



# the making of an

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## INFANTRY LIEUTENANT

Some people may think that leadership is leadership, that no matter what branch of service a soldier is in, the leadership principles remain the same. This may be true, but the instructors at the Infantry School, and in particular those in the Leadership Branch, like to think that there is such a thing as a unique Infantry brand of leadership. After all, there must be a difference between a leader who has to lead his men into combat and one who has to motivate his soldiers to do administrative work or drive a truck. It is the application of the universal leadership principles to the exceptional needs of the infantry that makes the Infantry School's leadership instruction unique. And it is this Infantry brand of leadership that a lieutenant takes with him to his first assignment after he completes the Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC).

The leadership instruction in the Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC) — all 48 hours of it — is soldier-oriented; the focus is not only on the soldiers and NCOs of the first platoon a lieutenant will lead, but on the lieutenant himself. The emphasis is not on the leader as a manager,

but on the leader as a teacher — one who can develop his subordinate leaders to the level where they can operate independently.

During the first four hours of leadership instruction, the lieutenant is introduced to the concept of "Be, Know, Do" — what the lieutenant needs to "Be" in order to become a professional Army officer and leader, what he needs to "Know" to be an effective leader; and what he must "Do" to turn a platoon of soldiers into a cohesive and productive unit. The "Be, Know, Do" concept provides a framework into which all the following instruction fits. That instruction is designed to improve the lieutenant's understanding of the "Be, Know, Do" concept and its practical application to him as an infantry officer.

The first area of consideration — "Be" — concerns the lieutenant himself and involves the professional and soldierly qualities he needs to be a good leader. He is taught that as an Army officer he is a member of a unique profession and that an inherent part of that profession is a code of ethics — a code that has its foundation in our basic national values and is exemplified in the oath of office he took when he was commissioned. The lieutenant is also given an opportunity for self-assessment in his preferred leadership and followship styles.

The second area of consideration is what the lieutenant should "Know." The instructors stress that the lieutenant should know himself, his capabilities, his strengths, and his weaknesses. They also teach the lieutenant to capitalize on his strengths and work on his weaknesses. At the same time, the instructors stress that the new lieutenant must also do all that he can to understand his soldiers and their capabilities, strengths, and weaknesses.

During this phase of instruction, counseling techniques and communicative skills are emphasized to give the new platoon leader the tools he needs to interact with his subordinates on a one-to-one basis. One of the methods used to drive home the counseling and communicative skills taught in the classroom is the counseling laboratory. Each lieutenant in the course takes part in two counseling lab sessions.

In the first, the lieutenant is exposed to situations in which a soldier or an NCO has a performance or personal problem. The scenarios are provided through role-playing and through the interactive videodisc system. (This system, which employs a laser videodisc with a computer, gives the lieutenant an opportunity to exercise his counseling skills and allows him to make mistakes in a controlled, supervised, practice environment.) The second counseling lab session consists entirely of role-playing and the situations in it are more complex. This complexity requires the lieutenant to use his counseling skills and to apply some institutional knowledge, especially in the use of referral agencies. Through these counseling labs the School tries to instill in the lieutenant a better understanding of his future soldiers and the types of problems he will have to contend with in his unit on a day-to-day basis.

Another aspect of the "Know" portion of the concept is for the lieutenant to know his job. As a platoon leader he must be technically and tactically proficient if he hopes to lead his platoon and gain the respect of his men; soldiers will not follow a leader who does not know his job. In addition to knowing his own job the lieutenant should also know the jobs of his subordinates as well as or better than they do. This means that he is expected to be proficient in the tasks for Skill Levels 1 through 4 and to know how to employ his platoon in a tactical situation.

The final part of the "Be, Know, Do" concept — "Do" — includes the things the lieutenant must do to direct and motivate his soldiers to accomplish the mission. The lieutenant, therefore, is taught how to make decisions using a seven-step decision-making process, and then how to implement those decisions. This process includes the important matter of resource management, and the lieutenant is taught how to plan to use his resources — time, equipment, and men — and how to assign priorities for the use of those resources when there is a shortage.

Finally, a lieutenant is taught how to motivate his soldiers to carry out the decisions and plans he wants to implement. In this class the lieutenant studies various theories of motivation and how he, as a leader, can create the right motivational climate in his platoon.

With all of this under his belt, the lieutenant is well versed in theory, and he has also taken part in some practical exercises designed to reinforce that theory. Later, during the "soldier-team development" phase of instruction, the lieutenant is required to bring together all he has learned and apply it to a simulated situation. That situation begins with the lieutenant arriving at his first unit and progresses through his first few months as a platoon leader. In these classes the lieutenant must use his communicative and counseling skills and must make decisions and then plan and implement those decisions using his available resources.

As a part of this instruction, the student is first taught a four-step approach to taking charge of his platoon — how to study the situation in the platoon; how to meet his subordinates; how to analyze and assess his soldiers' strengths and weaknesses; and how to take any corrective action that may be needed. He is also shown how to develop an ethical climate in his platoon through his personal example and through his attitude toward unethical behavior in his subordinates.

At the end of this period of instruction, the lieutenant

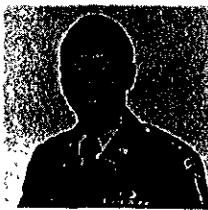
writes a plan in which he must identify the critical weaknesses of a unit and show how he would alleviate those weaknesses, what resources he would use, and which individual soldiers he would assign to carry out his plan. (This phase of instruction was designed to give the student an opportunity to use his leadership skills, practice developing a cohesive unit in a capsulized scenario, and make mistakes before arriving at his first unit.)

The remainder of the leadership instruction in IOBC deals with duties, responsibilities, and authority; special leadership issues; and battlefield leadership. During the class on duties, responsibilities, and authority, for example, the lieutenant is taught the duties and responsibilities of an officer and how these duties and responsibilities differ from an NCO's. The lieutenant is also shown how to use his authority, how to delegate that authority, and how to continuously strive to teach his subordinates and give them opportunities to develop as leaders themselves.

The class on the special leadership issues includes discussions of the Army's policy on alcohol and drug abuse, equal opportunity, and sexual harassment. The problem of stress is also discussed: what causes stress and how to manage it on an individual and an organizational level.

The last class the lieutenant receives before graduating is one on battlefield leadership. Until this time, the subject of combat is never really addressed, but during this period the lieutenant is shown dramatizations and film clips of actual combat footage to reinforce the lecture portion of the class. He is taught the conditions that can contribute to fear and panic in the face of the enemy and what he as the leader can do to lessen the effect of those conditions.

This, in a nutshell, is the leadership instruction an infantry lieutenant currently receives in the Infantry Officer Basic Course. The aim of the instruction is to expose the new Infantry lieutenant to the Army's current leadership doctrine and to help prepare him to take charge of his platoon immediately and become an effective link in his unit's chain of command.



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