

FORUM & FEATURES



THE DIFFERENCE

DANDRIDGE M. MALONE

A major malfunction that might occur in the process of developing company-level leaders will certainly occur when the leadership of a unit does not put enough effort into recognizing, emphasizing, and using THE DIFFERENCE.

Of the 169 men in a full strength company, 43 are officers and 126 are not. Therefore, 43 soldiers are in the leadership of the unit and 126 are not.

And that's THE DIFFERENCE. There is a line between them.

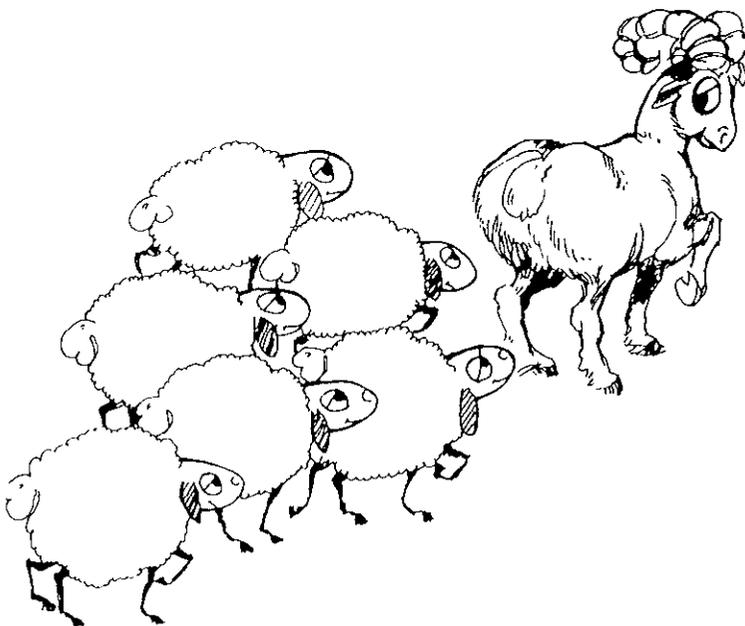
The line is totally unimportant in terms of making the 43 "better" individuals than the 126. Any one of the 169 can be as good a man as any other. The line is extremely important, though, in terms of making it possible for the leadership of the unit to lead the unit.

Any organized effort involving two

or more people must have someone in charge. There must be leaders and followers, and leaders and followers do different things. Leaders analyze, organize, deputize, and supervise. Followers execute. The line establishes THE DIFFERENCE between the two. New lieutenants and new sergeants, just as they have a hard time balancing mission needs with men needs, also have a hard time learning THE DIFFERENCE between leaders and followers.

Somewhere among your young able and willing soldiers there's probably one that you have started on the road to becoming a leader. You picked him out because he seemed to be the "main man" in one of those informal buddy groups that hang around together. Now, why do you think his buddies looked at him as the main man? It was because he knew, better than anyone else, what was inside his buddies, how they felt about the Army and about their jobs, what their attitudes were, what their needs were. And he was the main man because he, better than anyone else, could speak for them, and pass on their attitudes and needs to the leadership.

That's what makes an informal



leader of either a good group or a sorry group. He knows his buddies' attitudes and needs, and they think he's the one who can most probably get something done about them. That's why they put him in charge, informally, of course. Then you come along and put him in charge, formally. You did right, because he's a leader, in your eyes and theirs.

This young man, as an informal leader, is an expert on the needs of his men. But at this stage, there is no way he can do the balancing between mission and men, which is so critical. He knows little about the needs of the mission. When you bring him across that line that separates leaders from followers, the needs of the mission are what he must learn. And then, when he's started learning those, he

will begin to understand the price he has to pay to become a leader of men.

Nothing good ever comes for free. What he will learn is that never again, as a leader, can he be one of the boys. He has crossed the line. He has graduated. He is different.

Now that he's different, he's got to find some new buddy groups. He's got to hang around with leaders, and not with the boys. And that's why brand-new sergeants should be reassigned within their units. And that's why, in good units, there are separate areas in the mess halls where sergeants can talk about sergeants' business. And that's why, in good units, there are separate NCO clubs where they can talk about it some more. And that's why there are separate NCO rooms in the barracks

and why there are separate NCO get-togethers, meetings, and activities.

All this has nothing to do with NCO prestige. The purpose of all this separating is to teach, to develop, to strengthen, to clarify THE DIFFERENCE between those who are part of the leadership and those who are not. The better the leadership of the unit does this separating, the better the unit will be led.

DANDRIDGE M. MALONE, a retired Infantry Colonel, has published numerous articles, books, and technical reports. He holds a master's degree in social psychology from Purdue University and has completed several military schools, including the Armed Forces Staff College. In addition to his Infantry leadership assignments, he also served in either staff or faculty assignments at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the U.S. Military Academy, and the U.S. Army War College.

ARMY AVIATION

An Insider's View

CAPTAIN KEVIN G. SCHERRER

Despite its growing importance as a member of the combined arms team, Army Aviation is still at times mistreated, misused, and misunderstood by ground commanders at all levels.

An aviation unit's effectiveness on the battlefield depends on the availability of its equipment, the proficiency of its aircrews, and its thorough and complete integration with the ground maneuver and fire support elements. Accordingly, ground commanders and their operations people must thoroughly under-

stand a supporting aviation unit's capabilities, limitations, tactics, and methods of employment if they expect that unit to be of much help to them.

The first thing they must understand is that there will never be enough aircraft available to satisfy everyone's desires. This means that during peacetime training, ground units should request only those missions they would realistically ask for in an active combat situation.

Equipment limitation is something

else ground commanders and their principal staff officers are going to have to learn to live with. For example, the cargo hook of a UH-1 helicopter is rated at 4,000 pounds. This does not mean the helicopter can carry two tons of ammunition. A UH-1 aircraft usually has an operating weight, before loading, of some 7,500 pounds. Because its gross operating weight is 9,500 pounds, the UH-1 can carry only 2,000 pounds, or one ton, of cargo. And even that figure might be reduced by such en-