

## Chapter 5

### Direct Leadership Actions

5-1. Preparing to be a leader doesn't get the job done; the test of your character and competence comes when you act, when you DO those things required of a leader.

5-2. The three broad leader actions that Chapters 1 and 2 introduced—influencing, operating, and improving—contain other activities. As with the skills and attributes discussed previously, none of these exist alone. Most of what you do as a leader is a mix of these actions. This manual talks about them individually to explain them more clearly; in practice they're often too closely connected to sort out.

5-3. Remember that your actions say more about what kind of leader you are than anything else. Your people watch you all the time; you're always on duty. And if there's a disconnect between what you say and how you act, they'll make up their minds about you—and act accordingly—based on how you act. It's not good enough to talk the talk; you have to walk the walk.

**The most important influence you have on your people is the example you set.**

### INFLUENCING ACTIONS



Figure 5-1. Direct Leader Actions—Influencing

5-4. Leadership is both art and science. It requires constant study, hard work, and frequent practice. Since you're dealing with people and their emotions, dreams, and fears, it also calls for imagination and a positive, upbeat approach.

5-5. Effective leaders act competently and confidently. Your attitude sets the tone for the entire unit, and you choose your attitude—day to day, task to task, even minute to minute. Remember that optimism, a positive outlook, and a sense of humor are infectious. This is especially true when you must make unpopular decisions and face the challenge of bringing the team on board.

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5-6. Figure 5-1 shows that influencing consists of communicating, decision making and motivating. As a leader, you should be asking several questions: What's happening? What should be happening but isn't? Why are these things happening? Then ask yourself: How can I get this team moving toward the goal? (Appendix B lists leader performance indicators).

### COMMUNICATING

*You must talk to your soldiers...I don't just mean in formation or groups, but one-on-one. Take time (at least 15 to 30 minutes a day) to really talk to a soldier, one soldier a day.*

Command Sergeant Major Daniel E. Wright

5-7. Leaders keep their subordinates informed because doing so shows trust, because sharing information can relieve stress, and because information allows subordinates to determine what they need to do to accomplish the mission when circumstances change. By informing them of a decision—and, as much as possible, the reasons for it—you show your subordinates they're important members of the team. Accurate information also relieves unnecessary stress and helps keep rumors under control. (Without an explanation for what's happening, your people will manufacture one—or several—of their own.) Finally, if something should happen to you, the next leader in the chain will be better prepared to take over and accomplish the mission if everyone knows what's going on. Subordinates must understand your intent. In a tactical setting, leaders must understand the intent of their commanders two levels up.

5-8. In other situations, leaders use a variety of means to keep people informed, from face-to-face talks to published memos and family newsletters. No matter what the method, keep two things in mind:

- As a leader, you are responsible for making sure your subordinates understand you.
- Communication isn't limited to your immediate superiors and subordinates.

5-9. The success or failure of any communication is the responsibility of the leader. If it

appears your subordinates don't understand, check to make sure you've made yourself clear. In fact, even if you think your people understand, check anyway; ask for a back-brief.

5-10. Don't assume that communication begins or ends at the next level up or the next level down. If you're a team leader, listen carefully to what your supervisors, platoon sergeants, platoon leaders, and company commanders say. If you're a platoon sergeant, pass the word through your squad leaders or section chiefs, but also watch and *listen to the troops* to see if the information has made it all the way to where it needs to go. Listen carefully at least two levels up and two levels down.

5-11. In combat, subordinates may be out of contact with their leaders. Sometimes the plan falls apart because of something unexpected—weather, terrain, enemy action. Sometimes the leader may be killed or wounded. In those situations, subordinates who know the overall purpose of the mission and the commander's intent have the basic information they need to carry on. And if the leader has established a climate of trust, if the leader has trained the subordinate leaders in how and why decisions are made, one of these subordinates is more likely to step up and take charge.

5-12. To prepare your subordinates for such circumstances, create training situations where they must act on their own with a minimum of guidance—or with no guidance except a clear understanding of the purpose. Follow up these training situations with AARs so that subordinates learn what they did well, what they could have done better, and they should do differently next time.

5-13. Communicating also goes on from bottom to top. Leaders find out what their people are thinking, saying, and doing by using that most important communication tool: listening. By listening carefully, you can even hear those messages behind what a person is actually saying, the equivalent of reading between the lines. Practice "leadership by walking around." Get out and coach, listen, teach, and clarify; pass on

what you learn to your superiors. They need to know what's going on to make good plans.

## DECISION MAKING

*A good leader must sometimes be stubborn. Armed with the courage of his convictions, he must often fight to defend them. When he has come to a decision after thorough analysis—and when he is sure he is right—he must stick to it even to the point of stubbornness.*

General of the Army, Omar N. Bradley  
Address to the US Army Command and  
General Staff College, May 1967

5-14. A problem is an existing condition or situation in which what you want to happen is different from what actually is happening. Decision making is the process that begins to change that situation. Thus, decision making is knowing *whether* to decide, then *when* and *what* to decide. It includes understanding the consequences of your decisions.

5-15. Army leaders usually follow one of two decision-making processes. Leaders at company level and below follow the troop leading procedures (TLP). The TLP are designed to support solving tactical problems. Leaders at battalion level and above follow the military decision making process (MDMP). The MDMP, which FM 101-5 discusses, is designed for organizations with staffs. These established and proven methodologies combine elements of the planning operating action to save time and achieve parallel decision making and planning. Both follow the problem solving steps discussed below.

5-16. Every once in a while, you may come across a decision that's easy to make: yes or no, right or left, on or off. As you gain experience as a leader, some of the decisions you find difficult now will become easier. But there will always be difficult decisions that require imagination, that require rigorous thinking and analysis, or that require you to factor in your gut reaction. Those are the tough decisions, the ones you're getting paid to make. As an experienced first sergeant once said to a brand new company commander, "We get paid the big bucks to

make the hard calls." The next several paragraphs explain the steps you should use to solve a problem; then you'll read about other factors that affect how you make those hard calls and the importance of setting priorities.

## Problem Solving Steps

5-17. **Identify the problem.** Don't be distracted by the symptoms of the problem; get at its root cause. There may be more than one thing contributing to a problem, and you may run into a case where there are lots of contributing factors but no real "smoking gun." The issue you choose to address as the root cause becomes the mission (or restated mission for tactical problems). The mission must include a simple statement of who, what, when, where, and why. In addition, it should include your end state, how you want things to look when the mission is complete.

5-18. **Identify facts and assumptions.** Get whatever facts you can in the time you have. Facts are statements of what you know about the situation. Assumptions are statements of what you believe about the situation but don't have facts to support. Make only assumptions that are likely to be true and essential to generate alternatives. Some of the many sources of facts include regulations, policies, and doctrinal publications. Your organization's mission, goals, and objectives may also be a source. Sources of assumptions can be personal experiences, members of the organization, subject matter experts, or written observations. Analyze the facts and assumptions you identify to determine the scope of the problem. (FM 101-5 contains more information on facts and assumptions.)

5-19. **Generate alternatives.** Alternatives are ways to solve the problem. Develop more than one possible alternative. Don't be satisfied with the first thing that comes into your mind. That's lazy thinking; the third or fourth or twentieth alternative you come up with might be the best one. If you have time and experienced subordinates, include them in this step.

5-20. **Analyze the alternatives.** Identify intended and unintended consequences, resource or other constraints, and the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. Be sure to consider all your alternatives. Don't prejudge the situation by favoring any one alternative over the others.

5-21. **Compare the alternatives.** Evaluate each alternative for its probability of success and its cost. Think past the immediate future. How will this decision change things tomorrow? Next week? Next year?

5-22. **Make and execute your decision.** Prepare a leader's plan of action, if necessary, and put it in motion. (Planning, an operating action, is covered later in this chapter. Appendix C discusses plans of action as part of developmental counseling. Appendix D contains an example of a leader's plan of action.)

5-23. **Assess the results.** Check constantly to see how the execution of your plan of action is going. Keep track of what happens. Adjust your plan, if necessary. Learn from the experience so you'll be better equipped next time. Follow up on results and make further adjustments as required.

### Factors to Consider

5-24. All of this looks great on paper; and it's easy to talk about when things are calm, when there's plenty of time. But even when there isn't a great deal of time, you'll come up with the best solution if you follow this process to the extent that time allows.

5-25. Even following these steps, you may find that with some decisions you need to take into account your knowledge, your intuition, and your best judgment. Intuition tells you what feels right; it comes from accumulated experience, often referred to as "gut feeling." However, don't be fooled into relying only on intuition, even if it has worked in the past. A leader who says "Hey, I just do what feels right"

may be hiding a lack of competence or may just be too lazy to do the homework needed to make a reasoned, thought-out decision. Don't let that be you. Use your experience, listen to your instincts, but do your research as well. Get the facts and generate alternatives. Analyze and compare as many as time allows. Then make your decision and act.

5-26. Remember also that any decision you make must reflect Army values. Chapter 4 discusses ethical reasoning. Its steps match the problem solving steps outlined here. Most problems are not ethical problems, but many have ethical aspects. Taking leave for example, is a right soldiers and DA civilians enjoy, but leaders must balance mission requirements with their people's desires and their own. Reconciling such issues may require ethical reasoning. As a leader, your superiors and your people expect you to take ethical aspects into account and make decisions that are right as well as good.

### Setting Priorities

5-27. Decisions are not often narrowly defined, as in "Do I choose A or B?" Leaders make decisions when they establish priorities and determine what's important, when they supervise, when they choose someone for a job, when they train.

5-28. As a leader, you must also set priorities. If you give your subordinates a list of things to do and say "They're all important," you may be trying to say something about urgency. But the message you actually send is "I can't decide which of these are most important, so I'll just lean on you and see what happens."

5-29. Sometimes all courses of action may appear equally good (or equally bad) and that any decision will be equally right (or equally wrong). Situations like that may tempt you to sit on the fence, to make no decision and let things work themselves out. Occasionally that may be appropriate; remember that decision

making involves judgment, knowing *whether* to decide. More often, things left to themselves go from bad to worse. In such situations, the decision you make may be less important than simply deciding to do something. Leaders must

have the personal courage to say which tasks are more important than others. In the absence of a clear priority, you must set one; not everything can be a top priority, and you can't make progress without making decisions.

### Solving a Training Problem

A rifle platoon gets a new platoon leader and a new platoon sergeant within days of a poor showing in the division's military operations on urbanized terrain (MOUT) exercise. The new leaders assume the platoon's poor showing is a problem. Feedback from the evaluators is general and vague. The platoon's squad and fire team leaders are angry and not much help in assessing what went wrong, so the new leaders begin investigating. In their fact-finding step they identify the following facts: (1) The soldiers are out of shape and unable to complete some of the physical tasks. (2) The fire team leaders don't know MOUT tactics, and some of the squad leaders are also weak. (3) Third Squad performed well, but didn't help the other squads. (4) The soldiers didn't have the right equipment at the training site.

Pushing a bit further to get at the root causes of these problems, the new leaders uncover the following: (1) Platoon PT emphasizes preparation for the APFT only. (2) Third Squad's leaders know MOUT techniques, and had even developed simple drills to help their soldiers learn, but because of unhealthy competition encouraged by the previous leaders, Third Squad didn't share the knowledge. (3) The company supply sergeant has the equipment the soldiers needed, but because the platoon had lost some equipment on the last field exercise, the supply sergeant didn't let the platoon sign out the equipment.

The new platoon leader and platoon sergeant set a goal of successfully meeting the exercise standard in two months. To generate alternatives, they meet with the squad leaders and ask for suggestions to improve training. They use all their available resources to develop solutions. Among the things suggested was to shuffle some of the team leaders to break up Third Squad's clique and spread some of the tactical knowledge around. When squad leaders complained, the platoon sergeant emphasized that they must think as a platoon, not just a collection of squads.

The platoon sergeant talks to the supply sergeant, who tells him the platoon's previous leadership had been lax about property accountability. Furthermore, the previous leaders didn't want to bother keeping track of equipment, so they often left it in garrison. The platoon sergeant teaches his squad leaders how to keep track of equipment and says that, in the future, soldiers who lose equipment will pay for it: "We wouldn't leave our stuff behind in war, so we're not going to do it in training."

Building on Third Squad's experience, the platoon leader works with the squad and fire team leaders to come up with some simple drills for the platoon's missions. He takes the leaders to the field and practices the drills with them so they'll be able to train their soldiers to the new standard.

The platoon sergeant also goes to the brigade's fitness trainers and, with their help, develops a PT program that emphasizes skills the soldiers need for their combat tasks. The new program includes rope climbing, running with weapons and equipment, and road marches. Finally, the leaders monitor how their plan is working. A few weeks before going through the course again, they decide to eliminate one of the battle drills because the squad leaders suggested that it wasn't necessary after all.

5-30. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant followed the problem solving steps you just read about. Given a problem (poor performance),

they identified the facts surrounding it (poor PT practices, poor property accountability, and unhealthy competition), developed a plan of

action, and executed it. Where appropriate, they analyzed and compared different alternatives (Third Squad's drills). They included their subordinates in the process, but had the moral courage to make unpopular decisions (breaking up the Third Squad clique). Will the platoon do better the next time out? Probably, but before then the new leaders will have to assess the results of their actions to make sure they're accomplishing what the leaders want. There may be other aspects of this problem that were not apparent at first. And following this or any process doesn't guarantee success. The process is only a framework that helps you make a plan and act. Success depends on your ability to apply your attributes and skills to influencing and operating actions.

5-31. Army leaders also make decisions when they evaluate subordinates, whether it's with a counseling statement, an evaluation report, or even on-the-spot encouragement. At an in-ranks inspection, a new squad leader takes a second look at a soldier's haircut—or lack of one. The squad leader's first reaction may be to ask, "Did you get your haircut lately?" But that avoids the problem. The soldier's haircut is either to standard or not—the NCO must decide. The squad leader either says—without apologizing or dancing around the subject—"You need a haircut" or else says nothing. Either way, the decision communicates the leader's standard. Looking a subordinate in the eye and making a necessary correction is a direct leader hallmark.

### MOTIVATING

*A unit with a high esprit de corps can accomplish its mission in spite of seemingly insurmountable odds.*

FM 22-10, 1951

5-32. Recall from Chapter 1 that motivation involves using word and example to give your subordinates the will to accomplish the mission. Motivation grows out of people's confidence in themselves, their unit, and their leaders. This confidence is born in hard, realistic training; it's nurtured by constant reinforcement and through the kind of leadership—consistent, hard, and fair—that promotes trust. Remember that trust, like loyalty, is a gift your soldiers

give you only when you demonstrate that you deserve it. Motivation also springs from the person's faith in the larger mission of the organization—a sense of being a part of the big picture.

### Empowering People

5-33. People want to be recognized for the work they do and want to be empowered. You empower subordinates when you train them to do a job, give them the necessary resources and authority, get out of their way, and let them work. Not only is this a tremendous statement of the trust you have in your subordinates; it's one of the best ways to develop them as leaders. Coach and counsel them, both when they succeed and when they fail.

### Positive Reinforcement

5-34. Part of empowering subordinates is finding out their needs. Talk to your people: find out what's important to them, what they want to accomplish, what their personal goals are. Give them feedback that lets them know how they're doing. Listen carefully so that you know what they mean, not just what they say. Use their feedback when it makes sense, and if you change something in the organization because of a subordinate's suggestion, let everyone know where the good idea came from. Remember, there's no limit to the amount of good you can do as long as you don't worry about who gets the credit. Give the credit to those who deserve it and you'll be amazed at the results.

5-35. You recognize subordinates when you give them credit for the work they do, from a pat on the back to a formal award or decoration. Don't underestimate the power of a few choice words of praise when a person has done a good job. Don't hesitate to give out awards—commendations, letters, certificates—when appropriate. (Use good judgment, however. If you give out a medal for every little thing, pretty soon the award becomes meaningless. Give an award for the wrong thing and you show you're out of touch.) Napoleon marveled at the motivational power of properly awarded ribbons and medals. He once said that if he had enough ribbon, he could rule the world.

5-36. When using rewards, you have many options. Here are some things to consider:

- Consult the leadership chain for recommendations.
- Choose a reward valued by the person receiving it, one that appeals to the individual's personal pride. This may be a locally approved award that's more respected than traditional DA awards.
- Use the established system of awards (certificates, medals, letters of commendation, driver and mechanic badges) when appropriate. These are recognized throughout the Army; when a soldier goes to a new unit, the reward will still be valuable.
- Present the award at an appropriate ceremony. Emphasize its importance. Let others see how hard work is rewarded.
- Give rewards promptly.
- Praise only good work or honest effort. Giving praise too freely cheapens its effect.
- Promote people who get the job done and who influence others to do better work.
- Recognize those who meet the standard and improve their performance. A soldier who works hard and raises his score on the APFT deserves some recognition, even if the soldier doesn't achieve the maximum score. Not everyone can be soldier of the quarter.

### Negative Reinforcement

5-37. Of course, not everyone is going to perform to standard. In fact, some will require punishment. Using punishment to motivate a person away from an undesirable behavior is effective, but can be tricky. Sound judgment must guide you when administering punishment. Consider these guidelines:

- Before you punish a subordinate, make sure the subordinate understands the reason for the punishment. In most—although not all—cases, you'll want to try to change the subordinate's behavior by counseling or retraining before resulting to punishment.
- Consult your leader or supervisor before you punish a subordinate. They'll be aware of policies you need to consider and may be

able to assist you in changing the subordinate's behavior.

- Avoid threatening a subordinate with punishment. Making a threat puts you in the position of having to deliver on that threat. In such a situation you may end up punishing because you said you would rather than because the behavior merits punishment. This undermines your standing as a leader.
- Avoid mass punishment. Correctly identify the problem, determine if an individual or individuals are responsible, and use an appropriate form of correction.
- With an open mind and without prejudging, listen to the subordinate's side of the story.
- Let the subordinate know that it's the behavior—not the individual—that is the problem. "You let the team down" works; "You're a loser" sends the wrong message.
- Since people tend to live up to their leader's expectations, tell them, "I know you can do better than that. I expect you to do better than that."
- Punish those who are able but *unwilling* to perform. Retrain a person who's *unable* to complete a task.
- Respond immediately to undesirable behavior. Investigate fully. Take prompt and prudent corrective action in accordance with established legal or regulatory procedures.
- Never humiliate a subordinate; avoid public reprimand.
- Ensure the person knows exactly what behavior got the person in trouble.
- Make sure the punishment isn't excessive or unreasonable. It's not only the severity of punishment that keeps subordinates in line; it's the certainty that they can't get away with undesirable behavior.
- Control your temper and hold no grudges. Don't let your personal feelings interfere; whether you like or dislike someone has nothing to do with good order and discipline.

5-38. If you were surprised to find a discussion of punishment under the section on motivation, consider this: good leaders are always on the lookout for opportunities to develop

subordinates, even the ones who are being punished. Your people—even the ones who cause you problems—are still the most important resource you have. When a vehicle is broken, you

don't throw it out; you fix it. If one of your people is performing poorly, don't just get rid of the person; try to help fix the problem.

## OPERATING ACTIONS



**Figure 5-2. Direct Leader Actions—Operating**

5-39. You're operating when you act to achieve an immediate objective, when you're working to get today's job done. Although FM 25-100 is predominantly a training tool, its methodology applies to a unit's overall operational effectiveness. Because operating includes planning, preparing, executing, and assessing (see Figure 5-2), you can use the FM 25-100 principles as a model for operations other than training. Sometimes these elements are part of a cycle; other times they happen simultaneously.

5-40. You'll often find yourself influencing after you've moved on to operating. In practice, the nice, neat divisions in this manual are not clear-cut; you often must handle multiple tasks requiring different skills at the same time. (Appendix B lists operating actions and some indicators of effectiveness.)

### PLANNING AND PREPARING

5-41. In peacetime training, in actual operations, and especially in combat, your job is to help your organization function effectively—accomplish the mission—in an environment that can be chaotic. That begins with a well thought-out plan and thorough preparation. A well-trained organization with a sound plan is much better prepared than one without a plan. Planning ahead reduces confusion, builds subordinates' confidence in themselves and the organization, and helps ensure success with a minimum of wasted effort—or in combat, the minimum number of casualties. (FM 101-5 discusses the different types of plans.)

5-42. A plan is a proposal for executing a command decision or project. Planning begins with a mission, specified or implied. A specified mission comes from your boss or from higher headquarters. An implied mission results when the leader, who may be you, sees something within his area of responsibility that needs to be done and, on his own initiative, develops a leader plan of action. (Remember that a problem exists when you're not satisfied with the way things are or the direction they're heading.) Either type of mission contains implied and specified tasks, actions that must be completed to accomplish the mission. (FM 101-5 discusses how the MDMP supports planning.)

### Reverse Planning

5-43. When you begin with the goal in mind, you often will use the reverse planning method. Start with the question "Where do I want to end up?" and work backward from there until you reach "We are here right now."

5-44. Along the way, determine the basics of what's required: who, what, when, where, and why. You may also want to consider how to accomplish the task, although the "how" is



usually not included in a mission to a subordinate. As you plan, consider the amount of time needed to coordinate and conduct each step. For instance, a tank platoon sergeant whose platoon has to spend part of a field exercise on the firing range might have to arrange, among other things, refueling at the range. No one explicitly said to refuel at the range, but the platoon sergeant knows what needs to happen. The platoon sergeant must think through the steps from the last to the first: (1) when the refueling must be complete, (2) how long the refueling will take, (3) how long it takes the refueling unit to get set up, and finally (4) when the refueling vehicles should report to the range.

5-45. After you have figured out what must happen on the way to the goal, put the tasks in sequence, set priorities, and determine a schedule. Look at the steps in the order they will occur. Make sure events are in logical order and you have allotted enough time for each one. As always, a good leader asks for input from subordinates when time allows. Getting input not only acts as a check on the your plan (you may have overlooked something), but also gets your people involved; involvement builds trust, self-confidence, and the will to succeed.

### Preparing

5-46. While leaders plan, subordinates prepare. Leaders can develop a plan while their organization is preparing if they provide advance notice of the task or mission and initial guidance for preparation in a warning order. (Warning orders are part of the TLP and MDMP; however, any leader—uniformed or DA

civilian—can apply the principle of the warning order by giving subordinates advance notice of an impending requirement and how they'll be expected to contribute to it. FM 101-5 discusses warning orders.) Based on this guidance, subordinates can draw ammunition, rehearse key actions, inspect equipment, conduct security patrols, or begin movement while the leader completes the plan. In the case of a nontactical requirement, preparation may include making sure the necessary facilities and other resources are available to support it. In all cases, preparation includes coordinating with people and organizations that are involved or might be affected by the operation or project. (TC 25-30 discusses preparing for company- and platoon-level training).

5-47. Rehearsal is an important element of preparation. Rehearsing key combat actions lets subordinates see how things are supposed to work and builds confidence in the plan for both soldiers and leaders. Even a simple walk-through helps them visualize who's supposed to be where and do what when. Mobilization exercises provide a similar function for DA civilians and reserve component soldiers: they provide a chance to understand and rehearse mobilization and deployment support functions. Execution goes more smoothly because everyone has a mental picture of what's supposed to happen. Rehearsals help people remember their responsibilities. They also help leaders see how things might happen, what might go wrong, how the plan needs to be changed, and what things the leader didn't think of. (FM 101-5 contains an in-depth discussion of rehearsals.)

### An Implied Mission and Leader Plan of Action

Not all missions originate with higher headquarters; sometimes the leader sees what's required and, exercising initiative, develops a leader plan of action.

Suppose a platoon sergeant's soldiers had trouble meeting minimum weapons qualification requirements. Since everyone qualified, no one has said to work on marksmanship. But the platoon sergeant knows the platoon made it through range week on sheer luck. The leader develops a training

### An Implied Mission and Leader Plan of Action (continued)

plan to work on basic marksmanship, then goes to the platoon leader and presents it. Together the two leaders figure out a way to make sure their soldiers get a chance to train, even with all the other mission requirements. After they've talked it over, they bring in their subordinate leaders and involve them in the planning process. The platoon sergeant keeps track of the progress and effectiveness of the leader plan of action, making sure it accomplishes the intent and changing it when necessary. Later, the platoon leader and platoon sergeant meet to assess the plan's results and to decide if further action is required.

5-48. Leader plans of action can be used to reinforce positive behavior, improve performance, or even change an aspect of the organizational

climate. A leader plan of action may also be personal—as when the leader decides “I need to improve my skills in this area.”

### Brief Solutions, Not Problems

Leaders develop their subordinates by requiring those subordinates to plan. A lieutenant, new to the battalion staff, ran into a problem getting all the resources the unit was going to need for an upcoming deployment. The officer studied the problem, talked to the people involved, checked his facts, and generally did a thorough analysis—of which he was very proud. Then he marched into the battalion executive officer's (XO's) office and laid it all out in a masterly fashion. The XO looked up from his desk and said, “Great. What are you going to do about it?”

The lieutenant was back in a half-hour with three possible solutions he had worked out with his NCOs. From that day on, the officer never presented a problem to any boss without offering some solutions as well. The lieutenant learned a useful technique from the XO. He learned it so well he began using it with his soldiers and became a better coach and mentor because of it.

5-49. No matter what your position is, part of your duty is making your boss's job easier. Just as you loyally provide resources and authority for your subordinates to do their jobs, you leave the boss free to do his. Ask only for decisions that fall outside your scope of authority—not those you want to avoid. Forward only problems you can't fix—not those whose solutions are just difficult. Ask for advice from others with more experience or seek clarification when you don't understand what's required. Do all that and exercise disciplined initiative within your boss's intent. (Appendix A discusses delegation of authority.)

### EXECUTING

*Soldiers do what they are told to do. It's leadership that's the key. Young men and women join the Army; if they're with competent,*

*confident, capable leaders they turn into good soldiers.*

Sergeant Major of the Army Robert E. Hall

5-50. Executing means acting to accomplish the mission, moving to achieve the leader's goals as expressed in the leader's vision—to standard and on time—while taking care of your people.

5-51. Execution, the payoff, is based on all the work that has gone before. But planning and preparation alone can't guarantee success. Things will go wrong. Large chunks of the plan will go flying out the window. At times, it will seem as if everything is working against you. Then you must have the will to fight through, keeping in mind your higher leaders' intent and the mission's ultimate goal. You must adapt and improvise.

5-52. In a tactical setting, all leaders must know the intent of commanders two levels up. During execution, position yourself to best lead your people, initiate and control the action, get others to follow the plan, react to changes, keep your people focused, and work the team to accomplish the goal to standard. A well-trained organization accomplishes the mission, even when things go wrong.

5-53. Finally, leaders ensure they and their subordinate leaders are doing the right jobs. This goes hand in hand with empowerment. A company commander doesn't do a squad leader's job. A division chief doesn't do a branch chief's job. A supervisor doesn't do a team leader's job.

### Maintaining Standards

5-54. The Army has established standards for all military activities. Standards are formal, detailed instructions that can be stated, measured, and achieved. They provide a performance baseline to evaluate how well a specific task has been executed. You must know, communicate and enforce standards. Explain the ones that apply to your organization and give your subordinate leaders the authority to enforce them. Then hold your subordinates responsible for achieving them.

5-55. Army leaders don't set the minimum standards as goals. However, everything can't be a number one priority. As an Army leader, you must exercise judgment concerning which tasks are most important. Organizations are required to perform many tasks that are not mission-related. While some of these are extremely important, others require only a minimum effort. Striving for excellence in every area, regardless of how trivial, quickly works an organization to death. On the other hand, the fact that a task isn't a first priority doesn't excuse a sloppy performance. Professional soldiers accomplish all tasks to standard. Competent leaders make sure the standard fits the task's importance.

### Setting Goals

5-56. The leader's ultimate goal—your ultimate goal—is to train the organization to succeed in its wartime mission. Your daily work

includes setting intermediate goals to get the organization ready. Involve your subordinates in goal setting. This kind of cooperation fosters trust and makes the best use of subordinates' talents. When developing goals, consider these points:

- Goals must be realistic, challenging, and attainable.
- Goals should lead to improved combat readiness.
- Subordinates ought to be involved in the goal setting.
- Leaders develop a plan of action to achieve each goal.

### ASSESSING

*Schools and their training offer better ways to do things, but only through experience are we able to capitalize on this learning. The process of profiting from mistakes becomes a milestone in learning to become a more efficient soldier.*

Former Sergeant Major of the Army  
William G. Bainbridge

5-57. Setting goals and maintaining standards are central to assessing mission accomplishment. Whenever you talk about accomplishing the mission, always include the phrase "to standard." When you set goals for your subordinates, make sure they know what the standards are. To use a simple example, the goal might be "All unit members will pass the APFT." The APFT standard tells you, for each exercise, how many repetitions are required in how much time, as well as describing a proper way to do the exercise.

5-58. Also central to assessing is spot checking. Army leaders check things: people, performance, equipment, resources. They check things to ensure the organization is meeting standards and moving toward the goals the leader has established. Look closely; do it early and often; do it both before and after the fact. Praise good performance and figure out how to fix poor performance. Watch good first sergeants or command sergeants major as they go through the mess line at the organizational dining facility. They pick up the silverware and run their fingers over it—almost unconsciously—checking

for cleanliness. Good leaders supervise, inspect, and correct their subordinates. They don't waste time; they're always on duty.

5-59. Some assessments you make yourself. For others, you may want to involve subordinates. Involving subordinates in assessments and obtaining straightforward feedback from them become more important as your span of authority increases. Two techniques that involve your subordinates in assessing are in-process reviews (IPRs) and after-action reviews (AARs).

#### **In-Process Reviews**

5-60. Successful assessment begins with forming a picture of the organization's performance early. Anticipate which areas the organization might have trouble in; that way you know which areas to watch closely. Once the organization begins the mission, use IPRs to evaluate performance and give feedback. Think of an IPR as a checkpoint on the way to mission accomplishment.

5-61. Say you tell your driver to take you to division headquarters. If you recognize the landmarks, you decide your driver knows the way and probably say nothing. If you don't recognize the landmarks, you might ask where you are. And if you determine that the driver is lost or has made a wrong turn, you give instructions to get back to where you need to be. In more complex missions, IPRs give leaders and subordinates a chance to talk about what's going on. They can catch problems early and take steps to correct or avoid them.

#### **After-Action Reviews**

5-62. AARs fill a similar role at the end of the mission. Army leaders use AARs as opportunities to develop subordinates. During an AAR, give subordinates a chance to talk about how they saw things. Teach them how to look past a problem's symptoms to its root cause. Teach them how to give constructive, useful feedback. ("Here's what we did well; here's what we can do better.") When subordinates share in identifying reasons for success and failure, they become owners of a stake in how things get done. AARs also give you a chance to hear what's on your subordinates' minds—and

good leaders listen closely. (FM 25-101 and TC 25-20 discuss how to prepare, conduct, and follow up after AARs.)

5-63. Leaders base reviews on accurate observations and correct recording of those observations. If you're evaluating a ten-day field exercise, take good notes because you won't remember everything. Look at things in a systematic way; get out and see things firsthand. Don't neglect tasks that call for subjective judgment: evaluate unit cohesion, discipline, and morale. (FM 25-100 and FM 25-101 discuss training assessment.)

#### **Initial Leader Assessments**

5-64. Leaders often conduct an initial assessment before they take over a new position. How competent are your new subordinates? What's expected of you in your new job? Watch how people operate; this will give you clues about the organizational climate. (Remember SSG Withers and the vehicle inspection in Chapter 3?) Review the organization's SOP and any regulations that apply. Meet with the outgoing leader and listen to his assessment. (But don't take it as the absolute truth; everyone sees things through filters.) Review status reports and recent inspection results. Identify the key people outside the organization whose help you'll need to be successful. However, remember that your initial impression may be off-base. After you've been in the position for a while, take the necessary time to make an in-depth assessment.

5-65. And in the midst of all this checking and rechecking, don't forget to take a look at yourself. What kind of leader are you? Do you oversupervise? Undersupervise? How can you improve? What's your plan for working on your weak areas? What's the best way to make use of your strengths? Get feedback on yourself from as many sources as possible: your boss, your peers, even your subordinates. As Chapter 1 said in the discussion of character, make sure your own house is in order.

#### **Assessment of Subordinates**

5-66. Good leaders provide straightforward feedback to subordinates. Tell them where you see their strengths; let them know where they

can improve. Have them come up with a plan of action for self-improvement; offer your help. Leader assessment should be a positive experience that your subordinates see as a chance for them to improve. They should see it as an opportunity to tap into your experience and knowledge for their benefit.

5-67. To assess your subordinate leaders, you must—

- Observe and record leadership actions. Figure 1-1 is a handy guide for organizing your thoughts.
- Compare what you see to the performance indicators in Appendix B or the appropriate reference.
- Determine if the performance meets, exceeds, or falls below standard.
- Tell your subordinates what you saw; give them a chance to assess themselves.
- Help your subordinate develop a plan of action to improve performance.

### Leader Assessments and Plans of Action

5-68. Leader assessment won't help anyone improve unless it includes a plan of action designed to correct weaknesses and sustain strengths. Not only that, you and the subordinate must use the plan; it doesn't do anyone any good if you stick it in a drawer or file cabinet and never think about it again. Here is what you must do:

- Design the plan of action together; let your subordinate take the lead as much as possible.
- Agree on the actions necessary to improve leader performance; your subordinate must buy into this plan if it's going to work.
- Review the plan frequently, check progress, and change the plan if necessary.

(Appendix C discusses the relationship between a leader plan of action and developmental counseling.)

## IMPROVING ACTIONS

*How can you know if you've made a difference? Sometimes—rarely—the results are instant. Usually it takes much longer. You may see a soldier again as a seasoned NCO; you may get a call or a letter or see a name in the Army Times. In most cases, you will never be sure how well you succeeded, but don't let that stop you.*

Command Sergeant Major John D. Woodyard, 1993

5-69. Improving actions are things leaders do to leave their organizations better than they found them. Improving actions fall into the categories highlighted in Figure 5-3: developing, building, and learning.

5-70. Developing refers to people: you improve your organization and the Army as an institution when you develop your subordinates.

5-71. Building refers to team building: as a direct leader, you improve your organization by building strong, cohesive teams that perform to standard, even in your absence.

5-72. Learning refers to you, your subordinates, and your organization as a whole. As a leader, you must model self-development for your people; you must constantly be learning. In addition, you must also encourage your subordinates to learn and reward their self-development efforts. Finally, you must establish an organizational climate that rewards collective learning and act to ensure your organization learns from its experiences.



Figure 5-3. Direct Leader Actions —Improving

### DEVELOPING

*I've reminded many NCOs that they wouldn't be where they are today if someone hadn't given them a little extra time. I know I wouldn't be where I am.*

Former Sergeant Major of the Army Glenn E. Morrell

5-73. In the Army, developing means developing people. Your subordinates are the leaders of tomorrow's Army. You have a responsibility to train them, to be the kind of leader they deserve so that they'll see how leading is done. It's your duty to invest the time and energy it takes to help them reach their fullest potential. The driving principle behind Army leader development is that leaders must be prepared before assuming leadership positions; they must be competent and confident in their abilities. This principle applies to all ranks and levels, to soldiers and DA civilians, and to both the active and reserve components.

5-74. As Figure 5-4 shows, a trained and ready Army rests on effective leader development. In turn, leader development rests on a foundation of training and education, expectations and standards, and values and ethics. This foundation supports the three leader development

pillars: institutional training (schooling), operational assignments, and self-development. (DA Pam 350-58 discusses Army leader development.)

### Institutional Training

5-75. The Army school system provides formal education and training for job-related and leadership skills. The American public education system is progressive; that is, children attend primary school before middle school or junior high and then go on to high school. Likewise, the Army school system is progressive. The main difference is that you can expect to go out and use your skills in an assignment before being considered for the next level of schooling. Institutional training is critical in developing leaders and preparing them for increased positions of responsibility throughout the Army.



Figure 5-4. Leader Development

### Operational Assignments

5-76. When you take what you've learned in school into the field Army, you continue to learn through on-the-job experience and by watching your leaders, peers, and subordinates. Operational assignments provide opportunities to broaden your knowledge and refine skills you gain during institutional training and previous assignments. You gain and expand your experience base by performing a wide range of duties and tasks under a variety of frequently changing conditions and situations. Operational assignments provide a

powerful resource for leader development—an opportunity to learn by doing.

### Self-Development

5-77. Self-development is a process you should use to enhance previously acquired skills, knowledge, and experience. Its goal is to increase your readiness and potential for positions of greater responsibility. Effective self-development focuses on aspects of your character, knowledge, and capabilities that you believe need developing or improving. You can use the dimensions of the Army leadership framework to help you determine what areas to work on. Self-development is continuous: it takes place during institutional training and operational assignments.

5-78. Self-development is a joint effort involving you, your first-line leader, and your commander. Commanders establish and monitor self-development programs for their organizations. You and your first-line leader together establish goals to meet your individual needs and plan the actions you must take to meet them. You do this as part of developmental counseling, which is discussed below and in Appendix C. Finally, you must execute your plan of action. If you have subordinates, you monitor how well they're acting on their plans of action. You can't execute their plans for them, but you can give them advice, encouragement, and—when necessary and mission permits—time.

5-79. Self-development for junior personnel is very structured and generally narrow in focus. The focus broadens as individuals learn their strengths and weaknesses, determine their individual needs, and become more independent. Everyone's knowledge and perspective increases with age, experience, institutional training, and operational assignments. Specific, goal-oriented self-development actions can accelerate and broaden a person's skills and knowledge. As a member of the Army, you're obligated to develop your abilities to the greatest extent possible. As an Army leader, you're responsible to assist your subordinates in their self-development.

5-80. Civilian and military education is part of self-development. Army leaders never stop

learning. They seek to educate and train themselves beyond what's offered in formal schooling or even in their duty assignments. Leaders look for educational opportunities to prepare themselves for their next job and future responsibilities. Look for Army off-duty education that interests you and will give you useful skills. Seek civilian education to broaden your outlook on life. Look for things to read that will develop your mind and help you build skills. Challenge yourself and apply the same initiative here as you do in your day-to-day duties.

5-81. Remember that Army leaders challenge themselves and take advantage of work done by others in such fields as leadership and military history as well as in their off-duty areas of interest. In the leadership area, you can begin with some of the books listed in the bibliography or go to any bookstore or library. You'll find hundreds of titles under the heading of leadership. The libraries of your post, nearby civilian communities, and colleges contain works on these topics. In addition, the Internet can also be a useful place for obtaining information on some areas. However, be careful. Some books contain more reliable and useful information than others; the same is true of Internet sites.

5-82. Figure 5-4 also shows that actions, skills, and attributes form the foundation of success in operational assignments. This is where you, the leader, fit into Army leader development. As a leader, you help your subordinates internalize Army values. You also assist them in developing the individual attributes, learning the skills, and mastering the actions required to become leaders of character and competence themselves. You do this through the action of mentoring.

### Mentoring

*Good NCOs are not just born—they are groomed and grown through a lot of hard work and strong leadership by senior NCOs.*

Former Sergeant Major of the Army  
William A. Connelly

**Mentoring** (in the Army) is the proactive development of each subordinate through observing, assessing, coaching, teaching, developmental counseling, and evaluating that results in people being treated with fairness and equal opportunity. Mentoring is an inclusive process (not an exclusive one) for everyone under a leader's charge.

5-83. Mentoring is totally inclusive, real-life leader development for every subordinate. Because leaders don't know which of their subordinates today will be the most significant contributors and leaders in the future, they strive to provide all their subordinates with the knowledge and skills necessary to become the best they can be—for the Army and for themselves.

5-84. Mentoring begins with the leader setting the right example. As an Army leader, you mentor people every day in a positive or negative way, depending on how you live Army values and perform leader actions. Mentoring shows your subordinates a mature example of values, attributes, and skills in action. It encourages them to develop their own character and leader attributes accordingly.

5-85. Mentoring links operating leader actions to improving leader actions. When you mentor, you take the observing, assessing, and evaluating you do when you operate and apply these actions to developing individual subordinates. Mentoring techniques include teaching, developmental counseling, and coaching.

**Teaching** gives knowledge or provides skills to others, causing them to learn by example or experience.

5-86. Teaching is passing on knowledge and skills to subordinates. It's a primary task for first-line leaders. Teaching focuses primarily on technical and tactical skills. Developmental counseling is better for improving interpersonal and conceptual skills. Technical

competence is critical to effective teaching. In order to develop subordinates, you must be able to demonstrate the technical and tactical skills you expect them to perform; otherwise they won't listen to you.

5-87. To be an Army leader, you must be a teacher. You give your subordinates knowledge and skills all the time, whether in formal, classroom settings or through your example. To be an effective teacher, you must first be professionally competent; then you must create conditions in which your subordinates can learn.

*Soldiers learn to be good leaders from good leaders.*

Former Sergeant Major of the Army Richard A. Kidd

5-88. The measure of how well you teach is how well your people learn. In most cases, your people will learn more by performing a skill than they will by watching you do it or by hearing you talk about how to do it. However, it's up to you to choose the teaching method that best fits the material. To make this choice, you need to understand the different ways people learn. People learn—

- Through the example of others (observing).
- By forming a picture in their minds of what they're trying to learn (thinking).
- By absorbing information (thinking).
- Through practice (hands-on experience).

5-89. Teaching is a complex art, one that you must learn in addition to the competencies you seek to teach. Just because you can pull the engine out of a tank doesn't mean you would be any good at teaching other people to do it. There are techniques and methods involved in teaching that have nothing to do with how good you are on the job; you must know both the skills related to the subject and another set of teaching skills. As an Army leader, you must develop these teaching skills as well. A subject matter expert who has acquired technical knowledge but is unable to teach that knowledge to others isn't improving the organization or the Army. (FM 25-101 addresses these and other areas related to conducting training.)



**Developmental Counseling** is subordinate-centered communication that produces a plan outlining actions necessary for subordinates to achieve individual or organizational goals.

5-90. Developmental counseling is central to leader development. It's the means by which you prepare your subordinates of today to be the leaders of tomorrow. (Appendix C contains more details on developmental counseling.)

5-91. Developmental counseling isn't a time for war stories or for tales of how things were done way back when. It should focus on today's performance and problems and tomorrow's plans and solutions. Effective developmental counseling is centered on the subordinate, who is actively involved—listening, asking for more feedback, seeking elaboration of what the counselor has to say.

5-92. Developmental counseling isn't an occasional event that you do when you feel like it. It needs to be part of your program to develop your subordinates. It requires you to use all your counseling tools and skills. This means using counseling requirements such as those prescribed in the NCO Evaluation Reporting System (NCOERS), Officer Evaluation Reporting System (OERS), and Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES, which is used to evaluate DA civilians) as more than paper drills. It means face-to-face counseling of individuals you rate. But more important, it means making time throughout the rating period to discuss performance objectives and provide meaningful assessments and feedback. No evaluation report—positive or negative—should be a surprise. A consistent developmental counseling program ensures your people know where they stand and what they should be doing to improve their performance and develop themselves. Your program should include all your people, not just the ones you think have the most potential. (The bibliography lists the evaluation and support forms prescribed by the OERS, NCOERS, and TAPES. Appendix C discusses

how to use support forms to assist you with developmental counseling.)

5-93. New direct leaders are sometimes uncomfortable confronting a subordinate who isn't performing to standard. However, remember that counseling isn't about how comfortable or uncomfortable you are; counseling is about correcting the performance or developing the character of a subordinate. Therefore, be honest and frank with your subordinates during developmental counseling. If you let your people get away with substandard behavior because you want them to like you or because you're afraid to make a hard call, you're sacrificing Army standards for your personal well-being—and you're not developing your subordinates.

5-94. This manual has emphasized throughout the importance of the example that you, as an Army leader, set for your subordinates. Your people look to you to see what kind of leader they want to be. The example you set in counseling is especially important. Army leaders at every level must ensure their subordinate leaders use counseling to develop their own subordinates. Setting the example is a powerful leadership tool: if you counsel your subordinates, your subordinate leaders will counsel theirs as well. The way you counsel is the way they'll counsel. Your people copy your behavior. The significance of your position as a role model can't be understated. It's a powerful teaching tool, for developmental counseling as well as other behaviors.

5-95. Although you're responsible for developing your subordinates, no leader can be all things to all people. In addition, the Army is already culturally diverse and is becoming increasingly technologically complex. In this environment, some of your subordinates may seek advice and counsel from informal relationships in addition to their leadership chain. Such relationships can be particularly important for women, minorities, and those in low-density specialties who have relatively few role models nearby.

5-96. This situation in no way relieves you, the leader, of any of your responsibilities regarding caring for and developing your people. Rather,

being sensitive to your subordinates' professional development and cultural needs is part of the cultural awareness leader attribute. As an Army leader, you must know your people and take advantage of every resource available to help your subordinates develop as leaders. This includes other leaders who have skills or attributes different from your own.

**Coaching** involves a leader's assessing performance based on observations, helping the subordinate develop an effective plan of action to sustain strengths and overcome weaknesses, and supporting the subordinate and the plan.

5-97. You can consider coaching to be both an operating and an improving leader action. It's less formal than teaching. When you're dealing with individuals, coaching is a form of specific instance counseling (which Appendix C discusses). When you're dealing with all or part of a team, it's generally associated with AARs (which you read about earlier in this chapter).

5-98. Coaching follows naturally from the assessing leader action. As you observe your subordinates at work, you'll see them perform some tasks to standard and some not to standard. Some of their plans will work; some won't. Your subordinates know when you're watching them. They expect you to tell them what they need to do to meet the standard, improve the team's performance, or develop themselves. You provide this sort of feedback through coaching. And don't limit your coaching to formal sessions. Use every opportunity to teach, counsel or coach from quarterly training briefings to AARs. Teaching moments and coaching opportunities occur all the time when you concentrate on developing leaders.

### **Mentoring and Developing Tomorrow's Army**

5-99. Mentoring is demanding business, but the future of the Army depends on the trained and effective leaders whom you leave behind. Sometimes it requires you to set priorities, to

balance short-term readiness with long-term leader development. The commitment to mentoring future leaders may require you to take risks. It requires you to give subordinates the opportunity to learn and develop themselves while using your experience to guide them without micromanaging. Mentoring will lead your subordinates to successes that build their confidence and skills for the future.

5-100. Mentoring isn't something new for the Army. Past successes and failures can often be traced to how seriously those in charge took the challenge of developing future leaders. As you consider the rapid pace of change in today's world, it's critical that you take the time to develop leaders capable of responding to that change. The success of the next generation of Army leaders depends on how well you accept the responsibility of mentoring your subordinates. Competent and confident leaders trained to meet tomorrow's challenges and fight and win future conflicts will be your legacy.

5-101. As you assume positions of greater responsibility, as the number of people for whom you are responsible increases, you need to do even more to develop your subordinates. More, in this case, means establishing a leader development program for your organization. It also means encouraging your subordinates to take actions to develop themselves personally and professionally. In addition, you may have to provide time for them to pursue self-development. (FM 25-101 discusses leader development programs.)

**What have YOU done TODAY to develop the leaders of tomorrow's Army?**

### **BUILDING Building Teams**

5-102. You've heard—no doubt countless times—that the Army is a team. Just how important is it that people have a sense of the team? Very important. The national cause, the purpose of the mission, and all the larger concerns may not be visible from the battlefield.

Regardless of other issues, soldiers perform for the other people in the squad or section, for others in the team or crew, for the person on their right or left. This is a fundamental truth: soldiers perform because they don't want to let their buddies down.

5-103. If the leaders of the small teams that make up the Army are competent, and if their members trust one another, those teams and the larger team of teams will hang together and get the job done. People who belong to a successful team look at nearly everything in a positive light; their winners' attitudes are infectious, and they see problems as challenges rather than obstacles. Additionally, a cohesive

team accomplishes the mission much more efficiently than a group of individuals. Just as a football team practices to win on the gridiron, so must a team of soldiers practice to be effective on the battlefield.

5-104. Training together builds collective competence; trust is a product of that competence. Subordinates learn to trust their leaders if the leaders know how to do their jobs and act consistently—if they say what they mean and mean what they say. Trust also springs from the collective competence of the team. As the team becomes more experienced and enjoys more successes, it becomes more cohesive.

### Trust Earned

In a 1976 interview, Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York told of his experiences as a white officer with the 369th Infantry Regiment, an all-black unit in the segregated Army of 1917. Fish knew that his unit would function only if his soldiers trusted him; his soldiers, all of whom had volunteered for combat duty, deserved nothing less than a trustworthy leader. When a white regiment threatened to attack the black soldiers in training camp, Fish, his pistol drawn, alerted the leaders of that regiment and headed off a disaster.

"There was one thing they wanted above all from a white officer," [Fish recalled in an interview nearly 60 years later] "and that was fair treatment. You see, even in New York City [home of most of his soldiers] they really did not get a square deal most of the time. But if they felt you were on the level with them, they would go all out for you. And they seemed to have a sixth sense in realizing just how you felt. I sincerely wanted to lead them as real soldiers, and they knew it."

5-105. Developing teams takes hard work, patience, and quite a bit of interpersonal skill on the part of the leader, but it's a worthwhile investment. Good teams get the job done. People who are part of a good team complete the mission on time with the resources given them and a minimum of wasted effort; in combat, good teams are the most effective and take the fewest casualties.

5-106. Good teams—

- Work together to accomplish the mission.
- Execute tasks thoroughly and quickly.
- Meet or exceed the standard.
- Thrive on demanding challenges.
- Learn from their experiences and are proud of their accomplishments.

5-107. The Army is a team that includes members who are not soldiers but whose contributions are essential to mission success. The contributions made by almost 1,600 DA civilians in the Persian Gulf region were all but lost in the celebrations surrounding the military victory against Iraq and the homecoming celebration for the soldiers that followed. However, one safety specialist noted that these deployed DA civilians recognized the need for a team effort:

*Patriotism was their drawing force for being there.... We were part of the team supporting our soldiers! The focus is where it should be—on the military. They're here to do the job; we're here to help them.*

5-108. People will do the most extraordinary things for their buddies. It's your job as an Army leader to pull each member into the team because you may someday ask that person for extraordinary effort. Team building involves applying interpersonal leader skills that transform individuals into productive teams. If you've done your work, the team member won't let you down.

5-109. Within a larger team, smaller teams may be at different stages of development. For instance, members of First Squad may be used to working together. They trust one another and get the job done—usually exceeding the standard—with no wasted motion. Second Squad in the same platoon just received three new soldiers and a team leader from another company. As a team, Second Squad is less mature; it will take them some time to get up to the level of First Squad. New team members have to learn how things work: they have to be brought on board and made to feel members of the team; they must learn the standards and the climate of their new unit; they'll have to demonstrate some competence before other members really accept them; and finally, they must practice working together. Leaders, who must oversee all this, are better equipped if they know what to expect. Make use of the information on the next few pages; learn what to look for—and stay flexible.

5-110. Figure 5-5 lists things you must do to pull a team together, get it going in the right direction, and keep it moving. And that list only hints at the work that lies ahead as you get your team to work together. Your subordinates must know—must truly believe—that they're a part of the team, that their contribution is important and valued. They must know that you'll train them and listen to them. They don't want you to let them get away with shoddy work or half-baked efforts; there's no pride in loafing. You must constantly observe, counsel, develop, listen; you must be every bit the team player you want your subordinates to be—and more.

5-111. Teams don't come together by accident; leaders must build and guide them through a

series of developmental stages: formation, enrichment, and sustainment. This discussion may make the process seem more orderly than it actually is; as with so many things leaders do, the reality is more complicated than the explanation. Each team develops differently: the boundaries between stages are not hard and fast. As a leader, you must be sensitive to the characteristics of the team you're building and of its individual members—your people. Compare the characteristics of your team with the team building stage descriptions. The information that results can help you determine what to expect of your team and what you need to do to improve its capabilities.

### Stages of Team Building

5-112. Teams, like individuals, have different personalities. As with individuals, the leader's job isn't to make teams that are clones of one another; the job is to make best use of the peculiar talents of the team, maximize the potential of the unit climate, and motivate aggressive execution.

5-113. **Formation stage.** Teams work best when new members are brought on board quickly, when they're made to feel a part of the team. The two steps—reception and orientation—are dramatically different in peace and war. In combat, this sponsorship process can literally mean life or death to new members and to the team.

5-114. Reception is the leader's welcome: the orientation begins with meeting other team members, learning the layout of the workplace, learning the schedule and other requirements, and generally getting to know the lay of the land. In combat, leaders may not have time to spend with new members. In this case, new arrivals are often assigned a buddy who will help them get oriented and keep them out of trouble until they learn their way around. Whatever technique you use, your soldiers should never encounter a situation similar to the one in the next example.







| <b>TEAM BUILDING STAGES</b>   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | <b>SUBORDINATE CHALLENGES</b>   | <b>LEADER &amp; UNIT/ORGANIZATION ACTIONS</b>   |
| <b>FORMATION STAGE</b>  |   |   |
|  <b>GENERIC</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve belonging and acceptance</li> <li>• Set personal &amp; family concerns</li> <li>• Learn about leaders and other members</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to and care for subordinates</li> <li>• Design effective reception and orientation</li> <li>• Communicate</li> <li>• Reward positive contributions</li> <li>• Set example</li> </ul>  |
|  <b>SOLDIER CRITICAL</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face the uncertainty of war</li> <li>• Cope with fear of unknown injury and death</li> <li>• Adjust to sights and sounds of war</li> <li>• Adjust to separation from home and family</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with each soldier</li> <li>• Reassure with calm presence</li> <li>• Communicate vital safety tips</li> <li>• Provide stable situation</li> <li>• Establish buddy system</li> <li>• Assist soldiers to deal with immediate problems</li> </ul>   |
| <b>ENRICHMENT STAGE</b>   |   |   |
|  <b>GENERIC</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust leaders &amp; other members</li> <li>• Find close friends</li> <li>• Learn who is in charge</li> <li>• Accept the way things are done</li> <li>• Adjust to feelings about how things ought to be done</li> <li>• Overcome family-versus-unit conflict</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust and encourage trust</li> <li>• Allow growth while keeping control</li> <li>• Identify and channel emerging leaders</li> <li>• Establish clear lines of authority</li> <li>• Establish individual and unit goals</li> <li>• Train as a unit for mission</li> <li>• Build pride through accomplishment</li> <li>• Acquire self-evaluation/self-assessment habits</li> <li>• Be fair and give responsibility</li> </ul> |
|  <b>SOLDIER CRITICAL</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survive</li> <li>• Demonstrate competence</li> <li>• Become a team member quickly</li> <li>• Learn about the enemy</li> <li>• Learn about the battlefield</li> <li>• Avoid life-threatening mistakes</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train as a unit for combat</li> <li>• Demonstrate competence</li> <li>• Know the soldiers</li> <li>• Pace subordinate battlefield integration</li> <li>• Provide stable unit climate</li> <li>• Emphasize safety awareness for improved readiness</li> </ul>   |
| <b>SUSTAINMENT STAGE</b>  |   |   |
|  <b>GENERIC</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust others</li> <li>• Share ideas and feelings freely</li> <li>• Assist other team members</li> <li>• Sustain trust and confidence</li> <li>• Share mission and values</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate trust</li> <li>• Focus on teamwork, training &amp; maintaining</li> <li>• Respond to subordinate problems</li> <li>• Devise more challenging training</li> <li>• Build pride and spirit through unit sports, social &amp; spiritual activities.</li> </ul>   |
|  <b>SOLDIER CRITICAL</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust to continuous operations</li> <li>• Cope with casualties</li> <li>• Adjust to enemy actions</li> <li>• Overcome boredom</li> <li>• Avoid rumors</li> <li>• Control fear, anger, despair, and panic</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe and enforce sleep discipline</li> <li>• Sustain safety awareness</li> <li>• Inform soldiers</li> <li>• Know and deal with soldiers' perceptions</li> <li>• Keep soldiers productively busy</li> <li>• Use in-process reviews (IPRs) and after-action reviews (AARs)</li> <li>• Act decisively in face of panic</li> </ul>  |

Figure 5-5. Team Building Stages

### Replacements in the ETO

Most historians writing about World War II agree that the replacement system that fed new soldiers into the line units was seriously flawed, especially in the ETO, and did tremendous harm to the soldiers and the Army. Troops fresh from stateside posts were shuffled about in tent cities where they were just numbers. 1LT George Wilson, an infantry company commander who received one hundred replacements on December 29, 1944, in the midst of the Battle of the Bulge, remembers the results: “We discovered that these men had been on a rifle range only once; they had never thrown a grenade or fired a bazooka [antitank rocket], mortar or machine gun.”

PVT Morris Dunn, another soldier who ended up with the 84th Division after weeks in a replacement depot recalls how the new soldiers felt: “We were just numbers, we didn’t know anybody, and I’ve never felt so alone and miserable and helpless in my entire life—we’d been herded around like cattle at roundup time....On the ride to the front it was cold and raining with the artillery fire louder every mile, and finally we were dumped out in the middle of a heavily damaged town.”

5-115. In combat, Army leaders have countless things to worry about; the mental state of new arrivals might seem low on the list. But if those soldiers can’t fight, the unit will suffer needless casualties and may fail to complete the mission.

5-116. Discipline and shared hardship pull people together in powerful ways. SGT Alvin C. York, who won the Medal of Honor in an action you’ll read about later in this chapter, talked about cohesion this way:

*War brings out the worst in you. It turns you into a mad, fighting animal, but it also brings out something else, something I just don’t know how to describe, a sort of tenderness and love for the fellow fighting with you.*

5-117. However, the emotions SGT York mentions don’t emerge automatically in combat. One way to ensure cohesion is to build it during peacetime. Team building begins with receiving new members; you know how important first impressions are when you meet someone new. The same thing is true of teams; the new member’s reception and orientation creates that crucial first impression that colors the person’s opinion of the team for a long time. A good experience joining the organization will make it easier for the new member to fit in and contribute. Even in peacetime, the way a person is received into an organization can have long-lasting effects—good or bad—on the individual and the team. (Appendix C discusses reception and integration counseling.)

### Reception on Christmas Eve

An assistant division commander of the 25th Infantry Division told this story as part of his farewell speech:

“I ran across some new soldiers and asked them about their arrival on the island [of Oahu]. They said they got in on Christmas Eve, and I thought to myself, ‘Can’t we do a better job when we ship these kids out, so they’re not sitting in some airport on their first big holiday away from home?’ I mean, I really felt sorry for them. So I said, ‘Must have been pretty lonesome sitting in a new barracks where you didn’t know anyone.’ And one of them said, ‘No, sir. We weren’t there a half-hour before the CQ [charge of quarters] came up and told us to get into class B’s and be standing out front of the company in 15 minutes. Then this civilian drives up, a teenager, and the CQ orders us into the car. Turns out the kid was the first sergeant’s son; his father had sent him over to police up anybody who was hanging around the barracks. We went over to the first sergeant’s house to a big luau [party] with his family and a bunch of their neighbors and friends.’

**Reception on Christmas Eve (continued)**

“My guess is that those soldiers will not only do anything and everything that first sergeant wants, but they are going to tell anyone who will listen that they belong to the best outfit in the Army.”

5-118. **Enrichment stage.** New teams and new team members gradually move from questioning everything to trusting themselves, their peers, and their leaders. Leaders earn that trust by listening, following up on what they hear, establishing clear lines of authority, and setting standards. By far the most important thing a leader does to strengthen the team is training. Training takes a group of individuals and molds them into a team while preparing them to accomplish their missions. Training occurs during all three team building stages, but is particularly important during enrichment; it’s at this point that the team is building collective proficiency.

5-119. **Sustainment stage.** When a team reaches this stage, its members think of the team as “their team.” They own it, have pride in it, and want the team to succeed. At this stage, team members will do what needs to be done without being told. Every new mission gives the leader a chance to make the bonds even stronger, to challenge the team to reach for new heights. The leader develops his subordinates because they’re tomorrow’s team leaders. He continues to train the team so that it maintains proficiency in the collective and individual tasks it must perform to accomplish its missions. Finally, the leader works to keep the team going in spite of the stresses and losses of combat.

**Building the Ethical Climate**

5-120. As an Army leader, you are the ethical standard bearer for your organization. You’re responsible for building an ethical climate that demands and rewards behavior consistent with Army values. The primary factor affecting an organization’s ethical climate is its leader’s ethical standard. Leaders can look to other

organizational or installation personnel—for example, the chaplain, staff judge advocate, inspector general, and equal employment opportunity manager—to assist them in building and assessing their organization’s ethical climate, but the ultimate responsibility belongs to the leader—period.

5-121. Setting a good ethical example doesn’t necessarily mean subordinates will follow it. Some of them may feel that circumstances justify unethical behavior. (See, for example, the situation portrayed in Appendix D.) Therefore, you must constantly seek to maintain a feel for your organization’s current ethical climate and take prompt action to correct any discrepancies between the climate and the standard. One tool to help you is the Ethical Climate Assessment Survey (ECAS), which is discussed in Appendix D. You can also use some of the resources listed above to help you get a feel for your organization’s ethical climate. After analyzing the information gathered from the survey or other sources, a focus group may be a part of your plan of action to improve the ethical climate. Your abilities to listen and decide are the most important tools you have for this job.

5-122. It’s important for subordinates to have confidence in the organization’s ethical environment because much of what is necessary in war goes against the grain of the societal values individuals bring into the Army. You read in the part of Chapter 4 that discusses ethical reasoning that a soldier’s conscience may tell him it’s wrong to take human life while the mission of the unit calls for exactly that. Unless you’ve established a strong ethical climate that lets that soldier know his duty, the conflict of values may sap the soldier’s will to fight.

### SGT York

A conscientious objector from the Tennessee hills, Alvin C. York was drafted after America's entry into World War I and assigned to the 328th Infantry Regiment of the 82d Division, the "All Americans." PVT York, a devout Christian, told his commander, CPT E. C. B. Danforth, that he would bear arms against the enemy but didn't believe in killing. Recognizing PVT York as a potential leader but unable to sway him from his convictions, CPT Danforth consulted his battalion commander, MAJ George E. Buxton, about how to handle the situation.

MAJ Buxton was also deeply religious and knew the Bible as well as PVT York did. He had CPT Danforth bring PVT York to him, and they talked at length about the Scriptures, about God's teachings, about right and wrong, about just wars. Then MAJ Buxton sent PVT York home on leave to ponder and pray over the dilemma. The battalion commander promised to release him from the Army if PVT York decided he could not serve his country without sacrificing his integrity. After two weeks of reflection and deep soul-searching, PVT York returned, having reconciled his personal values with those of the Army. PVT York's decision had great consequences for both himself and his unit.

Alvin York performed an exploit of almost unbelievable heroism in the morning hours of 8 October 1918 in France's Argonne Forest. He was now a corporal (CPL), having won his stripes during combat in the Lorraine. That morning CPL York's battalion was moving across a valley to seize a German-held rail point when a German infantry battalion, hidden on a wooded ridge overlooking the valley, opened up with machine gun fire. The American battalion dived for cover, and the attack stalled. CPL York's platoon, already reduced to 16 men, was sent to flank the enemy machine guns.

As the platoon advanced through the woods to the rear of the German outfit, it surprised a group of about 25 German soldiers. The shocked enemy offered only token resistance, but then more hidden machine guns swept the clearing with fire. The Germans dropped safely to the ground, but nine Americans, including the platoon leader and the other two corporals, fell dead or wounded. CPL York was the only unwounded leader remaining.

CPL York found his platoon trapped and under fire within 25 yards of the enemy's machine gun pits. Nonetheless, he didn't panic. Instead, he began firing into the nearest enemy position, aware that the Germans would have to expose themselves to get an aimed shot at him. An expert marksman, CPL York was able to hit every enemy soldier who popped his head over the parapet.

After he had shot more than a dozen enemy, six German soldiers charged him with fixed bayonets. As the Germans ran toward him, CPL York once again drew on the instincts of a Tennessee hunter and shot the last man first (so the ones in front wouldn't see the ones he shot fall), then the fifth, and so on. After he had shot all the assaulting Germans, CPL York again turned his attention to the machine gun pits. In between shots, he called for the Germans to give up. It may have initially seemed ludicrous for a lone soldier in the open to call on a well-entrenched enemy to surrender, but their situation looked desperate to the German battalion commander, who had seen over 20 of his soldiers killed by this one American. The commander advanced and offered to surrender if CPL York would stop shooting.

CPL York now faced a daunting task. His platoon, now numbering seven unwounded soldiers, was isolated behind enemy lines with several dozen prisoners. However, when one American said their predicament was hopeless, CPL York told him to be quiet and began organizing the prisoners for a movement. CPL York moved his unit and prisoners toward American lines, encountering other German positions and forcing their surrender. By the time the platoon reached the edge of the valley they had left just a few hours before, the hill was clear of German machine guns. The fire on the Americans in the valley was substantially reduced and their advance began again.



**SGT York (continued)**

CPL York returned to American lines, having taken a total of 132 prisoners and putting 35 machine guns out of action. He left the prisoners and headed back to his own outfit. Intelligence officers questioned the prisoners and learned from their testimony the incredible story of how a fighting battalion was destroyed by one determined soldier armed only with a rifle and pistol. Alvin C. York was promoted to sergeant and awarded the Medal of Honor for this action. His character, physical courage, technical competence, and leadership enabled him to destroy the morale and effectiveness of an entire enemy infantry battalion.

5-123. CPT Danforth and MAJ Buxton could have ordered SGT York to go to war, or they might have shipped him out to a job that would take him away from the fight. Instead, these leaders carefully addressed the soldier's ethical concerns. MAJ Buxton, in particular, established the ethical climate by showing that he, too, had wrestled with the very questions that troubled SGT York. The climate these leaders created held that every person's beliefs are important and should be considered. MAJ Buxton demonstrated that a soldier's duties could be consistent with the ethical framework established by his religious beliefs. Leaders who create a healthy ethical environment inspire confidence in their subordinates; that confidence and the trust it engenders builds the unit's will. They create an environment where soldiers can truly "be all they can be."

**LEARNING**

*For most men, the matter of learning is one of personal preference. But for Army [leaders], the obligation to learn, to grow in their profession, is clearly a public duty.*

General of the Army Omar N. Bradley

5-124. The Army is a learning organization, one that harnesses the experience of its people and organizations to improve the way it does business. Based on their experiences, learning organizations adopt new techniques and procedures that get the job done more efficiently or effectively. Likewise, they discard techniques and procedures that have outlived their purpose. However, you must remain flexible when trying to make sense of your experiences. The leader who works day after day after day and

never stops to ask "How can I do this better?" is never going to learn and won't improve the team.

5-125. Leaders who learn look at their experience and find better ways of doing things. Don't be afraid to challenge how you and your subordinates operate. When you ask "Why do we do it that way?" and the only answer you get is "Because we've always done it that way," it's time for a closer look. Teams that have found a way that works still may not be doing things the best way. Unless leaders are willing to question how things are, no one will ever know what can be.

**"Zero Defects" and Learning**

5-126. There's no room for the "zero-defects" mentality in a learning organization. Leaders willing to learn welcome new ways of looking at things, examine what's going well, and are not afraid to look at what's going poorly. When direct leaders stop receiving feedback from subordinates, it's a good indication that something is wrong. If the message you hammer home is "There will be no mistakes," or if you lose your temper and "shoot the messenger" every time there's bad news, eventually your people will just stop telling you when things go wrong or suggesting how to make things go right. Then there will be some unpleasant surprises in store. Any time you have human beings in a complex organization doing difficult jobs, often under pressure, there are going to be problems. Effective leaders use those mistakes to figure out how to do things better and share what they have learned with other leaders in the organization, both peers and superiors.

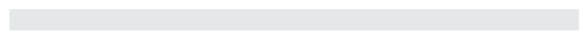
5-127. That being said, all environments are not learning environments; a standard of “zero-defects” is acceptable, if not mandatory, in some circumstances. A parachute rigger is charged with a “zero-defect” standard. If a rigger makes a mistake, a parachutist will die. Helicopter repairers live in a “zero-defect” environment as well. They can’t allow aircraft to be mechanically unstable during flight. In these and similar work environments, safety concerns mandate a “zero-defects” mentality. Of course, organizations and people make mistakes; mistakes are part of training and may be the price of taking action. Leaders must make their intent clear and ensure their people understand the sorts of mistakes that are acceptable and those that are not.

5-128. Leaders can create a “zero-defects” environment without realizing it. Good leaders want their organizations to excel. But an organizational “standard” of excellence can quickly slide into “zero defects” if the leader isn’t careful. For example, the published minimum standard for passing the APFT is 180 points—60 points per event. However, in units that are routinely assigned missions requiring highly strenuous physical activities, leaders need to train their people to a higher-than-average level of physical fitness. If leaders use APFT scores as the primary means of gauging physical fitness, their soldiers will focus on the test rather than the need for physical fitness. A better course would be for leaders to train their people on mission-related skills that require the higher level of physical readiness while at the same time motivating them to strive for their personal best on the APFT.

### **Barriers to Learning**

5-129. Fear of mistakes isn’t the only thing that can get in the way of learning; so can rigid, lockstep thinking and plain mental laziness. These habits can become learning barriers leaders are so used to that they don’t even notice them. Fight this tendency. Challenge yourself. Use your imagination. Ask how other people do things. Listen to subordinates.

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### **Helping People Learn**

5-130. Certain conditions help people learn. First, you must motivate the person to learn. Explain to the subordinate why the subject is important or show how it will help the individual perform better. Second, involve the subordinate in the learning process; make it active. For instance, you would never try to teach someone how to drive a vehicle with classroom instruction alone; you have to get the person behind the wheel. That same approach applies to much more complex tasks; keep the lecture to a minimum and maximize the hands-on time.

5-131. Learning from experience isn’t enough; you can’t have every kind of experience. But if you take advantage of what others have learned, you get the benefit without having the experience. An obvious example is when combat veterans in a unit share their experiences with soldiers who haven’t been to war. A less obvious, but no less important, example is when leaders share their experience with subordinates during developmental counseling.

### **After-Action Reviews and Learning**

5-132. Individuals benefit when the group learns together. The AAR is one tool good leaders use to help their organizations learn as a group. Properly conducted, an AAR is a professional discussion of an event, focused on performance standards, that enables people to discover for themselves what happened, why it happened, and how to sustain strengths and improve on weaknesses. Like warning orders and rehearsals, the AAR is a technique that all leaders—military or DA civilian—can use in garrison as well as field environments. (FM 25-101 and TC 25-20 discuss how to prepare for, conduct, and follow up after an AAR.) When your team sits down for an AAR, make sure everyone participates and all understand what’s being said. With input from the whole team, your people will learn more than if they just think about the experience by themselves.

### **Organizational Climate and Learning**

5-133. It takes courage to create a learning environment. When you try new things or try things in different ways, you’re bound to make mistakes. Learn from your mistakes and the

mistakes of others. Pick your team and yourself up, determine what went right and wrong, and continue the mission. Be confident in your abilities. Theodore Roosevelt, a colonel during the Spanish-American War and twenty-sixth President of the United States, put it this way:

*Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em, Certainly I can!—and get busy and find out how to do it.*

5-134. Your actions as a direct leader move the Army forward. How you influence your subordinates and the people you work for, how you operate to get the job done, how you improve the organization for a better future, all determine the Army's success or failure.

## SUMMARY

5-135. Direct leaders influence their subordinates face-to-face as they operate to accomplish the mission and improve the organization. Because their leadership is face-to-face, direct leaders see the outcomes of their actions almost immediately. This is partly because they receive immediate feedback on the results of their actions.

5-136. Direct leaders influence by determining their purpose and direction from the boss's intent and concept of the operation. They motivate subordinates by completing tasks that reinforce this intent and concept. They continually acquire and assess outcomes and motivate

their subordinates through face-to-face contact and personal example.

5-137. Direct leaders operate by focusing their subordinates' activities toward the organization's objective and achieving it. Direct leaders plan, prepare, execute, and assess as they operate. These functions sometimes occur simultaneously.

5-138. Direct leaders improve by living Army values and providing the proper role model for subordinates. Leaders must develop all subordinates as they build strong, cohesive teams and establish an effective learning environment.

