

EXAMPLE BATTALION OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of this program is to focus and highlight the professional development of lieutenants. Captains and majors will also participate in certain portions of this program.

GENERAL

The most important training we do in the Army is develop leaders. Leader development is the process through which we develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to lead, train, and employ units and organizations at increasing levels of responsibility. Leader development revolves around three pillars that in execution are intertwined: institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development. These three pillars form the foundation that leaders draw from in training and motivate the quality Soldiers in our unit and Army.

INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING

Selected officers will have the opportunity to attend formal Army and installation schools and courses to increase their proficiency in specific topic areas. Attendance at these schools will always benefit both the unit and the individual officer.

OPERATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

1. Minimally, Infantry lieutenants will serve in two operational assignments in the battalion. The first and most important assignment will be as a Rifle Platoon Leader. For this reason, Infantry lieutenants will serve about 12 months on average in a Rifle Platoon. This assignment will normally be followed by assignment as a specialty platoon leader (Scouts, Support, or Battalion Mortars), as a company executive officer or as a battalion staff officer. Twelve months is not hard and fast. More important than time is the quality of that time. Nine months in a training-intensive period is more professionally beneficial than 14 months (with 8 months spent in a support or non-training mode).
2. Non-Infantry lieutenants will serve primarily in duty positions requiring their branch-unique specialties.
3. Branch-detailed Infantry lieutenants will serve as Rifle Platoon Leaders in their initial assignment. Their tour will generally be slightly less than that of a standard Infantry lieutenant (9-12 months on average). Provided it is quality time, this is enough to imbed requisite leadership skills and at the same time does not block the queue for platoon leader time. Following that initial assignment, branch-detailed officers will most likely fill staff positions if they remain in the battalion. In some cases, such officers may have the opportunity to serve in their future specialty outside the battalion. These assignments will be coordinated with the senior officer or commander of the detailed branch.
4. Assignment patterns for captains and majors will be coordinated with the brigade commander.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Self-development is an important and effective pillar in the leader development process. Each officer is directly responsible for his own self-development. Self-development programs consist of professional reading and self-study. This is an informal, but intentional, program. By definition, we will not dictate this portion of the officer development program. It should be covered during rater and rated officer counseling sessions: identifying known developmental needs or areas of interest, goals, and ways to achieve them.

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CONCEPT

1. Formal Instruction. Self-development is augmented by formal classes that provide additional information on selected tactical and leader related topics. The training schedule will reflect these classes. These classes will normally take two forms:
 - Leader Team Training pertains to all officers covering general, non-tactical, and professional topics.
 - Nested Leader Training pertains to leaders two levels down from the sponsor (lieutenants are the focus for battalion nested leader training). These cover tactical topics along with conceptual, interpersonal, and technical skills.
2. Task List. To focus efforts for leader development, specific tasks for lieutenants are included at enclosure 1. These tasks are designed to round out an officer's development and facilitate integration into the unit. They cover topics other than those normally associated with accomplishing unit training. Lieutenants will work in conjunction with their company commander or principal staff supervisor to complete these tasks successfully. As a goal, leaders should complete these tasks within 90 days of assignment.
3. Counseling. Professional, routine, and goal-based counseling is an integral part of the professional development process. Company commanders, principal staff officers, and the battalion commander will execute counseling plans to ensure that individual goals are established and professional assessments are provided. Enclosure 1 tasks should be used to develop assessments and monitor professional development of junior officers.

Performance counseling as outlined in ATP 6-22.1 will occur according to battalion policy. Counseling will occur in the officer's work area, not the battalion commander's office. Formal evaluation counseling will be the exception. Officers should be prepared to discuss performance and future goals and objectives. Officers should also be prepared to discuss their self-development program and unit goals. Company commanders will arrange counseling sessions with the battalion commander through the adjutant based on their training schedule. The counseling rotation schedule follows:

- Staff officers and HHC: January, April, July, October.
 - Alpha & Charlie Companies: February, May, August, November.
 - Bravo & Delta Companies: March, June, September, December.
4. Professional Reading. Professional reading is a valued part of self-development. There are numerous recommended reading lists available. Additionally, technology (distance learning and other web-based applications) allows the easy production and dissemination of training videos on a variety of military-related topics. Additionally, several binders of instructional materials are available for use and review in the S3 shop.
 5. Mentorship. Nothing is more effective for professional development than a senior leader taking personal interest in the development of a subordinate. Effective mentorship requires an interested and receptive senior and an equally interested and receptive subordinate. It cannot be forced or dictated. I cannot be virtue or rank or position simply state, "I am your mentor". It is much more complicated than that. Senior officers take an interest in junior officers by imparting the benefit of their experience and knowledge. Junior officers should recognize this as a valuable resource and seek opportunities to learn from more senior and experienced officers.

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PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Battalion commander
 - Serves as the primary trainer and teacher for lieutenants. Certifies that lieutenants are proficient and can execute required tasks to standard.
 - Plans and executes the battalion program with staff and company commander assistance.
 - Provides feedback to officers on their leader development progress.
 - Manages assignment opportunities for lieutenants.
 - Assists in development of assignment patterns for company and field grade officers.
2. Company commanders and principal staff officers
 - Assistant trainer and teacher for lieutenants. Enable lieutenants in completing tasks to standard.
 - Provide feedback to junior officers on their leader development progress.
 - Ensure newly assigned officers are briefed and enrolled in battalion programs.
 - Authorized to expand the program into areas deemed necessary for advancement.
3. Individual officers
 - Participate in Leader Team Training and Nested Leader Training.
 - Develop, with your rater, an individual development plan.
 - Lieutenants will complete certification tasks specified at enclosure 1. The goal for completion of these tasks is within 90 days of assignment.

IMPLEMENTATION

This program is effective upon receipt of this memorandum. Many of the tasks listed at enclosure 1 may have already been completed by more senior lieutenants. In this case, rating officers (commanders or principal staff) are authorized to grandfather the appropriate tasks.

CONCLUSION

Development of leaders is the most important thing we do. Our Soldiers deserve nothing less than fully qualified leaders who understand and enforce high standards of mission accomplishment.