U.S.ARMY

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP DURING UNIT

TRAINING EXERCISES

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DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP DURING UNIT TRAINING EXERCISES

Unit leaders contribute substantially to their unit's mission success or lack of success. For this reason, the Army devotes considerable resources to foster the development of leaders during unit training exercises. Whether involving with, Leader development is an important part of the job of the Observer/Trainers (O/Ts) and the leader's chain-of-command. Their first responsibility is to provide leaders with accurate observations of their leadership and its impact on unit performance. Providing leadership feedback is a difficult, yet essential part of unit training exercises. Without it, the assessment of an important contributor to a unit's mission accomplishment, namely its leadership, is left undone.

This handbook is designed to provide O/T's and leaders in the chain of the command the tools and techniques needed to identify and feed back to leaders what their leadership looks like and how it impacts Soldier performance and mission accomplishment. Armed with this information, the leader is then in a position to quickly respond and improve the leader's performance. Improved leader performance means better Soldier motivation and mission accomplishment.

Guided discovery learning is an important underpinning of the concepts in this handbook. To the extent possible, O/T's and the leader chain of command ought to leverage the many techniques and ideas for implementing the principles of guided discovery learning presented in this handbook. Doing so places the individual leader being observed in charge of his or her learning, with the O/T and chain of command in a supporting role. The use of guided discovery learning during training exercises makes the leader all the more prepared to be a self-guided learner in any contemporary operating environment.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide those serving in the role of Combat Training Center (CTC) trainer as well as unit leaders, with techniques to develop leadership during unit training exercises. The wording of this handbook is written for either an officer or noncommissioned officer serving as a trainer, observer, controller or mentor is developing the leadership of a counterpart leader during an exercise at a CTC. The same techniques found in this guide can be applied by unit leaders during home station training, readiness exercises, and battle staff drills. The term Observer/Trainer (O/T) will be used but all similar roles are incorporated.

CTC O/T's are in a unique observational role with respect to the leader who is their counterpart. Their primary task is to observe the leader and unit in the midst of planning and executing missions. The rotating unit leader chain-of-command has responsibility as well for observing and assessing subordinate leaders and units. However, unit leaders must also fulfill their own leadership responsibilities, leaving less time for observing subordinate leaders than that afforded the O/T. Thus, the O/T fulfills a unique and valuable role in the development of leaders during unit training exercises.

The CTCs were created in large part as a leader development laboratory where leaders can learn and fine-tune the essentials of their profession. Army Regulation 350-50 (Combat Training Center Program) states the CTC program will provide realistic joint and combined arms training, according to Army and joint doctrine, approximating actual combat. The CTC Program-

- Provides commanders, staffs, and Soldiers an operational experience focused on leader development.
- Produces bold, innovative leaders through stressful tactical and operational exercises.
- Increases unit readiness for deployment and warfighting.
- Embeds doctrine throughout the Army.
- Provides feedback to the Army and joint participants to improve warfighting.
- Provides a data source for lessons learned to improve doctrine, training, leader development, organizations, materiel and Soldiers (DTLOMS) to win in combat.

In the past O/Ts have used many of the same techniques and approaches covered in this Handbook. This Handbook captures best practices from past and current O/Ts and from other proven learning practices. One reason for this Handbook is because some O/Ts may feel unqualified to observe and provide feedback on leadership actions. This Handbook shows how to treat leadership as a set of skills that can be developed and improved. The rotating training unit should also approach the exercise with a unified mindset to use it as an opportunity to improve leadership skills.

Organization

This handbook begins with describing how O/T's can create an overarching developmental climate. Within this climate, O/T's then learn how to observe and provide feedback to a counterpart leader. The term counterpart leader refers to the unit leader the O/T is assigned to for observational purposes during a rotation or exercise. Providing feedback is then placed within the larger context of guided discovery learning methods. The appendix of this guide includes behavioral descriptions of leadership at various levels of proficiency to support leader observation and feedback.

Desired Outcomes

- O/T's who take action with their counterpart to create a developmental climate that is conducive to the giving and receiving of feedback.
- O/T's who accurately and consistently observe leaders in field situations; identifying their strengths and developmental needs.
- O/T's who model guided discovery learning methods to their counterparts.
- O/T's who can effectively translate their observations into meaningful feedback for their counterpart that encourages self-discovery.
- Rotational leaders who are more aware of their leadership strengths and develop mental needs.
- Rotational leaders who take action, during the rotation, to improve their leadership and the unit's performance.

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Gaining Acceptance

An initial and ongoing objective of an Observer/Trainer (O/T) is to create a climate that supports leader development. A key accomplishment is to be accepted as 'part of the team' by your counterpart leader. This means that your counterpart leader views you as an advisor and coach who facilitates the leader's success. Starting with the first encounter, O/T's position themselves as trusted advisors by communicating and role modeling attributes and competencies that help create a developmental climate. Initial communications with your counterpart might start like this:

- O/T: ***"The only thing I want out of this is to help you (and your staff/unit) maximize your capability - to be the best you can be."*** (Selfless Service, FM 6-22)
- O/T: ***"I am a developmental resource for you. I don't rate you, and this rotation is not your report card. The measuring stick for success here is for you to look back when it's all over and say 'look how far I've come.'"*** (Develop Leaders, FM 6-22)
- O/T: ***"Tell me a little about yourself and your unit, what have you been going through lead ing up to this rotation? How much experience do you have in your current leadership role? After the exercise, what comes next for you and the unit?*** (Build Teamwork and Cohesion, FM 6-22)

The objective of engaging in this kind of communication with your counterparts is as much about listening to their response and understanding their situation as it is about clarifying your role and willingness to be a coaching resource. It is also important to build rapport by sharing something about yourself.

Early in your interaction with your counterpart, briefly share your own experiences – including areas of specialized expertise and where you have less experience. Your candor helps build credibility with your counterpart while at the same time role modeling that it is okay to bring up personal leadership developmental needs.

Activities that Build Teamwork and Cohesion

- Carve out time in the rotation schedule to meet with your counterpart before the actual exercise begins.
- Grab a bite to eat. Guide the conversation to non-CTC rotation topics. Get to know one another (it builds trust).
- Plan some spontaneous and friendly (low resource intensive) games between the O/T team and rotating unit leaders prior to the exercise. Relax and show your human side.

It is important to establish trust and a developmental climate. The rotating training unit has to be receptive to the O/T's role and be engaged and ready to develop. With some individuals it will take the O/T more time interacting to build the necessary level of rapport. Some individuals will seek more attention and feedback and some will want less.

TTPs for Creating a Developmental Climate

Subtle actions on your part build trust and communicate to your counterpart that you are in the role of trainer and developer rather than evaluator. Experienced O/T's use the following techniques to create a developmental climate:

Cover 'em rather than smother 'em
Early in the rotation, plan time away from your counterpart leader. After your initial observations, give them time and space to exercise leadership without being under the spotlight of an O/T. This helps establish your role as a supportive resource rather than an evaluative note taker.

Take an indirect approach
Start off by providing descriptions of what you are observing along with positive and negative outcomes. Allow your counterpart to 'connect the dots' as to what is going well and what needs improvement. The opposite of an indirect approach is to be overly prescriptive, saying things like, "here is what you have to do."

Give every unit and leader a fresh, objective start
Make comparisons between your counterpart leader and an objective standard. Avoid subjective comparisons to past leaders and units (including your own). It is okay to reflect on and leverage your own experience. The bottom line is to observe and assess each leader on individual merit. Avoid thinking of the observation as process to grade leaders.

Familiarize leaders with observation and feedback methods

The leader and unit you are working with should be made aware of your role as an observer and feedback provider. Walk the leaders through the SOAR card method (see Chapter 2) and how you plan to use it to support their leader development. This helps them understand why you take notes during the training exercise. Leaders will also be more supportive of your requests for time during the exercise to provide them with feedback.

STEP TWO | OBSERVING LEADERSHIP

Observe your counterpart leader.

Actions to create a developmental climate will most likely extend into the CTC rotation or exercise itself. At the same time you will need to start observing your counterpart leader. This section provides you with ways to accurately observe and describe leadership.

Seeing Leadership in Your Observations

Observing leadership requires skill, discernment, and practice:

- O/T's must be knowledgeable of the Army Leadership Requirements Model (FM 6-22), the competency language it uses and the action behaviors associated with each competency.
- O/T's need to discern, or differentiate, between leader influencing actions and doc trinal planning processes and procedures.
- O/T's should practice the specific observation of leadership to become experienced in how leader actions are likely to impact Soldier motivation and mission results.

FM 6-22

Leadership is the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.

The leader plays a significant role in the motivation and effectiveness of people in his/her sphere of influence and in the outcome of the missions they perform. A leader completes missions and tasks through - and with - others. Influence is a key component of leadership because that is how a leader impacts others.

Leadership is the art and science of interacting with others – not only through direction and instructions - but by role-modeling and actions. When a leader says one thing but does something that is inconsistent, or does not hold subordinates accountable, this causes confusion and undermines trust. Leadership, according to Army doctrine, is comprised of attributes and core leader competencies, as depicted in Figure 2-2, FM 6-22.

WHAT AN ARMY LEADER IS

CHARACTER
- Army Values
- Empathy
- Warrior Ethos

PRESENCE
- Military bearing
- Physically fit
- Composed and confident
- Resilient

INTELLECTUAL
- Mental agility
- Sound judgement
- Innovation
- Interpersonal tact
- Domain knowledge

LEADS
- Leads others
- Extends influence beyond the chain of command
- Leads by example
- Communicates

DEVELOPS
- Creates a positive environment
- Prepares self
- Develops others

ACHIEVES
- Gets results

WHAT AN ARMY LEADER DOES

LEADS

Leads Others
- Provide purpose, motivation, inspiration
- Enforce standards
- Balance mission and welfare of Soldiers

Leads by Example
- Display character
- Lead with confidence in adverse conditions
- Demonstrate competence

Extends Influence Beyond the Chain of Command
- Build trust outside lines of authority
- Understand sphere, means, and limits of influence
- Negotiate, build consensus, resolve conflict

Leads by Example
- Display character
- Lead with confidence in adverse conditions
- Demonstrate competence

DEVELOPS

Creates a Positive Environment
- Set the conditions for positive climate
- Build teamwork and cohesion
- Encourage initiative
- Demonstrate care for people

Prepares Self
- Be prepared for expected and unexpected challenges
- Expand knowledge
- Maintain self-awareness

Develops Leaders
- Assess developmental needs, Develop on the job.
- Support professional and personal growth
- Help people learn
- Counsel, coach, and mentor
- Build team skills and processes

ACHIEVES

Get Results
- Provide direction, guidance, and priorities
- Develop and execute plans
- Accomplish tasks consistently

Understanding the competencies and attributes in the Army Leadership Requirements Model is critical for O/T's to make careful and accurate observations of counterpart leadership.

The core leader competencies include how Army leaders ***lead*** people, ***develop*** themselves, their subordinates, and organizations, and ***achieve*** mission accomplishment.

Core Leader Competency Categories

- ***Lead*** – Leaders set goals and establish a vision, motivate or influence others to pursue the goals, communicate and come to a shared understanding, serve as a role model by displaying character, confidence, and competence, and influence outside the chain of command.
- ***Develop*** – Leaders foster teamwork, express care for individuals, promote learning, maitain competence and self awareness, coach, counsel and mentor others, and foster job development.
- ***Achieve*** – Leaders set priorities, organize taskings, manage resources, execute plans to accomplish the mission and achieve goals.

Attributes are characteristics that are an inherent part of a leader's total core, physical, and intellectual aspects, and shape how leaders behave in their environment.

Attribute Categories

- ***Displays Character*** – Factors internal and central to a leader, that which make up an individual's core: Adheres to Army Values, displays empathy and the Warrior Ethos.
- ***Displays Presence*** – How a leader is perceived by others based on the leader's outward appearance, demeanor, actions and words: Military bearing, physical fitness, composure, confidence and resilience.
- ***Displays Intellectual Capacity*** – Mental tendencies or resources that shape a leader's con ceptual abilities and affect a leader's duties and responsibilities: Mentally agile, sound judgment, innovative, tactful around others, technically and tactically proficient, culturally and geopolitically aware.

Accurate, Descriptive Observations

Observing leadership is accomplished by watching how a leader interacts with and influences others. Written directives, verbal communications and leader actions all provide indications of how a leader influences others. O/T's also learn about their counterparts' leadership by observing for reactions by peers, subordinates, and superiors.

When observing leadership, the following three key components ensure observations are accurate and descriptive:

1. Plan observation around key events.
2. Observe for a pattern of behavior.
3. Record Important observations without delay.

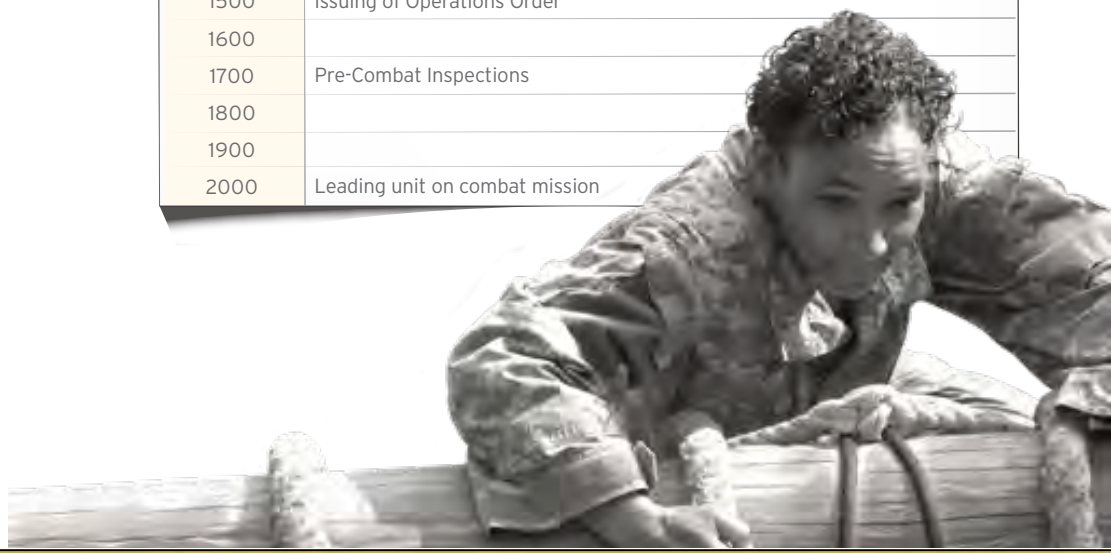
Step 3, record important observations without delay has three important parts to it:
- Use words that depict action.
- Link to effects and outcomes.
- Use the SOAR format.

1. Plan Observations around Key Events

O/T's learn by experience when they need to be present to observe key unit events. The same goes for observing individual leadership. Use a daily calendar to identify events that are likely to compel a leader to demonstrate a considerable number of leadership competencies and attributes. In the example below, the O/T's counterpart is a Company Grade officer.

LEARDER OBSERVED | CPT Smith

Observation Window	Situation to Observe
0800	Scheduled talk with subordinate who performed poorly on mission last night.
0900	
1000	Interview with Media Reporter
1100	
1200	
1300	Negotiation session with village chief
1400	
1500	Issuing of Operations Order
1600	
1700	Pre-Combat Inspections
1800	
1900	
2000	Leading unit on combat mission



2. Observe for a Pattern of Behavior

With time and frequent observation, an O/T gains confidence that they are starting to see a consistent pattern of behavior. It is an O/T judgment call as to when an observation can be considered a pattern of behavior. To observe for a pattern, make a note of how often a leader exhibits the same behavior in a given time period. The frequency of behavior may indicate a pattern. If a period of time has passed, and the O/T finds he/she is able to predict the leader's actions, then a pattern of behavior has likely emerged.

3. Record Important Observations without Delay

Use Words that Depict Action
An O/T needs to describe what the leader is doing when they are in the act of leading. By writing down an observation using action words, the O/T can be sure the leader will be able to recognize it when it is communicated back to them. An observation written down using action words appears like this:

> "SFC Jenkins voice was barely audible and monotone, so that it could not be heard by Soldiers participating in the mission rehearsal." *

> "CPT Rider looked directly into the eyes of each Platoon Leader as he issued the order." *

Link to Effects and Outcomes
The impact of your counterpart's leadership may be immediately observed in the verbal and non-verbal reactions of others who are in direct proximity to the leader. Or it could be that leaders and Soldiers in subordinate echelons will feel the positive or negative consequences of a leader's action. Leadership can also have an impact on task or mission accomplishment. Trace mission results and look for leader actions that contribute to success or lack of success. There could also be a delay in time between the leader's actions and their consequences. The impact may not reveal itself for hours or days. The following is a correct example of an observation that includes an impact:

> ***Observation:*** SFC Jenkins voice was barely audible and monotone, so that it could not be heard by Soldiers participating in the mission rehearsal.*

> ***Impact:*** One vehicle missed making a turn on the convoy route. The vehicle drove down a road banned from traffic due to IED's. Vehicle attacked by IED. 2 WIA and 1 destroyed vehicle.

NOTE

Observational notes in raw form typically go through some translation before they are verbally provided to the observed leader. See Chapter 3 for the 'how to' of feedback delivery.

Use the SOAR Format

Important details of a leadership observation may be lost or be inaccurately recorded if not written down soon after occurrence. Use a format for recording your observations called a SOAR card. SOAR stands for situation, observation, associate & assess, and reinforce & recommend. SOAR provides a quick, accurate, and consistent way to take notes. Accurate and complete notes will come in handy when providing the leader with feedback.

Situation – Describe the situation and conditions of the assessment. This should include the time, location, event or other context of the situation. If known, also try to capture the prevailing leadership relationship or climate between the leader and those being led. In later discussions, this information will help you and your counterpart recall the event and circumstances surrounding it.

Observation – Describe the leadership behaviors that the leader exhibits. Focus on competencies within Lead, Develop and Achieve, and note evidence of the attributes within Character, Presence, and Intellectual Capacity. Use this section to note both leader strengths and developmental needs. Be sure to note the impact of the leader's behavior on the mission and/or Soldiers.

Associate & Assess – Identify and associate the FM 6-22 competency or attribute that best describes the leader actions. Use the appendix of this guide to assess leader actions and determine whether they meet the standard, or represent a leader strength or development need. Write the competency or attribute in this box, across from the associated behavior in the observation box.

Reinforce & Recommend – Record how you will reinforce the leader's behavior through praise or correction. Identify actions for the leader to sustain or improve, and other recommendations for change. These notes are to help you plan the feedback you will discuss with the leader.

Situation: (Time, Place, Mission and Conditions)

Observation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

Associate & Assess: (Identify competency – attribute and assess proficiency)

[Assess: + Strength; ✓Standard; (DN) Need]

Reinforce & Recommend: (Note appropriate feedback, praise, or correction, and the recommendations for action to sustain/improve leader behavior)

NOTE

The SOAR card is not a score sheet for your counterpart's performance, nor is it a report you hand over to your counterpart. Rather, SOAR is a method to help you, the observer, record leadership observations and plan a leadership feedback discussion with your counterpart.

Associate & Assess using Behavioral Indicators

When observing leadership, it is important to frame observations in a context consistent with Army doctrine. The appendix to this guide includes descriptions of behavioral indicators for each of the competencies and attributes in the Leadership Requirements Model of Army Leadership, FM 6-22.

Using the Behavioral Indicators

Behaviors are grouped into categories of the core leader competencies (Lead, Develop and Achieve) and leader attributes (A Leader of Character, A Leader with Presence, and A Leader with Intellectual Capacity). These descriptions provide examples of three levels of proficiency for behaviors, including those that represent a developmental need, the standard, and a strength.

When using this rubric in the appendix, first review the behavior that appears in the center column - this represents the standard for leader performance. A leader demonstrating quality leadership to standard will exhibit the behaviors described in the center box. The box on the left describes behaviors that indicate a developmental need (leader falls short of the standard), while the box to the right describes behaviors that indicate a strength (leader exceeds the standard). The figure below provides an example of how the behavioral indicators are presented.

Developmental Need	Standard	Strength
(DN)	✓	+
Leader behaviors that represent a developmental need	Leader behaviors that represent the standard	Leader behaviors that represent a strength

As you compare your observations with the behavioral indicators in the appendix, determine the level of proficiency of the leader you are observing. In the 'Associate & Assess' box the SOAR card, write down the competency and use a short-hand method to indicate whether the leader meets the standard , demonstrates a strength +, or a developmental need (DN).

Example of Leader Observation:

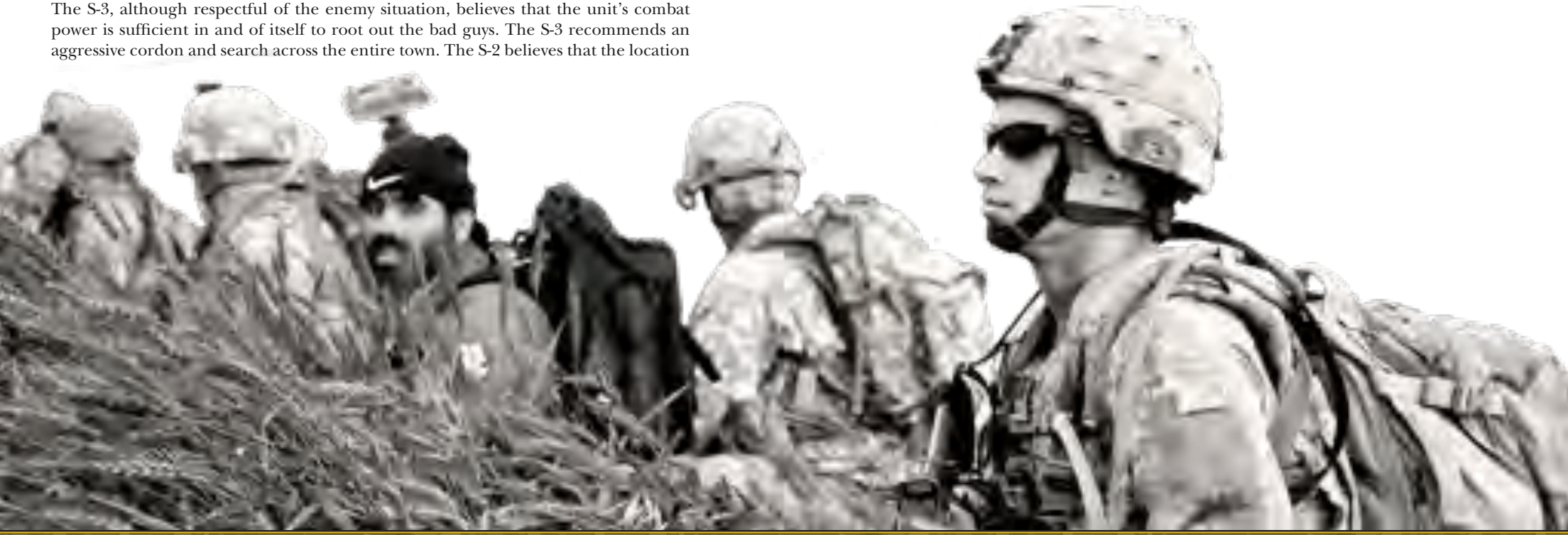
Situation

A number of bad guys are operating in a rural village. A prominent village chief was convinced by the previous unit commander to support US Army forces, but the village chief's support came with a price tag – pay for his militia to guard town checkpoints and provide intelligence. The incoming battalion commander is seeking to "understand the problem" in his new area of operation. Prior to being briefed by his primary staff, he attempts to energize his subordinates by reiterating the importance of attaining success in the mission early on. The tone of his statements appears to motivate those to whom he speaks. However, while being briefed by his primary staff, it is obvious that he defers to his operations officer (S-3) and discounts the assessment of his more junior intelligence officer (S-2).

The S-3, although respectful of the enemy situation, believes that the unit's combat power is sufficient in and of itself to root out the bad guys. The S-3 recommends an aggressive cordon and search across the entire town. The S-2 believes that the location of the bad guys can be identified by taking some time to work with the village chief and his militia. To date, the battalion commander has ignored this advice and actually cancelled two scheduled meetings with the village chief – citing the importance of site visits to unit outposts throughout the area of operations, and daily meetings at higher headquarters.

During the staff meeting, the commander asks the S-3 for his assessment, indicates non-verbal approval of what he hears, and does not ask follow-up questions. He then asks for the S-2 assessment. The S-2 says "I think we need to continue working with the village chief to maintain trust and leverage the manpower and intelligence he can bring to the table." The commander cuts him off by saying "that's the same thing you've been saying over and over again. It's not working."

It is evident the commander agrees with the S-3, and believes the problem is the bad guys. He is not open to hearing the S-2's suggestion that the unit's poor relations with locals who could help find the bad guys is causing a lack of cooperation. In a sidebar conversation, the commander tells his XO to "Reel in the S-2 to what we are trying to do operationally."



The commander, upon recommendation by the S-3, orders an aggressive, town-wide cordon and search to be planned and executed from 0200 to 0500. He believes that by showing the unit's might, the village chief will better understand who is in charge and provide the needed support.

Observation

Right off the bat, the O/T makes note of the positive tone the commander attempts to set – he energizes troops and demonstrates the Warrior Ethos by conveying the importance of success in the mission.

- The O/T associates the commander's behavior with modeling the Warrior Ethos, and assesses this as a Strength (+)
- The O/T associates how the commander energized others as an influence technique within Leads Others ✓, as this set the tone for the briefing. This is assessed as meeting the Standard ( )

The O/T is also attuned to the leadership dynamic between the commander and his staff. While the commander is supportive and open to the S-3's viewpoint, he is dismissive of the S-2. This behavior has an effect on the climate within the unit, and could potentially damage the S-2's confidence and self-esteem.

- The O/T associates the commander's dismissiveness to input with Creates a Positive Environment, as input from others was not encouraged. This is assessed as a potential Developmental Need (DN).
  - + Follow-up to this observation should also point out the effect this unit climate could have on the subordinate leader's (S-2) self-esteem and motivation.

- The O/T associates the commander's lack of consideration for alternative solu tions or timeframes for effects with Mental Agility, as the commander only attended to immediate conditions and surface outcomes when making decisions. This is assessed as a potential Developmental Need (DN).

Finally, the O/T makes note of the commander's reluctance to continue working with the Village chief (at the S-2's recommendation). This is potentially an important opportunity to build an alliance and establish trust.

- The O/T associates this missed opportunity with Extends Influence beyond the Chain of Command, as the commander could have attempted to build a trusting relationship outside the organization. This is assessed as a potential Developmental Need (DN).

Refer to the appendix to see how the O/T associated these behaviors with the competencies and attributes. These observations are captured in the SOAR format on the next page.

Situation: (Time, Place, Mission and Conditions)

BN Cdr receives briefing at 1900 14-Nov
Unit assumed control of this area one week ago
S-2 and S-3 brief the Cdr on latest intel and plans.
Decision to cordon & search town is made at recommendation of S-3.
S-2 input downplayed and recommendation ignored.

Observation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

Emphasis on attaining success in communication with staff

Uses positive tone and energetic talk to communicate importance of the mission.

Was dismissive of the S-2's assessment and recommendation

No consideration to alternative solutions or timeframes

Missed opportunity to build trusting relationship with the Village chief

Associate & Assess: (Identify competency – attribute and assess proficiency)

Warrior Ethos +

Leads Others ✓
(conveys significance of the work)

Creates a Pos. Environment (DN) (encourages open & candid communication)

Mental Agility (DN)

Extends Influence (DN) (Builds trust with those outside lines of authority)

[Assess: + Strength; ✓Standard; (DN) Need]

Reinforce & Recommend: (Note appropriate feedback, praise, or correction, and the recommendations for action to sustain/improve leader behavior)

Reinforce: Praise for initial motivation, demonstrating Warrior Ethos in leading. Help Cdr realize the effect of his actions on the working climate in the unit, and understand the potential impact of marginalizing a junior officer's input.

Recommend: Remain open to diverse points of view, and aware of the climate being set. Increase inclusiveness in communications and strive for a shared understanding. First determine the most effective strategy for problem solving, and consider second and third order effects beyond surface outcomes.

Capitalize on opportunities to meet with local leaders (Village chief) and build trust. These contacts can increase understanding of the unit's situation and area of operations.

Once you have observed leadership, it is important to plan how you will deliver your observations to your counterpart.

This chapter provides you with examples and techniques for the verbal delivery of SOAR card notes discussed in the previous chapter. Verbal delivery examples throughout this chapter are annotated with the part of SOAR they come from [example - SOAR, Situation]. This will help you understand how to apply SOAR written notes to the verbal delivery of feedback.

The delivery methods that follow, when done correctly, provide a leader with an understanding of the impact behaviors have on consequences, all based on careful and planned observations. The two-way communication techniques used for delivering an observation should motivate your counterpart to start acting in ways that improve leader and unit performance.

Preparation and Timing

Prior to the start of a training exercise, the SOAR form and its use as a feedback tool should be explained to the unit and its leaders. Emphasize the developmental nature of the feedback. Armed with this knowledge, unit leadership will be more supportive of your efforts to time the delivery of your feedback.

The timing of a discussion of leadership observations can be critical, and a deciding factor between whether a situation is perceived as evaluative or developmental. Ultimately, determining the appropriate time for the delivery of an observation is at the discretion of the O/T. Consider the following when planning your delivery approach:

"During the Action"

Sometimes observations can be delivered as they occur. Part of guided discovery learning relies on "during the action" feedback. This is especially true when pointing out to the leader that actions must occur "in the moment" while they can be observed. Care must be taken, however, to not disrupt the training exercise itself.

"Finding a Break in the Action"

Find the right 'break' in the action to deliver your observations. This could be during a lull after a major event has occurred (a major success or a failure).

"End-of-Day or at Completion of a Major Event"

Consider waiting until the end of that day, especially if observations you need to deliver are lengthier and require more discussion. To better enable unit collective learning, wait until after the unit or team AAR is conducted. Then, deliver observations to your counterpart in private, as a mentoring session away from others. This also allows you to align the delivery of your observations of your counterpart's strengths and areas for improvement with those of the unit or team as identified in the AAR, assuming they are congruent.

If observation delivery is best done at the completion of an event, consider letting your counterpart set the time for the discussion. At a minimum, provide a "heads up" about a situation or circumstance you would like to talk about. This allows your counterpart an opportunity to reflect and psychologically prepare to listen and receive. This approach reduces the likelihood your counterpart will be preoccupied, nervous or defensive. Examples of an O/T employing this approach include:

"I'll be back in about 30 minutes and I'd like to talk with you about how things went this morning. I'm going to ask you about how you led the team through the scenario and some of the approaches you took during the decision-making task." [SOAR, Situation]

"The simulation you led your staff through this afternoon was very successful, though I've noted some areas that you could work on. Is there a time you'd prefer to talk later today so I can share my observations and discuss with you?" [SOAR, Situation]

Delivering an Observation

The following steps are an effective way to deliver an observation. These steps represent an indirect approach to providing leadership observations. Once the SOAR card is completed, you are ready to discuss what you have observed, and reinforce and recommend actions. The following steps provide a framework for delivering observations, and flow in a logical sequence.

1. Confirm the Situation
Start by orienting your counterpart's attention to the situation you have observed. State the situation and clarify that your observation was on his/her leadership. Reiterate the information you recorded in the 'Situation' block of the SOAR card.

"I would like to discuss the actions you took in the battlefield simulation you just led with your staff." [SOAR, Situation]

2. Ask for a Self Assessment
Ask your counterpart for a self-assessment of the situation and his or her actions. Guide your questioning to your counterpart's leadership during the given event or situation. The counterpart's response should match your assessment. If it does not, ask more specific questions.

"How effective was the communication between you and the subordinates you were leading? And how could you tell?" [SOAR, Associate and Assess]

"What factors did you observe that may have contributed to miscommunication or a vague understanding among the troops?" [SOAR, Associate and Assess]

3. Clarify and Come to an Agreement
Either confirm or continue probing until your counterpart verbalizes your assessment of the situation. Come to an agreement on the linkage of actions and consequences.

"That is what I saw as well."

"Actually, in my observations I noted that you were directive in your message and didn't ask for questions. Would you agree that this is the approach you took?" [SOAR, Observation]

4. Add your Observations
Include your observations that your counterpart is not aware. Build on what your counterpart has already said to increase his or her self-awareness. Include specific behaviors that had an impact on the consequence or outcome.

"Your assessment is correct. When you asked for other viewpoints, a good sharing of information followed." [SOAR, Observation]

"It was clear some of the staff had differing opinions or other points to add, though the opportunity to share really didn't arise." [SOAR, Observation]

Engage and Expand

Raise questions that will prompt them to think about how to act or respond in the future. Ask them for recommendations about how to take better actions in the future, to avoid problems, or take advantage of an opportunity.

"How will you handle a similar situation next time?" [SOAR, transition to Reinforce and Recommend]

"What steps can you take to avoid this outcome in the future?" [SOAR, transition to Reinforce and Recommend]

6. Reinforce – Validate a Strength
Once you and your counterpart are in agreement on the behaviors that contributed to a consequence and a recommendation for the future, provide reinforcement on what your counterpart is doing correctly.

"Your influencing strategies are working for you, keep it up." [SOAR, Reinforce and Recommend]

"Consider closing out staff meetings with more opportunities for questions or discussion. Your pre-meeting planning and organizing is effective – you should continue that." [SOAR, Reinforce and Recommend]

Additional Tips for Providing Feedback

- Focus on the leader's behavior (actions).
- Identify what the leader has control over to change.
- Use focused questions (see Chapter 4) as a form of feedback to create discovery learning.
- Give the leaders the first opportunity to come up with a recommendation to your observation. This promotes their taking ownership and responsibility for it.

Lessons Learned from Delivering Observations

Here are actions O/T's should avoid when delivering an observation to a counterpart. These are especially important when direct observations need to be shared.

- Passing judgment on a counterpart. "You are abrasive when giving orders."
- Vagueness and generality of the message. "You are a good leader."
- Using absolutes or generalities (e.g., always, never). "You never follow-up after meetings."
- Feedback is late or after the fact. Leader is not able to act on it. "Two days ago you gave ambiguous instructions at the mission rehearsal."
- Observations applied to general traits or the total person. "Your personality is that of an introvert."

It is also important for O/T's to learn from the delivery of their observations. Employing indirect methods takes practice. It is helpful for O/T's to reflect on their delivery after an interaction. Self-reflective questions include:

- Was my counterpart receptive to what we discussed?
- What nonverbal cues were observed during our discussion?
- Based on my questions, how easily did s/he identify the behaviors that needed to change?
- Did my counterpart ask for techniques or ideas on how to change or improve?
- Is there evidence that my counterpart is taking action on the observations?

Once observations have been delivered, look for the next opportunity where leadership can be observed. From there, gauge if or how well the observation was received, what steps the leader has taken to change behavior, and what impact the change is having on unit outcomes.

Counterpart Receptiveness to Feedback

Trust and a developmental climate are critical to ensuring a counterpart is receptive to O/T observations. If an O/T is perceived to be genuinely interested in helping and developing a counterpart, the leader will be more attuned to listen and remain receptive to observations than if there is doubt or mistrust about motives. O/T's must convince their counterparts that the appropriate role is to support and guide learning and development.

To gauge counterpart receptiveness, remain attuned to verbal and non-verbal cues from your counterpart. These may be conveyed in the form of verbal disagreement or resistance, or non-verbal gestures such as folded arms, rolling eyes, or a lack of attentiveness.

If you sense your counterpart is becoming defensive to the delivery of your observations:

- Reaffirm the intent of your feedback – to maximize your counterpart's capabilities so that optimal unit performance is achieved.
- Remind the leader that your observations are for the purpose of development – not evaluation or judgment. You are developmental resource for the leader and the unit.
- Reiterate to your counterpart what they have been doing well, and note any incremental progress made thus far.

Prior to this chapter you were provided with the fundamental skills needed by an O/T to foster the development of the counterpart leader. Underpinning all developmental activity is the accurate observation of leadership. Armed with accurate observations, the O/T engages the leader in two-way communication to effectively deliver the actions and behaviors that have been observed. Effective delivery techniques foster leader acceptance, ownership, and action.

In addition to directly delivering an observation, O/T's can use more indirect methods. Indirect methods place more responsibility on the leader to identify his or her own strengths and developmental needs. Indirect methods employ the techniques of guided discovery learning. The techniques are designed to engage leaders to discover their learning needs, supported by the O/T's. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to provide the O/T with techniques for implementing guided discovery learning with the counterpart leader.

What is Guided Discovery Learning?

Guided discovery learning is an advanced technique that experienced Observer/Trainers employ to help the counterpart learn. This type of learning is effective because:

- It is the counterpart leader's responsibility to make sense of incoming information and integrate it with his or her personal base of experience and knowledge of relevant doctrine (discovery).
- Counterpart learning and transfer of knowledge to the job are maximized because the O/T keeps the counterpart generally on track through "hints, direction, coaching, feedback, and/or modeling."
- When learning is guided, it enables "deep understanding of targeted concepts, prin ciples, and strategies."

Pure discovery learning is less effective than guided discovery learning. With discovery learning alone:

- The counterpart leader merely executes without having to think about it.
- The counterpart leader makes sense of incoming information using whatever criteria they feel is relevant.
- The O/T is passive, providing no guidance or feedback concerning the rules or criteria that his/her counterpart is using for problem solving.

Guided discovery learning is also more effective than prescriptive methods in which the O/T gives his/her counterpart the correct answer to a problem. Prescriptive methods:

- Require neither thinking nor deep learning by the counterpart. The counterpart merely executes the prescribed solution given to them by the O/T.
- The O/T is directive and prescriptive, providing not just rules or criteria for problems solving, but full blown solutions to the problem. The counterpart leader provides little or no expertise.

NOTE

There may be brief periods of time when an O/T allows pure discovery learning to occur or has to go into prescriptive teaching mode. However, the primary method of learning an O/T should strive to maintain is guided discovery learning.

Guided Discovery Learning Techniques

Guided discovery learning techniques are an effective way to deliver leadership observations (such as those documented through SOAR). The following techniques are methods commonly employed by Observer/Trainers when developing the leadership skills of their counterparts.

Review the following techniques to determine feedback methods conducive to your style of counterpart leader develop. Work these methods into your delivery of leadership observations when interacting with your counterpart.

- Positive Reinforcement
- Open-Ended Questioning
- Multiple Perspectives
- Scaling Questions
- Cause and Effect Analysis
- Recovery from Setbacks
- Leverage "Perfect Intelligence"

This chapter concludes with ideas for the special situation of working with non-responsive leaders.

Technique: Positive Reinforcement

When to use it?

The first observations of a counterpart leader ought to be focused on what they are doing right. Commenting on positive actions up front shows a commitment to balanced and fair observation. It also builds confidence and confirms performance that is productive and accomplishing an objective.

(Blank application on page 59.)

How to Employ this Method

1. Identify leader behaviors that should be continued.
2. Verbalize encouragement to the leader after behavior is observed.
3. Be specific, and identify the behavior you want to reinforce.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: Establish contact and interact with others who share common interests (Leads – Extends Influence beyond the Chain of Command); Introduce new ideas in the face of challenging circumstances (Intellectual Capacity – Innovation).

O/T: Hey, good work this morning at the negotiations! I've never seen a leader handle negotiations with a local leader quite the way you did. Bringing gifts for the village chief's children was very innovative.

Providing positive reinforcement does not come naturally to everyone. For people who don't readily give positive feedback, practice with a small set of sayings. Other examples include:

- The climate you set with the troops this morning shows you are on the right track.
- The success the unit had today was in large part due to your communication skills.
- I wish there were more leaders who delegate responsibilities like you do.
- Great job stepping in and coaching that junior officer through his task today.

NOTE

When providing positive reinforcement, remember to be genuine and identify the specific leadership behavior you want to reinforce.

Technique: Open-Ended Questioning

The mere asking of an open-ended question gets your counterpart to start thinking about the situation and his or her leadership relative to unit performance. Questions put broadly maximize the potential for counterpart discovery. More specific questions may be needed if he/she is not identifying issues that need attention.

Advantages of this approach?

It is a good way to give your counterpart hints about what they may need to do differently, yet allow them to discover on their own what the actual issue is. In this way, responsibility for evaluation is with your counterpart, as is ownership for fixing the situation.

When to use it?

This technique is useful when the leader has time to listen to the O/T, reflect, and do something about the situation at hand. Thus, the busiest part of mission planning or execution is not the most appropriate time to ask an open ended question - unless it has a critical connection to reflective thought.

How to Employ this Method

- Identify the outcome you want the leader to realize.
- Ask general questions about factors related to that outcome.
- Ask more specific questions and provide hints until the leader connects the outcome with his or her actions.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: (Lead – Communicates).

O/T starts with general questions:

- How have things been going today?
- What have you been focusing your efforts on today?
- Are you satisfied with the results of your efforts?

If needed, transition to more specific questions:

- How did your role in the operations order go today?
- Why where there so many questions asked about the operations order?
- What indications do you have that subordinate units understood the priorities you communicated?

Only when needed, hone in on the exact need identified:

- What evidence do you have that your communication of the concept of the operation was clear and articulate?
- What indications do you have that your peers were convinced that this concept was going to achieve the commander's intent?
- What steps have you taken today to establish contact and build trust with the new players in this scenario?
- How could you improve next time in a similar situation?

Follow-Up to Open-ended Questioning

1. Listen closely to the leader's response.
2. Confirm and reinforce what you hear to be an accurate assessment.
3. Probe further or offer outcome-based evidence if they are not accurately assessing the situation.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: Encourages open and candid communications (Develop – Creates a Positive Environment). Apply multiple perspectives and approaches to assessment, conceptualization and evaluation (Intellectual Capacity – Mental Agility).

O/T: I noticed there was confusion among subordinate units as to why the use of cordon and search is best. Why was that?

Counterpart: I went over it two to three times with them. As I was talking it through each time I did use some different words each time. Perhaps that led to confusion.

O/T: I agree with you on that point. When planning the operation, how did your staff differ in their opinions of the situation with the local leaders?

Counterpart: Well my S-3 had the right idea and the only one pushing back on this was the S-2.

O/T: How did you handle these differences and come to a tactical decision based upon staff input?

Counterpart: I didn't think the S-2 had a grasp of what needed to be done so I pushed ahead with the S-3's recommendation. Though now it appears the S-2's assessment had merit.

O/T: What can you do next time to improve the decision making process when generating strategy?

Counterpart: I'll need consider each viewpoint a little more closely and generate discussion of potential second-order effects.

Technique: Multiple Perspectives

This technique helps a leader see the situation they are in from another person's perspective (or a different frame of reference).

A complementary step to the decision making process is to understand a problem and appreciate its complexities before seeking to solve it, a concept known as Design. O/T's help a counterpart reframe the current situation through open-ended questions. The purpose of this technique is to prompt counterparts to think creatively and innovatively in their approach.

When to use it?

This technique should be used when a counterpart appears to be stuck in a limited way of thinking, or unable to break away from a mental block.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: Form sound opinions and make sensible decisions and reliable guesses (Intellectual Capacity – Sound Judgment); Reflect on what is learned and organize to create new knowledge (Develop – Prepares Self (Knowledge Management).

O/T: If you were a fly on the wall in your targeting meetings, what would you observe yourself saying and doing that contributes to the discussion being effective? ...being ineffective?

Counterpart: As for making the meetings more effective, I think I quickly make decisions on targeting priorities and we go back to work getting steel on prioritized targets quickly...

As for what makes the meetings ineffective..., I guess I don't ask many questions about the quality of the intelligence that is supporting our targeting. We have ended up wasting much of our fires resources on questionable and dated intelligence.

O/T: Ok, why don't you try a few changes and see what effect it has. Which person or evidence would be able to tell you it is more effective?

Counterpart: My Executive Officer is pretty observant... he would tell me if my changes are improving the process.

Technique: Scaling Questions

The scaling technique is useful in facilitating a leader's self understanding of how difficult or challenging a problem is in relative terms. It also facilitates incremental improvement and helps an individual recognize that progress has been made.

How to Employ this Method

1. Using a 10-point scale (where 10 is highest or best and 1 is lowest or worst) ask your counterpart to assess his or her performance on an action or behavior (e.g., competency).
2. Ask the counterpart what they could do differently to improve performance one or two points to the scale.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: Form sound opinions and make sensible decisions and reliable guesses (Intellectual Capacity – Sound Judgment).

O/T: On a scale of 1 to 10 with ten being highest, how would you rate the timeliness of your decisions once you receive information?

Counterpart: I would probably put it at a 5. I was waiting on more intelligence on the location of the suspects. Subordinate units barely had enough time to put out their operations order. They did not have time to rehearse cordon and search procedures.

O/T: What could you do to move that rating just one point on the scale?

Counterpart: Next time I need to decide to execute with less than perfect intelligence and keep to our timetable. I can always issue a FRAGO if more intelligence comes in. We need to get out there and find the bad guys before they have a chance to move.

O/T: (after counterpart executes a quicker decision) Now that you implemented changes in your decision making and allowed them time to work, where on the scale would you rate it now?

Counterpart: I would put my decision-making speed this time at around a 7. I am still cautious, but by huddling my key intelligence experts briefly I was able to clarify the intelligence picture, make a decision, and keep the orders process flowing.

Technique: Cause and Effect Analysis

Leader actions are often several layers or processes removed from their consequences. The cause and effect analysis is a method to identify the root (or original) cause of consequences and outcomes.

Why this Approach?

It is not always obvious to leaders how certain behaviors affect outcomes further down the line. This method of analysis is important because a leader and unit will continue to experience a negative outcome until the actual root cause is identified and resolved. Many times only subsequent effects (or symptoms) of a problem are addressed, leaving the root cause intact.

When to use it?

When there is limited time and capability for personnel to address shortcomings. Identification of a root cause focuses on remedial actions that will fix the problem and change the consequence.

How to Employ this Method

1. Asking What? Show or depict consequence or outcome data. Ask what is causing it to happen (what rather than why).
2. Continue to ask "What?" and "What else?" until all causes have been identified. This should be worked out graphically in a notebook or on a whiteboard.
3. Depict the relationships between causes and effect (see example).
4. Identify which causes, if removed or changed, would prevent reoccurrence of the outcome or consequence.
5. Identify solutions or changes that can be implemented without causing other negative outcomes or consequences to occur.
6. Coach the leader on being proactive about using Root Cause techniques to avoid negative outcomes before they occur.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: Builds and maintains alliances, and remains firm, fair and respectful to gain trust (Leads – Extends Influence beyond the Chain of Command); Anticipate or adapt to uncertain or changing situations (Intellectual Capacity – Mental Agility).

O/T: Let's go through what might have caused the bad guys to get away today.

Counterpart: I am fresh out of answers and all for it.

O/T: What caused the road blocks to be unmanned today?

Counterpart: The local militia did not show up to man them.

O/T: What caused the local militia to not show up today?

Counterpart: Well, they did not get paid last week and we have sort of blown off meetings with their leader, the Village chief. I would think they take this as a sign of disrespect.

O/T: What caused the local militia to not get paid last week?

Counterpart: Convoy runs carrying the cash were delayed. We have had a surge in IED's and all of the routes had to be re-cleared.

O/T: Given this sequence of events, what could have been done differently to ensure the militia was manning the check points?

Counterpart: For one, if I had been meeting regularly with the village chief, I could have let him know what was going on and give assurances of eventual payment. Second, if I had been told we were having route problems, aircraft could have flown the cash to us. Getting cash to the militia was just not a critical event I or my staff was staying on top of...

O/T: I agree. The relationship and trust you establish with the village chief has direct effects on many of the unit's outcomes.

Technique: Recovery from Setbacks

When a counterpart leader experiences a difficult situation, setback, or seemingly insurmountable challenge, an O/T can help restore confidence and prevent conditions from going from bad to worse.

How to Employ this Method

1. Reinforces a strength; a leadership behavior the individual is performing well. Help the leader recognize that he/she is already successfully handling some part of the task.
2. Ask open-ended questions to increase the leader's awareness of the situation, and probe for solutions.
3. Provide recommendations if/when the leader is unable to arrive at an appropriate course of action.
4. Increase the percentage of positive reinforcement and support, relative to negative reinforcement.

EXAMPLE

Leader Competency: Establishes and imparts clear intent and purpose (Lead – Leads Others); Determines information-sharing strategies (Lead – Communicates); Displays understanding of the importance of building alliances (Lead - Extends Influence beyond the Chain of Command).

O/T: I heard about the setback you experienced this morning. The local populace is refusing to cooperate with your unit. Is this correct?

Counterpart: Yes, we are getting zero intelligence from the locals and we have had a rise in reported civilian abuses. I don't understand it. In my commander's intent I emphasized to achieve our end state we must gain the trust and confidence of the local populace, but that does not seem to be happening.

O/T: You definitely have an understanding of the importance of trust and the need for influence with the local populace. How about let's talk through the different options of what you might do differently to turn this around. When was the last time you did some serious battlefield circulation and met with subordinate leaders?

Counterpart: The last time I got out to visit with subordinate units was a week ago.

O/T: So it is way past due to get out there - I'll walk with you! Let's exchange perceptions to better understand why your commander's intent is not being implemented at the small unit level. Let's talk communication strategy and the unit's background in working with locals.

With the recovery from setbacks technique, the O/T lends support and encouragement while helping the individual probe for actions they have taken in the past that might be useful in improving the current challenge to get the leader back on track.

NOTE

The Recovery from setbacks method should be used to restore confidence and motivate a leader, but not as a safety net that prevents learning from challenges.

Technique: Leverage "Perfect Intelligence"

By virtue of position, an Observer/Trainer often knows something is going wrong or right before the counterpart leader knows it. CTC data collection systems provide the O/T with "perfect intelligence" on any given scenario. There is an art to knowing when to impart aspects of that "perfect intelligence" to a leader. A great deal of learning can occur by providing leaders with hints and bits of information – well short of full understanding.

O/T's carefully weigh the pros and cons of providing a leader with hints during training exercises. It is important to allow situations and events to unfold without premature intervention. If the O/T provides information or solutions too soon, the value of a situation for leader development can be diminished, as situations of ambiguity and adversity compel leaders to eventually adapt and problem-solve on their own.

Yet, an O/T does not want to hold on to information that may inhibit learning during the exercise itself. Without hints, a leader may experience a situation and its consequences, but not effectively learn from it. With hints and additional information, a leader is set off on a learning expedition while the situation itself is still evolving. The inquisitive leader will take action to follow up on the O/T's lead and find out why systems and/or people did not perform to expectations, a learning expedition that is valuable in and of itself.

EXAMPLE

O/T: I heard the bad guys got away today, any idea what happened?

Counterpart: We thought we had every escape route covered... I can't figure out how they got away.

O/T: Are you aware that your local militia did not show up today to man their checkpoints?

Counterpart: No I did not know that. At the rehearsal they all nodded in agreement to the plan. And we received reports by radio that all of their vehicle inspections had turned up negative. I better check into the situation and see what happened.

Special Situation: Working with Non-Responsive Leaders

There will be times when a leader does not respond to any of the previously mentioned feedback or discovery learning methods. When this occurs, the O/T might first reflect on why this is occurring and if there is anything the O/T might do differently to trigger a leader response. Ultimately the responsibility for learning lies with the observed leader. Even in such difficult situations there are techniques to use that may gain the leader's attention and create learning opportunities.

How to Employ this Method

1. Redirect your efforts to work with the leader's subordinates, peers, or superior. They are most likely feeling the consequences of the leader's behavior. Support the leader's adaptation to the identified developmental needs by providing solutions and taking action to mitigate impact on the unit's mission. The leader will notice the change in unit mission performance and want to know why it is occurring.
2. Resources and time permitting, swap places with a fellow O/T for a time, or have another O/T observe the non-responsive leader. Compare notes and see if your observations are consistent with that of the other O/T.
3. Leverage the experience of the O/T team. Talk the situation over with O/T's you know that are good at observing leadership. Obtain their perspectives and ideas on how to work with non-responsive leaders.

Summary: Leader Observation and Guided Discovery

Observing for Leadership

- Identify a time and situation to observe leader behavior
- Talk over leader observation and feedback techniques with a peer
- Refresh on doctrinal leadership references
- Know your counterpart's background and experience
- Observe for leadership
- Determine the appropriate time to deliver the observation

Delivering an Observation to Your Counterpart

- Confirm the Situation
- Ask for a Self Assessment
- Clarify and Come to an Agreement
- Add your Observations (specific behaviors)
- Raise Future-Oriented Questions; Ask for a Recommendation
- Reinforce something they are doing correctly (validate a strength)

Return to Observation and Follow-up

- Allow your counterpart time and space to adjust his or her actions
- Observe for a change in leader actions
- Give brief verbal and non-verbal reinforcement when changes in behavior are observed
- Observe for changes in outcomes and consequences
- Bring leader's attention to changes in outcomes and consequences - reinforce success

"BE THE EXAMPLE"

Role Model behavior you want to see in others

Applying SOAR in the field

Review the behavioral indicators before you observe the leadership of your counterpart. Do this so you can associate your observations with the various levels of proficiency under each competency and attribute. Prior to an observed event, create a table of four boxes in a notebook or other piece of paper like so:

Situation:	
Observation:	Associate & Assess:
Reinforce & Recommend:	

Note: Draw the boxes large enough so there is sufficient space to write.

1. Before the observed event, record the **situation** in the top box. Include information such as the date/time, place, and mission or task your counterpart leader is involved in. Also note any other key players in the situation and the climate of their relationship (if known).

2. Observe for leadership. During and immediately following an event, record your observations of leadership in the **observations** box.

3. Refer to the behavioral indicators in the appendix of this guide to associate observed behaviors with the competencies and attributes. Indicate proficiency as either a developmental need, meeting the standard, or a strength. In the **associate/assess** box, associate each competency or attribute with one of the following symbols:
- Strength (+)
- Meets Standard (✓)
- Developmental need (DN)

4. Following the event, record how you will **reinforce** the behaviors you have observed, and note **recommendations** you will make to the leader. Make these notes in the bottom box.

Delivering SOAR using Guided Discovery Learning

When planning your approach to deliver these observations to your counterpart leader, refer to the notes you recorded. In your delivery, be prepared to highlight your counterpart's strengths (+), where they meet the standard (✓) and most importantly, his/her developmental needs (DN). The discussion with your counterpart should lead to reinforcement and recommendations from you.

Engage in a guided discovery learning conversation with your counterpart. Ask open-ended questions to help your counterpart realize the impact his or her actions had on the mission and Soldier outcomes. Guide your counterpart toward the realization of strengths and improvement of developmental needs.

A Review of the Process for Delivering an Observation:

(Remember the acronym CA CARS)

1. Confirm the Situation
2. Ask for a Self Assessment
3. Clarify and Come to an Agreement
4. Add your Observations
5. Raise Future-Oriented Questions; Ask for Recommendation
6. Strengthen the Leader – Validate and Reinforce Positives

Review the examples on the following pages to see how the SOAR observation and assessment method is recorded and how these observations are delivered to the observed leader.

(Blank application on page 59.)

EXAMPLE

Background:

At FOB Bender, an O/T is paired with SFC Olson, who is about to lead a 9 vehicle convoy to an assembly area (AA) 12 km away. SFC Olson's mission is to successfully deliver all 9 vehicles to the AA. He leads 5 subordinate NCOs and 8 junior enlisted Soldiers.

Employing the SOAR Observation and Assessment method:

Situation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

1900 14MAR - FOB Bender
SFC Olson leads convoy of 9 vehicles
9 drivers and 13 other troops (5 NCOs and 8 junior enlisted)
High morale and enthusiasm among the unit

Observation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

Provided initial guidance and followed-up; ensured everyone understood objective and requirements and kept in contact

Promoted optimistic expectations and attitudes among troops

Ensured PCI were completed by all drivers

Improperly wore kneepads around ankles

Missed opportunities to delegate leadership responsibility to subordinates during this task

Mission completed

Associate & Assess: (Identify competency – attribute and assess proficiency)

Communicates +

Creates Pos. Environment √

Leads Others √

Leads by Example (DN)

Develops Leaders (DN)

Gets Results √

[Assess: + Strength; √Standard; (DN) Need]

Reinforce & Recommend: (Note appropriate feedback, praise, or correction, and the recommendations for action to sustain/improve leader behavior)

Reinforce- Troops and drivers were prepared, well informed, and motivated

Recommend- (Leads by Example) Several junior enlisted Soldiers wore ***kneepads around ankles*** *violating the standard*

Reinforce - Mission completed successfully – ***but missed opportunities to delegate/develop*** *subordinate leaders*

EXAMPLE

Upon recording these observations, the O/T in this situation then engages SFC Olson in guided discovery learning.

(Confirm the situation - Ask for self assessment)
O/T: How do you think this mission went?

SFC Olson: It went well - we completed the mission because everyone knew what they were doing and stayed motivated.

(Come to an agreement - Add your observations)
O/T: I agree - your initial guidance on the task ensured everyone understood the objectives, and you promoted positive attitudes among them. How else did you ensure success for the drivers?

SFC Olson: We have some newer troops so I went around and made sure everyone had done pre-combat inspections of their vehicles and gear. We made a few corrections after that and were all good.

(Open-ended questions to reveal developmental needs – Add your observations)
O/T: I definitely think the PCI contributed to your success. But, given you had other experienced SSGs with you, could one of them have personally checked on the PCIs?

SFC Olson: I guess they could have, and then reported to me. I got caught in the moment and wanted to be positive we were all ready to go.

(Reinforce – Open-ended questions to reveal developmental needs)
O/T: Delegating something like that can go a long way – those SSGs will have your job some day. You had a lot of visibility before the convoy left – it's clear the troops respect you. But was there anything about your appearance that might have conveyed the wrong message about standards?

SFC Olson: You mean my kneepads? I meant to take them off but I started feeling rushed to get going.

(Add your observations - Reinforce)
O/T: I noticed several Soldiers also wearing kneepads around their ankles – including you – which is not to standard. Demonstrating the standard is an easy way to set expectations of others.

EXAMPLE

Background:

In the main TOC, an O/T is paired with CPT Erickson, a battle captain working in a BCT. CPT Erickson's duties include the conduct of periodic intelligence briefings.

Employing the SOAR Observation and Assessment method:

Situation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

07APR to 10APR – BCT Tactical Operations Command
CPT Erickson has been briefing the BCT commander on intelligence-gathering in the area. Coordination with personnel outside his team has been minimal.

Observation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

Briefings are lucid, concise, and tailored to the audience

Briefing content demonstrates a firm understanding and ability to manage knowledge

Changes to conditions required new approaches to collect information; Erickson evaluates effectively and presented well thought-out information

Demonstrates knowledge of facts and relevant geopolitical awareness

Did not act on opportunity to engage with allied partners that visited, though information sharing is needed

Associate & Assess: (Identify competency – attribute and assess proficiency)

Communicates, Interpersonal Tact +

Prepares Self ✓

Mental Agility +

Domain Knowledge ✓

Extends Influence (DN)

[Assess: + Strength; ✓Standard; (DN) Need]

Reinforce & Recommend: (Note appropriate feedback, praise, or correction, and the recommendations for action to sustain/improve leader behavior)

Praise – He received few follow-up questions from senior leaders which indicates briefings are thorough and complete

Reinforce - Domain knowledge is driving his success, though finding opportunities to extend influence could improve (Provide Recommendation)

EXAMPLE

Using SOAR Notes to Guide Development:

Upon recording these observations, the O/T in this situation then engages CPT Erickson in guided discovery learning.

(Confirm the situation - Ask for self assessment)
O/T: I'd like to chat about your role in the TOC this week. How do you think the intelligence briefings were received?

CPT Erickson: I'm not certain. I haven't received much feedback. I haven't had to field many questions.

(Come to an agreement – Add your observations)
O/T: That is a good sign. Looking around the room, your superiors have appeared satisfied with the level of detail they are receiving. You have tailored each message to the audience well and ensured a shared understanding of the content. Speaking of audience, there were guests present this morning... did you interact at all with the Allied partners that were visiting?

CPT Erickson: No I didn't. They met with another coordinating cell.

(Open-ended questions to reveal developmental needs – Add your observations)
O/T: They were from the same unit that recently visited the area you gave a briefing on yesterday. What information might they have had to share with you?

CPT Erickson: If they just visited that area they could have provided a lot of perspective on the intel we have. I really should have approached them when they had a break. My team has gathered some intel but not much of it is current.

(Reinforce- Validate a strength)
O/T: I agree. Building relationships with Allied partners can save you a lot of leg work. You have been managing the information you have very well. Continue to look for new sources of information through reliable contacts such as these leaders.

APPENDIX

FM 6-22 Leadership Requirements Model and associated Behavioral Indicators

Core Leader Competencies: Leads

- Leads Others
- Communicates
- Extends Influence Beyond the Chain of Command

What Leads **looks** like during unit training:

LEADS OTHERS

- Development Need

  Inconsistently demonstrates influence techniques, and assessment and monitoring of risk factors during task execution. Allows mission priority to adversely affect subordinate morale, physical condition or safety. Hesitates to act when risk factors escalate.

- Standard

  Influences others effectively. Assesses and routinely monitors the impact of task execution on subordinate welfare. Monitors conditions of subordinate morale and safety. Implements appropriate interventions when conditions jeopardize mission success. Assesses and manages risk.

- Strength

  Demonstrates full range of influence techniques. Continually assesses and monitors mission accomplishment and Soldier welfare. Attends to subordinate morale, physical condition and safety. Implements interventions to improve situations. Exudes a safety-conscious attitude.

COMMUNICATES

- Development Need

  Misunderstands or fails to perceive nonverbal cues. Ideas not well organized or easily understandable. Speaks without considering listener interest. Information dissemination is inconsistent or untimely.

- Standard

  Chooses appropriate information-sharing strategy before communicating. Conveys thoughts and ideas appropriately. Disseminates information in a timely manner. Provides guidance and asks for a briefback or confirmation.

- Strength

  Uses verbal and nonverbal means to maintain listener interest. Adjusts information-sharing strategy based on operating conditions. Ensures information dissemination to all levels in a timely manner. Avoids miscommunication through verifying a shared understanding.

EXTENDS INFLUENCE
(Beyond the Chain of Command)

- Development Need
  Inconsistently demonstrates understanding of indirect influence. Misses or passively acts on opportunities to build trusting relationships outside the organization.

- Standard
  Demonstrates understanding of conditions of indirect influence. Builds trust to extend influence outside the organization. Displays understanding of the importance of building alliances.

- Strength
  Demonstrates effective use of indirect influence techniques. Establishes trust to extend influence outside the chain of command. Proactively builds and maintains alliances to benefit the organization.

LEADS BY EXAMPLE

- Development Need
  Demonstrates behavior inconsistent with the Army Values. Displays a lack of commitment and action. Remains unaware of or unconcerned about the example being set.

- Standard
  Demonstrates an understanding of leader attributes and competencies. Recognizes the influence of personal behavior and the example being set. Displays confidence and commitment when leading others.

- Strength
  Models sound leader attributes and competencies. Exemplifies the Warrior Ethos through actions regardless of situation. Demonstrates competence, confidence, commitment and an expectation of such behavior in others.

Core Leader Competencies: Develops

- Creates a Positive Environment
- Prepares Self

What **Develops** looks like during unit training:

CREATES A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

- Development Need
  Demonstrates negative expectations and attitudes not conducive to a productive work environment. Focuses on task accomplishment. Fosters an expectation of zero-defects. Holds honest mistakes against subordinates.

- Standard
  Promotes expectations and attitudes conducive to a positive work environment. Demonstrates optimism and encourages others to develop and achieve. Provides coaching, counseling and mentoring to others.

- Strength
  Exemplifies a positive attitude and expectations for a productive work environment. Conveys a priority for development within the organization. Encourages innovative, critical and creative thought. Leverages lessons learned to improve organization.

PREPARES SELF

- Development Need
  Reluctant to accept responsibility for learning. Downplays feedback from others. Acts on information without regard to source, quality or relevance. Ineffectively transfers new information into knowledge.

- Standard
  Accepts responsibility for learning and development. Evaluates and incorporates feedback from others. Analyzes and organizes information to create knowledge. Focuses on credible sources of information to improve personal understanding.

- Strength
  Seeks feedback from others. Seeks learning opportunities to improve self. Demonstrates knowledge management proficiency. Integrates information from multiple sources; analyzes, prioritizes, and utilizes new information to improve processes.

DEVELOPS LEADERS

- Development Need
  Disinterested in motivating and assisting in the growth of others. Focuses on the task at hand without consideration of improving organizational effectiveness.

- Standard
  Demonstrates willingness to motivate and help others grow. Provides coaching, counseling and mentoring. Builds team skills and processes to improve organization.

- Strength
  Seizes opportunities to teach, coach and mentor. Fosters job development and enrichment. Knows subordinates and prepares them for new positions. Improves unit productivity.

Core Leader Competencies: Develops

GETS RESULTS

- Development Need
  Demonstrates a limited understanding of supervising, managing, monitoring, and controlling priorities of work. Hasty prioritization and planning lead to incomplete guidance and direction.

- Standard
  Prioritizes, organizes and coordinates taskings for others. Plans for expected setbacks and enacts appropriate contingencies when needed. Monitors, coordinates and regulates subordinate actions but allows subordinates to accomplish the work.

- Strength
  Utilizes other competencies to accomplish objectives. Demonstrates understanding of supervising, managing, monitoring, and controlling of priorities of work. Reflects on end state prior to issuing guidance. Provides subordinates autonomy to accomplish the work.

A Leader of Character demonstrates:

- Army Values
- Empathy

What **Character** looks like during unit training:

ARMY VALUES

- Development Need
  Inconsistently demonstrates: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Demonstrates these with more than occasional lapses in judgment.

- Standard
  Consistently demonstrates: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.

- Strength
  Models Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Promotes these principles, standards, and qualities in others.

EMPATHY

- Development Need
  Exhibits resistance or limited perspective on the needs of others. Words and actions communicate distance or lack of understanding. Unapproachable and disinterested in personally caring for Soldiers.

- Standard
  Demonstrates an understanding of another person's point of view. Identifies with others' feelings and emotions. Displays a desire to care for Soldiers and others.

- Strength
  Attentive to other's views and concerns. Takes personal action to improve Soldiers' situation. Breaks into training, coaching or counseling mode when needed and role models empathy for others.

WARRIOR ETHOS

- Development Need
  Inconsistently demonstrates the spirit of the profession of arms. Downplays the importance of this sentiment.

- Standard
  Demonstrates the spirit of the profession of arms.

- Strength
  Models the spirit of the profession of arms. Instills this behavior in subordinates and others.

A Leader with Presence demonstrates:

- Millitary Bearing
- Physical Fitness
- Composure and Confidence

What **Presence** looks like during unit training:

MILLITARY BEARING

- Development Need
  Inconsistently projects a professional image of authority. Actions lack a commanding presence. Allows professional standards to lapse in personal appearance, demeanor, actions and words.

- Standard
  Possesses a commanding presence. Projects a professional image of authority. Demonstrates adherence to standards.

- Strength
  Models a professional image of authority. Commanding presence energizes others. Exemplifies adherence to standards through appearance, demeanor, actions and words.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

- Development Need
  Physical health, strength or endurance is not sufficient to complete most assigned missions. Fitness level unable to support emotional health and conceptual abilities under prolonged stress.

- Standard
  Displays sound health, strength and endurance that support emotional health and conceptual abilities under prolonged stress.

- Strength
  Models physical health and fitness. Strength and endurance supports emotional health and conceptual abilities under prolonged stress. Energetic attitude conveys importance of fitness to others.

COMPOSED, CONFIDENT

- Development Need
  Inconsistently displays composure or a calm presence. Allows a set-back to derail motivation. Displays a less than professional image of self or unit.

- Standard
  Displays composure, confidence and mission-focused under stress. Effectively manages own emotions and remains calm when situations become adverse.

- Strength
  Projects self-confidence and builds confidence in others. Models composure, an outward calm, and control over emotions in adverse situations. Manages personal stress, and remains supportive of stress in others.

RESILIENT

- Development Need
  Slowly recovers from adversity or stress. Inconsistently maintains a mission or organizational focus after a setback.

- Standard
  Recovers from setbacks, shock, injuries, adversity and stress while maintaining a mission and organizational focus.

- Strength
  Quickly recovers from setbacks. Focuses on the mission and objectives in the midst of shock, injuries and stress. Maintains organizational focus despite adversity.

A Leader with Intellectual Capacity demonstrates:

- Mental Agility
- Sound Judgment
- Innovation
- Interpersonal Tact

What **Intellectual Capacity** looks like during unit training:

MENTAL AGILITY

- Development Need
  Inconsistently adapts to changing situations. Attends to immediate conditions and surface outcomes when making decisions. Hesitates to adjust an approach.

- Standard
  Demonstrates open-mindedness, Recognizes changing conditions, and considers second- and third-order effects when making decisions.

- Strength
  Models a flexible mindset and anticipates changing conditions. Engages in multiple approaches when assessing, conceptualizing and evaluating a course of action.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

- Development Need
  Inconsistently demonstrates sound assessment of situations. Hesitates in decision making when facts not available. Forms opinions outside of sensible information available.

- Standard
  Demonstrates sound decision making ability. Shows consideration for available information, even when incomplete.

- Strength
  Models sound judgment. Engages in thoughtful assessment. Confidently makes decisions in the absence of all of the facts.

INNOVATION

- Development Need
  Relies on traditional methods when faced with challenging circumstances. Hesitates to introduce new or novel ideas when given the opportunity or when appropriate.

- Standard
  Offers new ideas when given the opportunity. Provides novel recommendations when appropriate.

- Strength
  Consistently introduces new ideas when opportunities exist. Creatively approaches challenging circumstances and produces worthwhile recommendations.

INTERPERSONAL TACT

- Development Need
  Demonstrates lapses in self-awareness when interacting with others. Misses cues regarding others perceptions, character and motives. Presents self in appropriately or not tactfully.

- Standard
  Maintains self-awareness of others perceptions and changes behaviors during interactions accordingly.

- Strength
  Demonstrates proficient interaction with others. Effectively adjusts behaviors when interacting with others. Understands character and motives of others, and modifies personal behavior accordingly.

DOMAIN KNOWLEDGE

- Development Need
  Demonstrates uncertainty or novice proficiency in technical aspects of job. Inconsistently applies competence of joint, cultural and geopolitical knowledge. Displays indifference toward expanding knowledge or skill set.

- Standard
  Possesses facts and beliefs of joint, cultural and geopolitical knowledge. Seeks out information on systems, equipment, capabilities and situations. Expands personal knowledge of technical, technological and tactical areas.

- Strength
  Demonstrates expert-level proficiency with technical aspects of job. Demonstrates understanding of joint, cultural and geopolitical knowledge. Conveys knowledge of technical, technological and tactical systems to subordinates and others.

SOAR (Situation, Observation, Associate and Assess, Reinforce and Recommend)
Leadership Feedback Form

Situation: (Time, Place, Mission and Conditions)

Observation: (Describe behavior and impact on mission and or Soldiers)

Associate & Assess: (Identify competency – attribute and assess proficiency)

[Assess: + Strength; ✓Standard; (DN) Need]

Reinforce & Recommend: (Note appropriate feedback, praise, or correction, and the recommendations for action to sustain/improve leader behavior)

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For further information or to submit comments on this handbook, contact the Combined Arms Center—Center for Army Leadership at (913-758-3160 or http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/CAL

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