high note.
- **Lean on your peers and seniors for review.** It can be mortifying to some to have their writing reviewed by their peers or seniors, but they are valuable assets you

have access to. Your peers can help provide additional supporting evidence and help ensure you're going down a logical path (staying within your argument). Your seniors can also be vital to this process, particularly officers. They have a different perspective to your problem and solution, and can offer quick proofreading or ideas.

Conclusion: Submit

The *NCO Journal* is a great publication for your professional articles and has a large Army readership. You can find their submission guidelines at https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/NCO-Journal-Submission-Guidelines/). Find a topic you are passionate about, a deficiency you have a creative solution for, or a system/process you think can benefit others and share it. Help shape the Army into a more efficient and lethal fighting force. "I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, noncommissioned officers, leaders!" (Department of the Army, n.d., para. 3). ■

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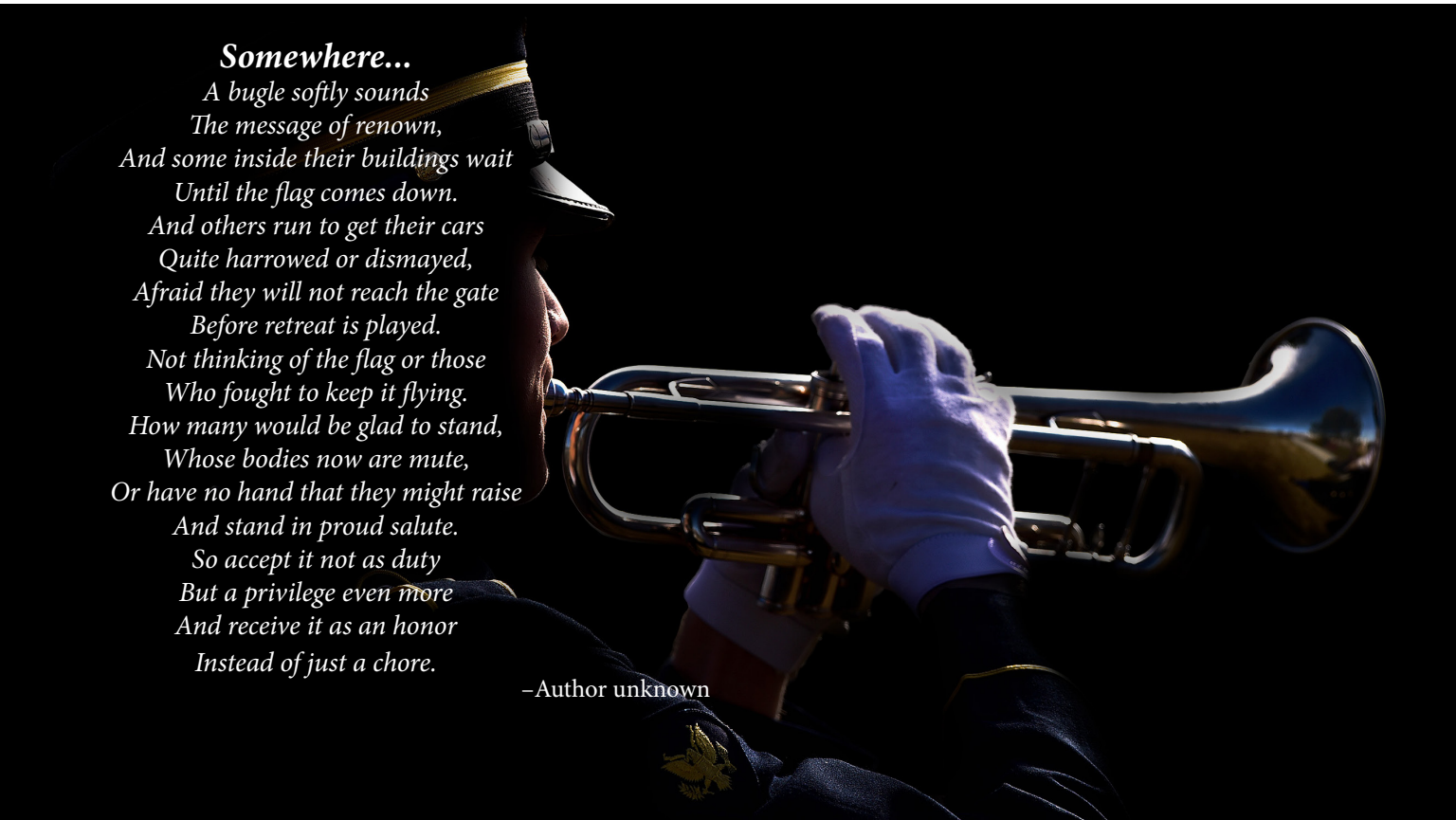


Somewhere...

A bugle softly sounds
The message of renown,
And some inside their buildings wait
Until the flag comes down.
And others run to get their cars
Quite harrowed or dismayed,
Afraid they will not reach the gate
Before retreat is played.
Not thinking of the flag or those
Who fought to keep it flying.
How many would be glad to stand,
Whose bodies now are mute,
Or have no hand that they might raise
And stand in proud salute.
So accept it not as duty
But a privilege even more
And receive it as an honor
Instead of just a chore.

–Author unknown

Remember

By 1st Sgt. James J. Richard

A Warrior's life is a lonely time,
With little joy, little thanks
And visions not too kind

Remember that you'll never be alone
Wherever you may be
You have friends right next to you
Who would die to set you free

Because of this we can't forget
The friends who passed this way
Some have given all
So we can live this way

There's friends we've fought with
Friends we laughed with
Some who saved our hide

There's friends we drank with
Friends we cried with
And some we left behind

For friendships forged in battle
Are the purest of them all
That is why it cuts so deep
When one of us must fall

For in the trade of warfare
The rule is still the same
There's always too few winners
Some must lose the game

And on your day of battle
When the reaper takes his toll
I pray he takes you swiftly
And the Lord to take your soul

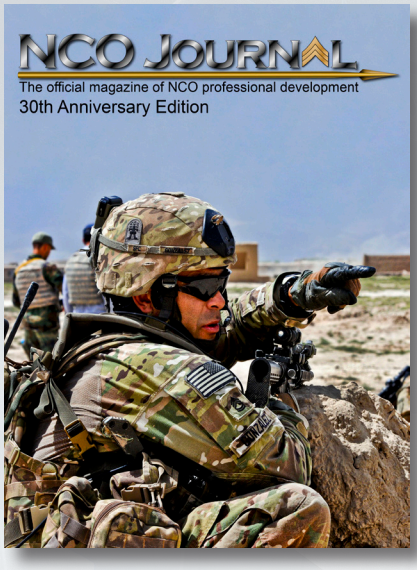
There are many still who need our help
The ones who need protecting
Always must be on guard
Our best they are expecting

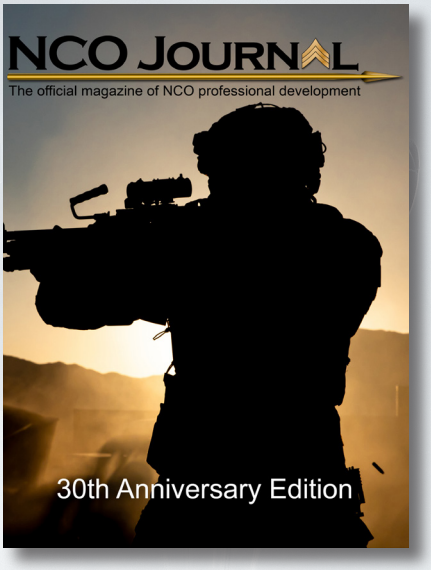
Remember why you do this
Endure time of strife
For you parents, for your children
Your husband, or your wife

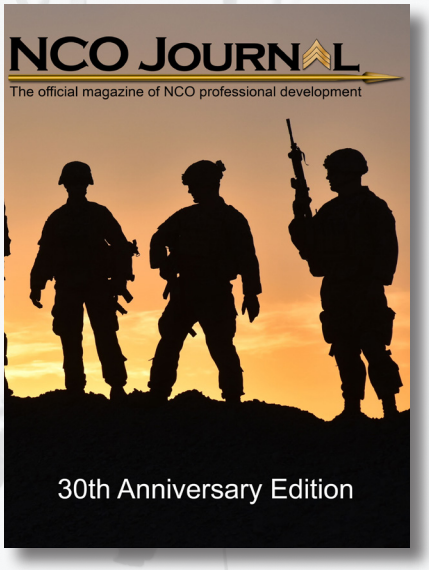
Remember those who came before us
The ones the Lord has taken
Join me now and raise a glass
For the ones who couldn't make it

*Originally published in the Spring 2001 issue.

The graphics below were created by the NCO Journal staff as potential covers for the 30th Anniversary Edition.







Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army." I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers, and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the military service, and my country; regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watch-word. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind: Accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer, I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers, and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers, and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!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