

INFORMATION GATHERED IN TOPICS 2 AND 3: Getting to Know Your Subordinate Leaders & Providing Feedback

In *Topic 2: Getting to Know Your Subordinate Leaders* and *Topic 3: Providing Feedback*, you took on the role of a newly arrived LTC who is assuming command of an overseas U.S. Army Garrison.

Overview of Your Mission

Prior to taking command, you're briefed by your boss, BG Johnson, regarding the situation and challenges that you'll face in this new role. First, he informs you that the garrison is designated to expand as part of a realignment of forces; plans for the storage of additional ammunition basic load and training ammunition as well as forward deployed equipment need to be part of your planning for the upcoming year. One implication of the expansion is that existing facilities will need to become more efficient and additional storage capacity built. A second order affect is that a re-alignment or expansion of the installation's perimeter may be necessary.

Secondly, based on this, the camp's strategic importance will increase, and it'll no doubt become a greater target for enemy surveillance and, perhaps, infiltration attempts. BG Johnson expects that the traditional defensive postures, such as guards and electronic surveillance, won't be sufficient. You'll need to create a more offensive or proactive security posture around the camp and its immediate vicinity.

Lastly, due to the camp's isolated location, it's been difficult to recruit and retain Army civilians to fill critical positions. Therefore, the civilians that presently work in the garrison directorates will probably constitute your only resource to "step up" into new positions of responsibility that'll entail a wider scope of responsibilities, span of control, and supervision of personnel.

Officer Record Brief: CPT Womack

- 27 years old
- Has been in HHC Commander position for 4 months
- Attended University of Alabama as ROTC cadet
- Spent 3 years serving as an Engineer platoon leader and Company executive officer
- One deployment to Iraq
- ARCOM and Bronze Star with "V" device from service in Iraq
- Licensed engineer in the state of Alabama

Information Gathered from Direct Interaction with CPT Womack

| Category | Information |
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| Professional Goals and Priorities | Wants to progress technically and tactically in her assignment as Garrison, HHC |
| Key challenges in current assignment | Getting along with 1SG |
| Personal leadership strengths and developmental needs | Encourages innovation in her Soldiers, conveys significance of work to Soldiers; needs to work on communication with 1SG |

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| Satisfaction with work and Army profession | Satisfied, but misses her husband. Holding back because disappointed in the HHC job – wanted an Engineer company command |
| Relationships with peers and subordinates | Generally good, but does not get along with 1SG |
| Feelings about boss and our work relationship | Wants to assist in installation decision-making efforts |
| Previous assignments and career experiences | ROTC; three years as Engineer platoon leader; Company XO; one deployment to Iraq |
| Important family members | Husband; close to parents |
| Housing location and transportation to work | Lives on post, bicycles to work |
| Unique skills | Avid soccer player |
| Main interests outside of work | Interested in foreign affairs and enjoys learning about the local culture |
| Personal stressors | Fear of failure; doesn't like her authority publicly challenged |

Information Gathered from Interaction with CPT Womack's Subordinates

| Soldier | Information |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1LT Henry, HHC XO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good working relationship. • Pushing Soldiers to put forward a good face to the host-nation citizens as community liaison • Good at interfacing with people higher in the chain of command • Poor relationship with 1SG Wright |
| 1SG Wright, HHC First Sergeant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPT Womack not supporting of training initiatives for increased offensive security posture around camp • CPT more of a strategic thinker; 1SG more tactical • Doesn't listen to suggestions; won't change behavior when called out on it |
| SPC Rochester | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates significance of work in relation to mission • Doesn't like NCOs to challenge her decisions |

Information Gathered from Unit and Personal Performance Reports

| Report Type | Information |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Mission Readiness Exercise Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation: Installation security tested at 0200 by infiltration of one 2 man enemy sapper team. Ready Reaction Force (RRF) alerted upon breach in outer perimeter fence and video surveillance passed to RRF confirms size of the infiltration team. • Assessment: RRF was tactically deployed by its Commander in squad sized elements. Elements were not dispersed widely and quickly enough to detect the sapper team. • Recommendation: Train the RRF and its leadership to better assess the threat and respond with the most appropriate tactics. Note: An RRF deployment in smaller, decentralized teams that disperse quickly would have had a better chance of initially detecting and making contact with this small and lightly armed infiltration. Smaller RRF teams also would have maintained the element of surprise. |
| APFT Scorecard | Received high scores in most recent tests across the board (between 286 – 292 total points) |

Information Gathered from Performance Observations

| Observation Event | Information |
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| HHC Physical Fitness Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation: PT 0700. CPT Womack and 1SG Wright lead a five mile training run. • Observation: CPT opened up session with motivational words that connect PT to mission. Ignores 1SG Wright (he was trying to tell her that the run route had changed). Seems annoyed when he speaks up, hunches shoulders and turns away. • Associate & Assess: Leads Others – strength; Creates a positive work environment - weakness • Reinforce & Recommend: Reinforce that fact that she gave effective motivating speech. Improve encouraging open and candid communications– work on nonverbal cues and reacting to new or conflicting information from 1SG Wright. Plan session to sit down with CPT and 1SG to discuss issues. |
| Garrison Strategic Planning Session | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation: CPT Womack presents at Garrison Strategic Planning Session. CPT presents plans for expansion of garrison facility to large group of senior officers. • Observation: Restated garrison mission in terms appropriate to HHC. Presented multiple innovative options. Responded effectively to questions from high-ranking attendees. • Associate & Assess: Leads Others (establishes and imparts clear intent and purpose) – strength; Communicates (employs engaging |

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| | <p>communication techniques, listens actively, conveys thoughts and ideas to ensure shared understanding) - strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reinforce & Recommend: Reiterate her strengths and ensure shared understanding. Discuss how to use strength for the benefit of developing her subordinate leaders. |
| <p>Unannounced Readiness Exercise</p> | <p>CPT Womack is in charge of the ready reaction force (RRF) during an unannounced night call out. You observe the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CPT Womack does not make the group deployment decision quickly enough. ● RRF does not employ weapon systems properly. ● Infiltrating enemy forces escape. <p>CPT Womack makes mistakes reflecting her tactical and decision-making skills similar to those LTC Rodriguez had cited she made during an earlier readiness exercise. This appears to be a pattern of behavior that you need to address.</p> <p>1LT Henry's notes also tell you that CPT Womack properly planned for the deployment of the RRF's weapons. When weapons teams deployed, they got disoriented in the dark and never made it to locations CPT Womack had identified for them. His notes also confirmed that the RRF did not deploy fast enough.</p> |
| <p>Meeting with 1SG Wright</p> | <p>CPT Womack and 1SG Wright are off in a side room following the unit AAR of the readiness exercise. You are nearby and overhear them arguing. 1SG Wright is telling the CPT that she can't wait for 100% confirmation of the enemy's composition before deploying the ready reaction force (RRF) – that she has to go with what information is available. The CPT tells the 1SG that that is her decision to make and walks out.</p> |

CPT Womack's Strengths and Developmental Needs

- **Strengths:**
 - Restating garrison mission in terms appropriate to HHC
 - Making engaging presentations to a large group
 - Motivating subordinates
 - Thinking innovatively
 - Meeting or exceeding physical fitness standards
- **Developmental Needs:**
 - Appropriately using nonverbal communication
 - Encouraging open and candid communication
 - Thinking tactically
 - Interacting effectively with NCOs

Feedback Provided following Garrison Strategic Planning Session

You held an event counseling session with CPT Womack to provide her with feedback on how she performed during the garrison strategic planning session. CPT Womack felt that everyone in attendance was onboard with the expansion plan that she presented. It's important to her to be involved with installation strategic decision-making, so she was glad that she had the opportunity to be a part of the recent session.

- When asked what factors contributed to the fact that everyone in attendance was "onboard" with her plan, CPT Womack explains how she laboriously went through the mission goals and objectives and then determined the appropriate HHC course of action necessary to fulfill mission requirements. Because she was slotted for a 30-minute presentation window, she knew that she couldn't cover every HHC goal, objective, and course of action. For that reason, she felt that she effectively focused in on the most important aspects of the situation.
- When asked what indications she had that those in attendance understood what she was presenting, CPT Womack explains that people were asking questions, maintaining eye contact, and nodding at the appropriate times. She tried to keep them engaged by speaking enthusiastically and avoided reading from her slides.
- When asked if there was anything she would change about how she prepared and executed the presentation, she said that she would have started preparing earlier.
- When asked what about her approach made her successful, she explained that (1) she knew what she was talking about, (2) posed a question that she knew was "top of mind" for the senior officer audience, and (3) listened to audience input/concerns and changed proposed actions when needed.
- She admits that she could apply those listening skills to her relationship with her first sergeant and with other HHC NCOs. You advise her to consider this for inclusion in her individual development plan (IDP).

Feedback Provided following Unannounced Readiness Exercise

The day after the unit AAR, you decided to sit down with CPT Womack to review what occurred. CPT Womack started off the meeting explaining that she realizes something went wrong during the exercise (i.e., the weapons teams did not make it to their assigned locations in time) but that she believed it was an isolated incident. In order to counteract her defensiveness, you explained the developmental intent of your feedback and asked several follow-up questions.

- CPT Womack described the fact that it was dark and the weapons team got disoriented. She admits that she may have ordered the deployment of the RRF's weapons too late.
- She talked about how it can be difficult for her to make decisions under stress in a tactical exercise. She likes having time to weigh her options.
- She admitted that NCOs are usually good at making these tactical decisions and that she should use them and up her own tactical expertise in order to feel more comfortable making such decisions.
- Recalled the fact that she had a similar issue during a readiness exercise last year.
- CPT Womack plans to pull in senior NCOs to help make decisions quickly during the next readiness exercise. They will establish a decisions point by which time they have to make the deployment decision.

Feedback Provided during/following HHC Physical Fitness Training

You initially provided feedback during an on-the-spot coaching exchange. You pulled CPT Womack aside and briefly discussed what happened (walking away from 1SG) and why (she feels that he's always trying to correct her in front of the troops). You also set up a time the following week to meet and discuss what occurred. Although she seemed to agree with you during the on-the-spot coaching exchange, CPT Womack arrived to the sit-down session and told you that she can't work with someone who doesn't recognize her authority (i.e., 1SG Wright). You helped her look at the situation from different perspectives by asking questions about what contributes to positive and negative interactions with people.

- She cited the fact that she usually gets a positive reaction from people when she attends to what they're saying and listens to their concerns.
- She gets a negative reaction when she gets stressed or feels threatened and lets those feelings show. She admitted that she may have overreacted to 1SG Wright's suggestion.
- You added your observations: you noticed CPT Womack's nonverbal behavior (hunched shoulders, turned away) and know the negative impact a poor CO-1SG relationship can have on subordinates.
- CPT Womack pledged to be more composed and positive in her outlook and facial expressions. She will also solicit input from her NCOs and listen to what they have to say.