

He is salvaged. That will happen about one time out of five, after you've invested more hours in these five problem soldiers than in all of your other men put together.

Putting a lot of time in with the unable and unwilling soldier is noble and human. But it is not "leadership effective" in terms of the effort you must invest and the return the Army gets on that investment. Your other soldiers will benefit far more from your time and effort. But don't pass this man on or let him slip through.

There is no place for him on the battlefield when that "thing" we call a unit does its work.

There it is — a simple and practical tool for identifying four different categories of soldiers, and a simple strategy for developing the individual soldiers in each category. The differences between them have nothing to do with race, creed, color, sex, or anything else. The differences have to do simply with skill and will, which is what you as a leader are responsible for developing in your soldiers. Skill

plus will equal performance. Performance is what gets the job done. And the purpose of leadership is, after all, to do the job.

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Building Morale Through PT

CAPTAIN DAVID H. PETRAEUS

In recognition of the need for its soldiers to be physically ready for any future conflict, the Army is emphasizing physical training more than ever. As a result, more units are running and exercising as a group. Unfortunately, too many of them fail to make the most of the opportunity to build morale, esprit, and cohesion at the same time they are developing stamina and fitness.

The problem is that PT is often seen as a boring, tedious activity, usually performed at an early hour, often before sunrise, and occasionally when it is quite cold. In the grey chill before dawn, the members of many organizations stumble out of their barracks or their automobiles and shuffle through the daily routine without ever gaining a feeling of togetherness or enthusiasm. On the other hand, units with high levels of motivation and spirit normally shout and sing their way along, helping each other and developing a close-

knit feeling and considerable pride in their units. More than likely, such units will carry this same positive attitude throughout the day in performing their other duties.

Knowingly or not, units that effectively build morale through PT usually practice several basic principles. These are principles that other units can use to improve their own programs.

MANDATORY

First, attendance at PT sessions should be mandatory. If the program is to be effective, everyone must participate, especially the company commander, the first sergeant, the company clerk, the commander's driver, and the motor sergeant. Certainly, there should be an allowance for exceptions on a day by day, mission by mission basis, but these should be granted sparingly and only by the

commander or the first sergeant.

At the beginning of each regular PT session the instructor should announce the exercise and the number of repetitions to be performed as well as the distance and time for the run that is to follow. This lets everyone in the group know the program for that day and allows them to pace themselves through it.

The PT instructors must be thoroughly professional. They must know the exercises they will conduct and lead their units in these exercises crisply and with confidence. They should never act self-conscious or unsure of themselves, but neither should they show off their superior fitness at the expense of others. They need to be in complete control of the formation and should not tolerate marginal performance by any member of it.

Other leaders in the unit must support them completely in this by never allowing their soldiers' unsatisfactory performance to go uncorrected. In

units that have pride in their PT program, the soldiers, too, will usually help through positive peer pressure. They will not tolerate others who are out of step or who are not doing the exercises correctly. The senior leader present should also provide a critique or feedback to the PT instructors immediately following each session.

The pace of the PT session should be reasonable. The number of repetitions for each exercise and the length of the run should challenge the soldiers but should not totally exhaust them.

The instructors should choose exercises that work on different parts of the body and should perform them in a sensible order. As an example, good instructors avoid following the four-count pushup with the squat thrust, because both are upper body exercises. Pushups, situps, and a run should be included in each session.

STANDARDS

Recognized, published physical fitness standards are vital, and the PT program must be oriented toward those standards. A unit should not run faster than the standard unless everyone can make it. If the successful completion of the PT test is the minimum, that's fine, but unit members should be aware of it.

Testing should be done frequently to measure progress and to provide a visible goal; those who fail to meet the standards, especially leaders, need to be quickly identified for a remedial program.

A unit's remedial program should not be for those who fall out of a run that is twice as long as the standard, or one that is three minutes faster than the standard. It should be only for those who fail to perform at the level of the announced minimum standards. Remedial activities should be announced in advance and attendance should be strictly enforced. The progress of those in the program should be carefully monitored.

But in the process of dealing with the standards and the remedial pro-

grams, the PT leaders should be careful not to stifle the overachievers. They must be given an opportunity to show their stuff, and they can be, through several techniques. Letting them pair off and do pushups or situps (or other exercises) for an announced time (one or two minutes, for example), rather than a fixed number of repetitions, will allow the hard chargers such an opportunity. The same goes for letting them run a fixed distance individually for time. A third method is to have a separate group that, on certain mornings, does PT separately, performing more repetitions and running farther and faster. Still, these PT superstars should not be allowed to lose their unit identity through too many of these individual sessions.

Most good units also vary the level of their PT sessions, conducting them at platoon level most days, at company level once or twice a week, and at battalion level once or twice a month. This practice adds variety, allows initiative at platoon (or squad) level, and fosters cohesion and esprit at all organizational levels. (The platoons should also be encouraged to incorporate different programs that are most appropriate to that level, such as grass drills or rifle PT.)

Whatever the level, units should never be permitted to march or run a single step without someone calling cadence. Few things build morale more quickly. And the cadences should be adapted to the unit: Tank companies don't extol the virtues of airborne ranger life; they sing about diesel smoke and end connectors. By the same token, paratroopers don't sing about APCs and bustle racks; they sound off about C130s rolling down the strip.

The singing must be constructive — it should not include profanity or other material that is in questionable taste; it should not be about drugs; and it should not run down others. Leaders or units that feel compelled to deride any person or element they pass are normally quite insecure.

It is important to remember that

good cadence callers are not born, they are developed and trained. To help with this, some leaders keep copies of cadences and pass them out to further their programs. Another point to keep in mind is that formations should not be so long that those in the front or rear can no longer hear the calls. When in doubt, the leader should break the unit into smaller elements, each with its own cadence caller.

Finally, most good PT programs also include organized athletics. Whether the organization is a post league or an intra-company competition, such activities can be beneficial if properly pursued. Within a unit, organized athletics should consist of contests that provide for even competition and a good workout. Games such as two-ball soccer, basketball, field handball, or pushball are ideal and give excellent exercise (better than softball, horseshoes, or bowling). Post league sports are good for unit morale if the unit's team is successful. But it is normally better not to enter than to put together a poorly supported, shoestring effort. On the other hand, if teams in post leagues are run professionally and are reasonably supported, they can become a great source of pride for the entire unit.

The very nature of a soldier's life requires that he be physically and mentally ready for the stress of combat. A good PT program can contribute tremendously to such physical readiness if it is properly organized and conducted. But morale, cohesion, and esprit are also a part of unit readiness, and if a PT program can help achieve these goals as well, then it can be considered truly successful.



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