



INITIAL MILITARY TRAINING JOURNAL

Issue 10
October 2010

Distributed by the Training Support and Schools Directorate, DCG-IMT, Fort Jackson, South Carolina

Inside this issue:

- DCG-IMT
LTG Mark Hertling
- Military and Social Media
Kelly Schloesser
- Critical Path to Failure
LTC Bryan Hernandez
- Enhancing IMT Company Training
COL Craig J. Currey
- DCG-IMT Company-Level Leader
Forum
CPT Blake L. Little, Sr.
- In Brief: Notes and Notifications

From the DCG-IMT...

- 1 By: LTG Mark Hertling
Deputy Commanding General—Initial Military Training
- 2 Since the last edition of this Journal, we've made significant strides in several areas of Initial Military Training. After completing the Warrior Task and Battle Drill and Basic Combat Training Review early last spring – and then instituting the new WTBDs and POI into our BCT course by July 1 – we've instituted several other initiatives that are beginning to bear fruit. We will have rewritten both regulations that constitute the major IMT processes – TRADOC REG (TR) 350-6 (incorporating input from Company Commanders and 1SGs from the recent forum, while expanding to cover AIT in ways that were not done before), and TR 350-36, which outlines the way we conduct Basic Officer Leader Course (this is a new reg). Additionally, we've expanded the Soldier-Athlete Program, having established a Memorandum of Understanding with MEDCOM on Physical Therapist and Athletic Trainers in our units, and we've made huge progress on the "Fueling the Soldier" initiative. We have developed and incorporated many more "apps" for our smart phones and devices, to include the PRT Manual (TC 3.22-20), the "Blue Book" (TRADOC Pam 600-4), and several other training tools. Recently, CSM King at the Drill Sergeant School led a complete review and overhaul of the Drill Sergeant training program, and Victory University is incorporating the emerging Army Learning Model into some of their instruction.
- 4
- 8
- 11
- 12 But these are all first steps. Last year, I made a promise that once we completed a holistic review of BCT and BCT related programs (reception, DSS, and OSUT) I would turn our attention towards updating, standardizing and sharing the rest of the IMT courses. During the TRADOC Senior Leader Conference and again during the IMT Commander's Conference, we outlined an aggressive plan to review all AIT MOS and BOLC training programs over the next two years to promote relevancy, standardize core requirements, update functional training, and improve initial experiences and expectation for our operating forces. I encourage all leaders, trainers, and support personnel involved in AIT, AIT training in OSUT, and BOLC to start reviewing your Programs of Instruction, and preparing for the scheduled review. While understanding there is a tremendous shortage of training developers and course managers to accomplish this important work, we will need to soon roll up our sleeves and tackle this project.

In the meantime, please continue publishing your thoughts on how we can continue to improve, and submit articles for this Journal. All of the improvements, updates, and success we have enjoyed over the past year only work because of leader efforts to collaborate while sharing new and innovative ways to address problems and improve training. Professional dialogue, communication, and writing are WHAT RIGHT LOOKS LIKE!

This edition of the Journal focuses on a few articles with those ideals in mind. The DCG-IMT PAO, Kelly Schloesser, opens the edition with a discussion on social networking and its effect on the military over the past year. LTC Bryan Hernandez, a BCT battalion commander at Fort Jackson discusses new way of thinking and promoting safety. COL Craig Currey, the Deputy Commander, Fort Jackson, follows up with a look at company training and how it can be improved with appropriate leadership focus and emphasis. Finally, the Journal has an update on the company leadership forum hosted last month in Virginia by CPT Blake Little, the leadership course manager at Victory University.

The temperatures are finally beginning to drop. By the time this edition reaches you, the first freezing night may have already occurred. Remain vigilant and engaged to the safety requirement we follow to ensure all Soldiers are training tough, but training smart.

Soldiers are Our Credentials!

Military and Social Media: A New Partnership

By Kelly Schloesser
TRADOC DCG-IMT Public Affairs Officer

Admiral Michael Mullen responded to an array of questions from national security to military personnel and readiness issues via Youtube during his "Ask the Chairman" virtual town-hall meeting last week. According to his Twitter feed, Mullen also recently urged military spouses to fill out a survey on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell".

US Army Europe posted cast member interviews and performances on USAREUR Youtube from "Theatre of War." The video details this innovative theatrical approach to helping Soldiers and their families cope with combat stress.

General Ray Odierno, former Commanding General of Multi-National Forces-Iraq, posted his farewell speech on his Facebook page, marking the transition from Operation Iraqi Freedom to Operation New Dawn. According to the page, he is a die-hard New York Yankees fan and enjoys listening to the classic rock band Aerosmith and country star George Strait.

Everywhere on the internet, from Facebook to Flickr or from Twitter to Youtube, military leaders and their units are taking advantage of technology and communicating globally at the push of a button.

Department of Defense Policy

This past February, the Department of Defense released its formal policy on social media, *Directive-Type Memorandum – Responsible and effective use of internet based capabilities*. The memo opened the floodgates for all military installations, allowing open access to popular social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and Flickr.

"The default for the DoD non-classified network, the NIPRNET, is for open access so that all of DoD can use new media," stated the policy.

Senior military leaders have continued to highlight the need for social media and the need for officers and leaders at all levels to embrace it. For example Mullen said leaders need to develop awareness about the technologies that have become almost second nature to the service members they lead.

"I think communicating that way and moving information around that way – whether it's administrative information or information in warfare – is absolutely critical," he said.

The Secretary of Defense called the freedom of communication, including social media, a huge strategic asset to the United States. Information warfare, leaders have noted, is a top priority.

U.S. Army best practices

Though formal DoD policy was only released this year, the Army was always a little ahead of the game. Army headquarters took an early lead and started the Online and Social Media Division at the Office, Chief of Public Affairs back in the winter of 2009. The goal was not only to communicate internally with Soldiers and families but to also take the Army to the American public, many of whom are tech savvy, said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Phillips, former Deputy Chief of Army Public Affairs.

Unlike its sister services at the time, the Army allowed installations to open up social media access to sites like Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter following the creation of the social media division. The decision, sent out via e-mail, encouraged Soldiers to 'tell the Army story' and to facilitate the dissemination of strategic, unclassified information.

Many agreed this was the right move to communicate with Army's audience.

"The future of our Army depends on how we communicate with our audience in between the ages 15 to 25," said Pete Geren, former Secretary of the Army.

Army Regulation 25-2 states that social networking sites provide an excellent opportunity to collaborate and share information. But also warns that these sites could expose Army networks to malicious software and security concerns. The regulation also places commanders in charge of enforcing standards.

The Army and the Department of Defense are embracing a new partnership with social media and exploring its possibilities. It can connect to a younger generation that would make worthy recruits, disseminate information to fellow Soldiers and families, get the right information out faster than the enemy, and connect a four-star general with a private first class

Military and Social Media cont...

with a simple click.

Initial Military Training best practices

Here at Initial Military Training, we are working to reach out to IET Soldiers and families, ensuring they have up-to-date information on what's going on at training bases across the country. Additionally, IMT is exploring training tools such as smart-phones and applications for iPhones and Droids. Whether you're a new recruit about to ship or a seasoned Soldier in need of a review, you can download the Army Soldiers Blue Book or the new Physical Readiness Training app.

On IMT Facebook find the latest updates on training and helpful tools for new Soldiers, cadre, and spouses. View current training videos on Youtube and media coverage on Facebook. Check out recent visits to your training post and unit on our Flickr page.

Additionally, IMT supports individual units establishing their own social media presence, as long as units have the manpower and resources to do so. If you start an official unit Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, or Youtube site, you must register with the US Army Social Media (link in resources section.) It's also a best practice to continually keep your commander informed and your local Public Affairs Office for additional support. And always remember UCMJ and OPSEC when posting information.

IMT Social Media:

Facebook www.facebook.com/initialmilitarytraining

Youtube www.youtube.com/dcgimt

Flickr www.flickr.com/initialmilitarytraining

Vimeo www.vimeo.com/imtraining

Resources:

DoD Directive-Type Memorandum – Responsible and effective use of internet based capabilities <http://socialmedia.defense.gov/about/read-the-policy/>

Army Regulation 25-2 Information Assurance <https://ia.signal.army.mil/docs/AR25-2.pdf>

Registration for US Army Social Media sites <http://www.army.mil/media/socialmedia/>

Army Regulation 530-1 Operations Security <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/ar530-1.pdf>

Critical Path to Failure: Teaching a Safety Mental Model

By LTC Bryan Hernandez
Commander, 3-34th Infantry Regiment

There is an old saying that, “accidents just happen”. Unfortunately, in the Army when accidents occur our Soldiers tend to get seriously injured or killed. Daily life in the military is dangerous, regardless if it is in training or combat. However, it is everyone’s duty to make it as safe as humanly possible. Our leaders and Soldiers are instilled very early on in their introduction to the military that they must learn how to mitigate the dangers of military life through the application of safety. Therefore, the previously mentioned adage has no place in military thinking because accidents do not “just happen”. I would argue that in training most accidents are preventable and with the development of the right mental focus on thinking about safety amongst leaders and soldiers can be avoided. The problem lies in how to teach safety in a way that breaks outside of the normal methods used to habitually discuss and think about it. Most members of the military are accustomed to the compulsory safety briefings in formations prior to a training event, mission, or a long weekend off. Although necessary, it is clearly evident through the look on the soldiers’ faces that many are not paying attention or taking the warnings seriously. Safety, and more importantly, the act of being safe is not comprised of simply talking about safety, but rather thinking about it and taking action based on those thoughts or observations.

When an incident occurs and a Soldier is killed or seriously injured an investigation is normally conducted to determine the root causes of the accident, the key events that occurred leading to it, and possible responsibility or culpability. These investigations also determine a critical point- was the accident preventable, and if so, why was nothing done to avoid it? Investigations normally utilize a deliberate method of tracing the series of events, either from the beginning to the end of the tragedy or systematically backwards, in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the accident. This process, much like a television police drama, allows investigators and leaders to develop a clear picture of what happened through understanding the linkage and sequence of actions that created the conditions for the accident. In most cases, when an investigation concludes and the results are published we find two key points, the accident was preventable and, had someone seen the warning signs and taken action, could have been avoided. Understanding this chain of events requires viewing it as a path with several crossroads and alternative routes where conditions change and decisions or actions by those on it can either set a course for success or critical failure, i.e., disaster.

The Critical Path to Failure is the accumulation of supporting events and negative actions that, when not identified or acted upon, creates the conditions for a serious disaster. Its purpose is to serve as a mental model that focuses on identifying and understanding the events that lead to tragic accidents in order to prevent them. To achieve this endstate it instills visualizing and taking preventative actions to avoid accidents by breaking the chain of events that cause them. It is a holistic approach that requires leaders to see beyond isolated events that occur in training or combat and see the connections that actions have with other events that set the course and underlying conditions for poor decision making. Many times, mishaps occur because those involved or supervising fail to connect the dots and see how certain events, when not acted upon, create further conditions that increase the probability of a serious incident.

The Critical Path to Failure Example

Let’s examine the following situation in order to better understand the Critical Path to Failure. A group of soldiers start their day by going to a marksmanship range to qualify on their weapons, by the end of the day, one is dead and three are in the hospital. How did this happen? What seemed to be such a simple task turned into a day of tragedy. By looking at the events that occurred that day we can begin to see a chain of events forming. First, the driver responsible for picking up the range detail, which had the responsibility for the set up of the range, arrived late to work because he overslept. This common mistake by itself seems quite harmless but it has set off a chain reaction of events and decisions within the unit that set the conditions for disaster. Because the driver arrived late in the morning the preparation and range setup scheduled to be complete by the time the main body of soldiers arrived was also running behind and this set the unit almost an hour behind schedule. Feeling the pressure that starting training late would cause the unit to look bad, the unit leader orders the range detail supervisor to, “Hurry up and get more people out there to the range”, so the unit was ready as soon as possible. The chain of events on the Critical Path to Failure has now begun. Instead of loading only 14 personnel in back of the 5-ton truck, the maximum amount allowed for safety by post regulations, the supervisor adds six more soldiers, for a total of 20. His reasoning is that more personnel are now required to get things set up for the unit arriving shortly after them since they are running late. The driver, who has received several verbal lashings for his tardiness, now feels pressured to hurry up in order to make up for his “costly mistake”. With the 20 soldiers loaded on the truck he drives as quickly as possible to get to the range, ignoring the posted speed limits because he received the orders, “to get out

Critical Path to Failure cont...

there as quickly as possible". While enroute to the range the driver misjudges his speed, which is 10 miles greater than posted speed limit, and the truck's ability to negotiate a turn. He loses control of the vehicle and flips the 5-ton truck, ejecting half of its occupants and pinning one soldier under the massive weight of the truck. The result is one dead, three in the hospital, and another unit that has travelled along the Critical Path to Failure.

How could this happen? Simple, single actions suspended in time may have no significance, but when combined with other factors they can set a chain of events based on negative or risky actions, perceived pressure to deviate from appropriate procedures, and poor decision making. In the case of this terrible accident, the tardiness of the truck driver set the underlying condition within the unit of increased pressure on all decision makers. All of the stakeholders involved saw single events that occurred as lone, separate actions without a linkage to other actions, and most importantly, decisions being made that morning. This is evident in the unit leader placing pressure on the range detail supervisor to hurry up and get the range ready for the unit. The soldier receiving a reprimand from his superior, although warranted, was now more focused on making up for his mistake by driving fast over using common sense and following safety protocols. Leaders created an environment of unnecessary pressure on personnel involved that led to several poor decisions that further aggravated the situation. As this chain reaction began, anyone within the unit or chain of command could have identified the various elements occurring and taken preventative action to stop it. No one took such action because they failed to look at all the events holistically and put the pieces together. To do this requires developing a mental acuity and intuition to connect the dots- a mental model to train our minds and senses that can see when a path to failure is emerging and quickly take action.

Analyzing the Critical Path to Failure

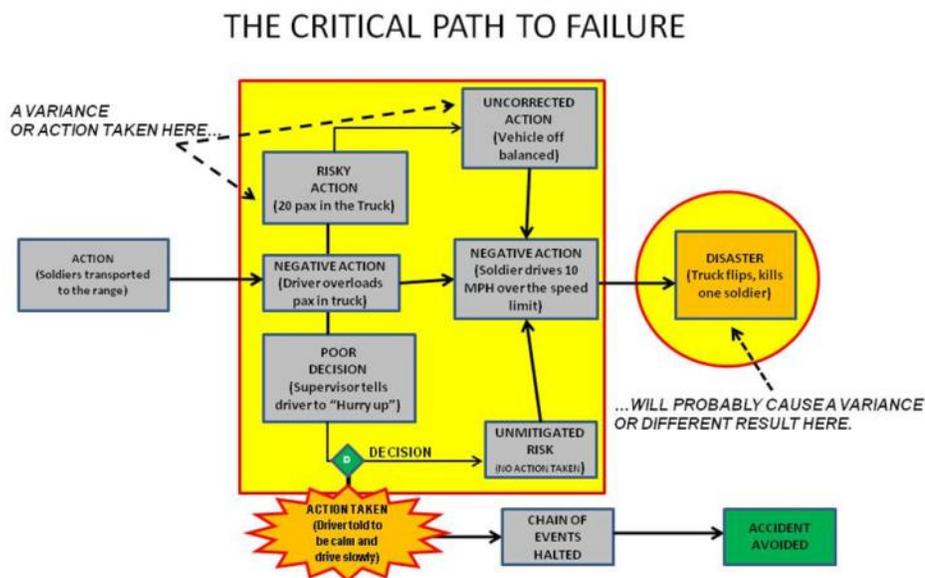


Figure 1

This model depicts the various possible endstates based upon actions or variances taken along the path and, more specifically, those actions that will lead to catastrophe. Critical to this model is following the impact and flow of negative or risky actions, compounded by poor decision making or inaction, on creating worsening conditions. The direction of the path can be altered if these conditions are identified early enough and acted upon correctly. The middle box on the diagram depicts the area along the path to failure where a proper action may deviate a unit or individual off of the road to disaster and where, unchecked, will propel it along its destructive course. As a mental model, understanding the concept can assist leaders and decision makers in comprehending the correlation of the various factors at work by analyzing them together in order to anticipate possible outcomes based upon snapshot events.

Critical Path to Failure cont...

Why employ such a method? Because most post accident investigations teach us the following key points:

- The incident or accident was preventable.
- Someone in the chain of command failed to take an action that could have prevented the accident.
- The indicators and warning lights were flashing, but were not noticed or understood.
- Leaders and key personnel involved missed the warning signs and made poor decisions.
- Everyone knew better.
- No one connected the dots.

Teaching soldiers and leaders to think utilizing the Critical Path to Failure addresses these areas by building the mental sharpness of all individuals involved in training, especially leaders, to see what others may not and identify when actions or pressure are creating those underlying conditions that lead units to make poor decisions. It trains us to make smarter decisions or take appropriate actions by visualizing the possible end results.

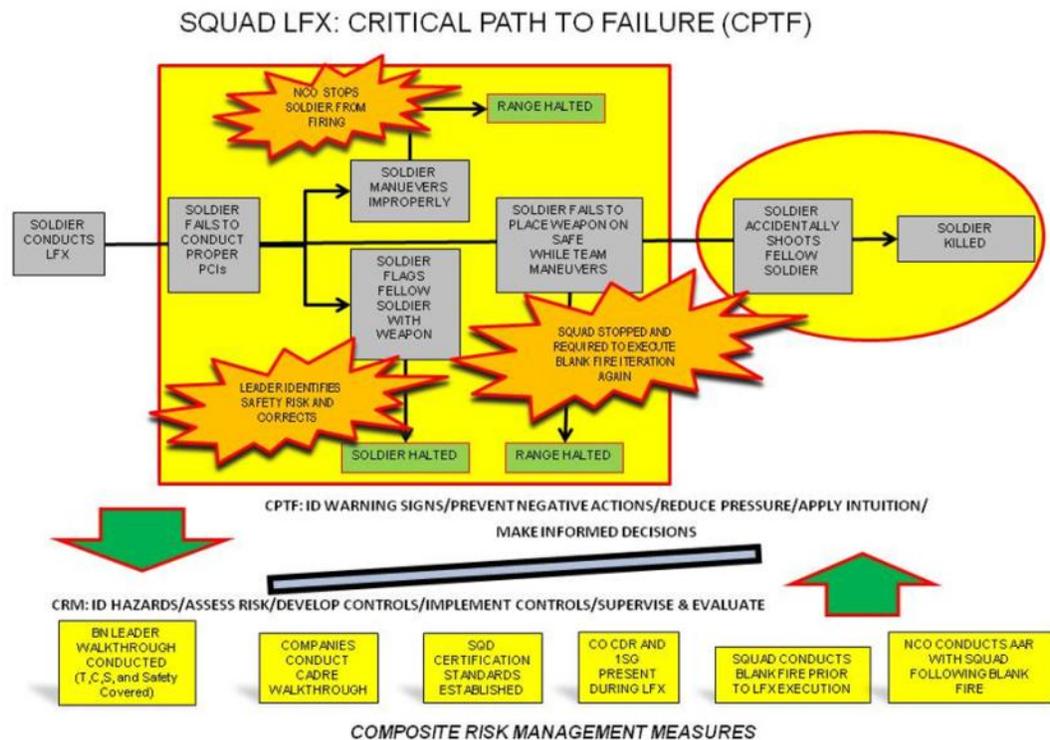


Figure 2

Teach a Mental Model

After watching my own unit conduct training and discussing safety with my cadre, I realized that the mental focus I wanted was missing in our approach to thinking about safety. The cadre knew the battle drills in case of an emergency and the requisite steps to take to mitigate risk in training by utilizing Composite Risk Management, but thinking critically about safety was challenging. I decided to try something different and avoid the normal emphasis on safety through standard briefings and talk about safety by introducing the Critical Path to Failure model amongst the entire group. My purpose was to get them to think about safety along a mental model rather than with a checklist mentality. A mental model, for practical purposes, is an explanation of someone's thought process about how something works and can establish relationships between its various parts and a person's intuitive perception about their own acts and their consequences. Mental

Critical Path to Failure cont...

models are powerful tools because they can shape what we pay attention to and what we do.

One of the greatest attributes to training a model is its impact on decision making. Within the Army we emphasize our Composite Risk Management (CRM) process, which has had a drastic impact on reducing the amount of accidents in training and combat through a deliberate process of identifying risks and placing measures to mitigate them with varying control measures. The issue is how we influence decision making during situations not covered in our CRM or accounted for as events unfold. What mental tool can we provide to those making decisions without the ability to foresee the consequences of those decisions? The path to failure provides such a tool by expanding on cognitive capabilities to rapidly process varying actions and decisions occurring in time, establishing possible cause and effect relationships, and identifying probable outcomes. In a situation that may appear normal, it causes us to ask if there is something else going on that we may not be aware of. The result is an individual taking an extra second to think carefully before making a decision, to ensure it is a well-informed or intuitive process. The next key step is to inculcate the model into an organization and its individuals.

How to Employ a New Way of Thinking

The first step in changing the organizations' approach to safety is through leader involvement and education about critical thinking. It is important to instill a command climate that focuses on great training and safety while not confusing it with risk aversion. It is also necessary not to let subordinates think of safety as the commander's pet peeve, but rather a fundamental principle of the entire unit, understood and embraced by all within the team. To achieve this outcome, the commander must create the dialogue from the highest to the lowest level about thinking safely. Within our unit, I personally conduct a formal Safety Stand Down discussion every quarter where we apply the model with vignettes and lessons learned over the previous quarter. I do not delegate this responsibility because there is nothing that makes a greater statement than the chain of command being personally involved. If it is important to the command, then the commander should address it.

In order to effectively educate members of the unit about the path to failure it should be applied gradually within the processes leaders utilize to develop and execute operations in both training and combat. This concept is not easily understood overnight and requires constant discussion and reiteration. A good method is to take a training or mission concept plan along with a CRM matrix and sketch out a possible Critical Path to Failure. This activity allows a commander and his subordinates to visualize possible outcomes they may not have planned for as well as develop decision points and triggers based on possible warning signs and changing conditions. Figure 2 depicts applying the CRM with a Critical Path to Failure Model in the preparation of a squad live fire exercise. After reviewing the concept plan and the CRM matrix, we develop possible flow patterns that may create a Critical Path to Failure. Possible conditions, unforeseen events, and decisions that may turn a normal situation into a hazardous one are reviewed so leaders and individuals are better prepared. This process is similar to the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) and wargaming the worst case scenario in Course of Action development. It serves as a great tool for all participants to make smarter decisions and take appropriate action when required.

Conclusion

The only way for a unit to truly be successful in executing tough, realistic, and safe training or reduce the risk of accidents in combat is to empower the individuals conducting and supervising these operations with the required tools they need to be safe and smart. In today's complex environment, we need critical thinkers at all levels with a higher level of mental sharpness to quickly identify risks and hazards so that they can take appropriate actions. Accidents do not just happen, but they do every single day in the Army. This is not acceptable because the data shows that most are preventable. The Critical Path to Failure is one method to build an increased mental capacity within an organization and its individuals to think rapidly as conditions change, pressure mounts, and actions occur that we may not fully understand. Safety is a hallmark of a good, disciplined unit and we should all strive to reduce the chance of losing or injuring a Soldier due to an unfortunate accident.

Enhancing Company Training in IMT

By COL Craig J. Currey
Deputy Commander, Fort Jackson, South Carolina



On a recent visit to training, a company was conducting individual movement training on a facility that Fort Jackson calls Chipyong-ni. The 1SG found me immediately and the Company Commander not long after that, and we started observing various platoon lanes in which Soldiers were moving from position to position engaging a MILES enemy at the end of the lane. The event was just prior to the buddy team live fire that would be conducted the next day.

The company cadre was prepared for the training. They had met the requirements of the POI. They had a grasp of the action/conditions/standards for the event. Soldiers were being trained, and the mission was being accomplished. But we were at the 80% solution. Had we stopped there and just let it ride, we would not be maximizing the training event or time available. Hence, this article will push for company and battalion level leadership to review the current IMT training events, and push for a higher, more precise level of execution.

Particularly in Basic Combat Training (BCT) in which the Program of Instruction (POI) was recently reviewed and improved, we now need to

execute the changes well. In the process, we must make our training as effective as possible while operating in a resource constrained environment. In educating our company leaders on how to maximize training, we will improve the quality of the different IMT events across the board. Our company leadership, particularly the Company Commander and Executive Officers, will have varying degrees of experience. Some have missed the basic of conducting training during long deployments. Their combat experience and sense of what is important are spot on, but their ability to develop the necessary skills and attributes in IMT Soldiers is lacking. We, therefore, have to develop them as leaders, so we have quality execution at the company level. Leaving platoon training supervision exclusively to the Drill Sergeants and AIT Platoon Sergeants, abrogates the company training responsibility of the command team. You will not have consistent training across your platoons as some DSs/PSGs are better trainers than others. This mentorship is where 1SGs are critical. They are the master trainer in the company and so important in IMT. If a 1SG is weak in a company, it will be difficult for the company to be a top-notch training organization.

As we continued observe, we started to see that it is not only the new POI tasks that need careful examination, but all of the events that have been conducted for years. Basic training execution questions emerged that would help the Company Commander improve future iterations. In fact, if the Commander applied these fundamental questions to his or her training, it would only improve across the board, both old and new POI events.

These training questions consist of:

1. **What are you trying to accomplish in Soldier development with the training?**
2. **How well is the company teaching Soldiers and are they learning?**
3. **Are available resources being well used?**
4. **Is there a focus in the AARs?**

Although seemingly simple, the questions go beyond what is written in lesson plans. They are an important basis for any class, but their application is what makes certain IMT units rise to higher levels. Let's analyze the first question "What are you trying to accomplish in Soldier development with the training?"

At our training event, we did not go straight to what the desired outcome for the event was. We already know trainers have a difficult time articulating any enabling attributes or mental intangibles that they may want from the training. Often we are happy if they simply give us the action/conditions/standards for the event with no placement into the developmental outcome for which we may ultimately be looking. For this event, the real outcome, that is often prevalent across IMT,

Enhancing Company Training cont...

was that they wanted to be ready for the next tougher related event in the cycle. In this case, they wanted the Soldiers to be ready for the buddy team live fire the next day—a very pragmatic approach to have Soldiers ready and safe for the next day. Often, you will find this is true for IMT events particularly in the Basic Rifle Marksmanship (BRM) sequence, Combat Lifesaver (CLS), AIT modules, or a live fire progression.

In opting into this progression model, you are OK if the culminating event is what you want for the Soldier in combat with the first unit of assignment. For example, if all we care about in BRM is achieving a 23 out of 40 qualification score, we have limited the development of our new Soldiers to the lowest acceptable level of performance. And if we allow our cadre to accept only this lowest standard, we are not developing them as leaders. We must push the company to higher levels within the lesson plan—we want Soldiers performing, understanding, and adapting what we teach them. Let's not simply default to being on the "production line" conveyor belt, simply "cranking them out."

The learning point started to be driven in to the 1SG and Company Commander when they watched their cadre interacting with the Soldiers on the lane. They were telling Soldiers everything to do—every detail with corrections on everything. At first we were happy that the cadre had such attention to detail. But Soldiers began to anticipate corrections at each firing position—they were not thinking—rather waiting and reacting to what the DS told them to do along the way. The company had conducted a demonstration at the beginning of the day using cadre to show what right looked like. This modeling is always a good technique, but Soldiers can't fully learn a task by watching one iteration, no more than new football players learn blocking techniques by watching the coach demonstrate them. They have to do it themselves several times. Hence, the goal of the training (being ready for the live fire the next day) predominantly drove the cadre to make muzzle awareness corrections. Communication between the buddy team and position selection weren't as important—they were just told when and where to go. As a result, the problem solving and thinking of the Soldiers decreased. The ability to select your next firing position and move to it by the best tactical means diminished as the event came to represent a dry/blank fire iteration of the next day's buddy team live fire. The new Soldiers would be safe on the range by robotically following the DS instructions and not flagging another Soldier on their lane.

There was also a DS with each Soldier in the pair just as there would be on the next day's live fire. At this point, the Soldiers lack the skill and ability to execute good movement. They do many things incorrectly because they have never really done it. The meticulous corrections that we saw the DSs making might better be done on the second or third iteration of the lane. Maybe you could run a pair of Soldiers with one DS and make major corrections. Then repeat the training on another new lane that caused Soldiers to rethink their position selection. The goal shifts to enabling Soldiers to become as proficient as possible in individual movement techniques, so they understand it and can do it well. They consequently will be better prepared for the subsequent live fire as a by-product of good training and development. In other words, don't just "teach the test," rather help the Soldiers to understand the task and become good at it. As Soldiers repeat the lanes, the cadre will see if they are improving on what they have been taught. The cadre should then observe Soldiers executing lanes with precision and also more quickly and aggressively. Soldiers also adapt to varying conditions because they understand what moving tactically means.

The third question posits if resources are being well used. This use goes beyond did the unit shoot up its case of ammunition. It involves maximizing every training opportunity in the cycle. Good units do this well by continuing to waste no time, ammunition, training areas or facilities, or instructors. More average companies tend to tire through the cycle and don't maintain the level of training and resource use because it is harder. Our cadre needs to plan continuously and AAR events, so they will improve. Running a great cycle in BCT or AIT is extremely difficult and takes the entire company cadre working as a team and the watchful eyes of master trainers.

At Chip, the company was using three of four lanes. Immediately, one could wonder if they could expand to the fourth lane to allow for more Soldier repetitions. The company was missing several DSs, the usual degradation for CQ, SDNCO, sickness, or schools, but their decision to concentrate all cadre members instead of spreading them out made expanding the lanes impossible. The company also had not used the sand areas for additional three to five second rush training. In this case, they claimed to have done this training two weeks ago on a fire break dirt road. That



Enhancing Company Training cont...



initiative to do the training early was commendable, but I thought of my old offensive line football coaches and blocking the sleds. They never told us that we did blocking two weeks ago and that we do not need to do it now. We hit the sleds over and over, just like Soldiers for muscle memory and practice.

As we looked at the rest of the platoon that was providing security in a small platoon perimeter near the start of each lane, we started to wonder if there is a better use of their time. Lesson plans in the POI tell the instructor how to teach the event properly to one Soldier. The time for the unit to execute is also figured into the document and then resourced. If you analyze the amount of time Soldiers actually train at a daily event, vice sitting in bleachers or sitting around with their Smart Books, you will see how much training the Soldiers in your company are receiving. You may be surprised as what you discover.

The company was using MILES and had zeroed the equipment. Again they were maximizing the resources that were available to them. Not all drill sergeants, however, were using the control guns for near misses on Soldiers that moved too slowly or took up poor firing positions. Again, the DSs favored putting the control

guns away and just told the Soldiers all the problems. When asked if any Soldier have been “killed” on the lanes, the Company Commander and 1SG thought they had seen one. The point here is not to sharp shoot, simply for the cadre leadership to know what they are getting from MILES, or any other resource, and ensuring it is being used to the fullest extent. Simply having something at training but not using it is not good enough. Everything we do must be deliberate and have meaning to improve the effectiveness of Soldier learning.

Finally, the units have to be focused on AARs. By this, we mean they target Soldier development of performing the task while also covering the attributes such as adhering to Army Values during the event. At the Soldier level, the cadre was providing quick “hot washes” to the buddy team after each lane iteration. They reviewed their conduct and provided a one-way critique of each person. They needed to conduct the final platoon AAR on what was learned during the day, why it is important to their performance in combat, and what attributes were also learned.

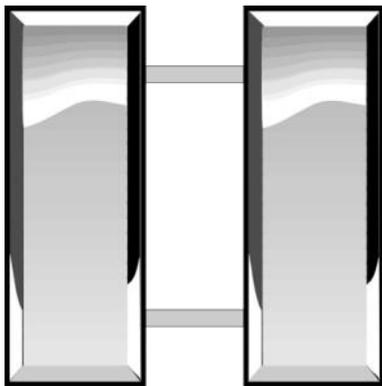
AARs are critical to learning for the Soldiers and cadre. For the Soldiers, it helps solidify what right looks like for them. If they have questions on what occurred or any standard, that is time for clarification. They also must comprehend how teamwork, flexibility, and initiative are part of all we do in the Army. They must understand that it takes initiative to keep pushing forward while under fire. You care for your buddy and protect him or her as you fire suppressive rounds. Hence, there is respect and integrity. So training is a leadership and developmental laboratory where we need to put our teachers, the cadre, to work.

The company was trying hard. The command team was at the training and fully engaged. The POI was being followed. The training was safe with proper heat monitoring. But we need to be alert to our company cadre experience. We need to develop the company command teams as master trainers. The experience IMT provides will make them great trainers in future assignments. If they learn the fundamentals of training well, all of their IMT events and cycles will improve. Let’s develop our cadre leadership and ensure we are executing all of our training with precision. Now is the time to enhance training execution—we have improved the BCT POI, BRM program, values and culture training, and implemented Physical Readiness Training. By asking the right questions, our company leaders can enhance training and push our Soldier development to the next level.



TRADOC DCG-IMT Company-Level Leadership Forum

By CPT Blake L. Little, Sr.
Course Manager, Victory University



The TRADOC DCG-IMT, LTG Hertling hosted a company level leadership (CDR, 1SG, Drill Sergeants, and AIT Platoon Sergeants) forum from 8-10 September to discuss some of the current issues and future changes in Basic Combat Training (BCT), Advanced Individual Training (AIT), and One Station Unit Training (OSUT). The Forum gave the Company Level Leadership an opportunity to address situations in their respective battalions and brigades. Some of the key highlights or issues that were discussed were promotion rates, Army Physical Training (APRT), challenges of being in command, and TRADOC Regulation 350-6 updates just to name a few.

Several questions arose on the promotion rate discrepancies between AIT PSG and Drill Sergeants. Many AIT PSGs felt as though they were at a disadvantage because they were not DSs, but performed the same duties and responsibilities as DSs. They also felt as though they were not being recognized or compensated for their work. The DCG-IMT explained that Platoon Sergeants and Drill Sergeants promotion rates are higher than their peers in the operational army.

Mr. Frank Palkoska from the Army Physical Fitness School at Fort Jackson came to solicit the Physical Readiness Training (PRT). He gave some brief history on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and posed a series of questions on the validity of the PT test. Some of the questions that were asked, "Does the current test measure the overall physical fitness or does it measure push-ups, sit-ups and the 2-mile run?" He suggested that the standard for measuring PT should be how Soldiers fight in combat.

The DCG-IMT elaborated on the challenges of being in command and how not to have Toxic Leadership. Leaders have different leadership styles and with those styles come various command climates. Some key advice that plays a vital role prior to taking a command: 1. Write down your AAR before you take the job; 2. Walk around and ask questions and learn the ins and outs of your organization; 3. Bad Things comes in 3's and good things happen all the time; 4. Have fun, keep a balance and time goes too fast.

One of the most important topics that were discussed during the company level forum was the TRADOC Regulation 350-6 updates. MAJ Mugavero led a very intense and in depth in discussion about the proposed changes. One of the several proposed changes was to re-implement the 1:1:1 assessment so that Drill Sergeants can better determine Soldiers fitness level. Another proposed change or recommendation was to include squad leaders and military instructors in the corrective actions process in AIT.





TSSD

Websites:

- TSSD: <http://www.jackson.army.mil/sites/tssd/>
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The IMT Journal is issued quarterly during the first month of each fiscal quarter. Article submissions are due no later than the 15th of the last month of the previous quarter (i.e. in order to submit an article for the October edition submissions must be received by 15 September).

We are looking for articles of interest to share with the IMT community. Articles should be submitted in Word format generally following APA format style rules (no footnotes or endnotes) and no “advanced formatting” such as headers or footers as these must be stripped out. Word 2007 contains tools to help with APA formatting guidelines. Images may be contained inline or sent separately. Please reference images by number or content rather than placement as the placement of images may change during reformatting. Minor editing for clarity or format may be performed without notification to the author.

To submit your article, please send notification to the editor:
Mr. Wayne Marken: wayne.marken@us.army.mil.

In Brief: Notes and Notifications...

Lesson Plans and Training Support Packages are being continuously updated. You can always get the most recent copy of the Basic Combat Training Program of Instruction and its associated lessons and support documents at our AKO Site:

<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/6544544>

Previous editions of the IMT Journal can be found at: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/15174657>.

Get out the VOTE! Election day is 2 November.

TRADOC Block (Holiday) Leave is scheduled for 20 December–31 December.