

TRAINING NOTES



OSUT Fast Track Program

CAPTAIN BRIAN G. GRONSDAHL

The U.S. Army Infantry Training Center provides 13 weeks of common task and Infantry MOS-specific skill training for new infantry soldiers. These soldiers are fully prepared to join units that are training for wartime missions. As in any training program, though, there are some soldiers who demonstrate potential above and beyond that of the rest. These soldiers are capable of additional training beyond the baseline requirement of the standard program of instruction (POI).

The Infantry One Station Unit Training (OSUT) Fast Track Program, therefore, was created to identify those soldiers who have the highest potential for leadership and to provide them with training above and beyond that prescribed by the Infantry OSUT POI.

This program has two primary objectives.

- To challenge and further develop those Initial Entry Training soldiers who have the highest potential for leadership.
- To identify and provide a core of potential fire team and section leaders to the field.

Each Infantry OSUT training company selects up to 10 percent of the soldiers in each cycle for the Fast Track Program. The cadre selects these soldiers during their fifth week of training on the basis of individual training performance to that point, leadership potential, motivation, maturity, and self-discipline.

Each soldier selected is thoroughly briefed on the program and on what is expected of him. The program includes soldiers in MOSs 11B, 11C, 11H, and 11M.

Once the soldiers have been identified, they receive additional instruction and training in 17 Skill Level 1 and 2 tasks in addition to those in the POI. They are also placed in team, section, or squad leader positions, and they perform in these Skill Level 2 positions during the 162 hours that are devoted to tactical

training. Finally, they assume certain garrison leadership roles and help the cadre supervise such activities as billet maintenance, troop movements, personal hygiene, and peer reinforcement of training.

The drill sergeants and instructors thoroughly evaluate the performance of the fast track soldiers each day. If the soldiers do not live up to their potential, they are removed from the program.

The soldiers are taught individual tasks (shown in Table 1) that emphasize prepa-

ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUAL TASKS	
SKILL LEVEL 1	SKILL LEVEL 2
1. Emplace field-expedient carry warning devices.	1. Supervise maintenance of individual and TOE equipment.
2. Install hot loop.	2. Inspect squad personnel for proper load equipment and readiness.
3. Construct field-expedient trip mines for an M203 grenade launcher.	3. Supervise the fitting of protective masks.
4. Operate a night vision light AN/PVS-4.	4. Enforce preventive medicine.
5. Construct an M60 machinegun fighting position.	5. Supervise the construction of a fighting position.
6. Mount and mount the AN/PVS-4 to an M60 machinegun.	6. Supervise the camouflaging of a fighting position.
7. Direct lay a 60mm/4.2mm mortar (11C only).	7. Conduct an after-action review.
8. Construct a field-expedient antenna (11B/M/H only).	8. Conduct the occupation of a mortar firing position by a squad (11C only).
9. Install and recover a night trench ambush.	9. Control fire team movement (11E/M/H only).
10. Determine directions with a hand compass (11C only).	10. Select overwatch positions (11E/M/H only).

Table 1

SQUAD TACTICAL COLLECTIVE TASKS	
MANEUVER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move. • Assault. • Defend. • Break Contact. • React To Contact. • Overwatch and support by fire. • Conduct point ambush. • Occupy assembly area. • Occupy (objective) rally point. • React to near ambush. 	
MOBILITY/SURVIVABILITY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for chemical attack. • Prepare for nuclear attack. • Maintain OPSEC. • Cross water obstacle. 	
INTELLIGENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct reconnaissance of an area. 	
AIR DEFENSE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • React to air attack. 	
Table 2	

ration for combat. Except for those with the 11C MOS, they are taught to perform as fire team leaders on 16 squad tactical collective tasks (Table 2). All of this instruction is conducted within the prescribed length of the Infantry OSUT course, and it is designed to get the most out of these new warriors.

The soldiers who successfully complete the Fast Track Program receive accelerated advancement to Private-2. Exceptional 11M soldiers, after they complete the Bradley Fighting Vehicle basic course, may be selected to attend the 11M20 gunner course. Those who graduate from the latter course are promoted to Private First Class.

The Infantry Training Center has developed a comprehensive notification system to see that the units who will get these soldiers know they are products of the Fast Track Program. For soldiers in COHORT units and those with pinpoint assignments, a form letter is sent directly to the gaining unit's command sergeant major. For non-COHORT soldiers assigned to the continental United States without pinpoint assignments, these let-

ters are sent to the gaining division or installation command sergeant major.

A monthly message sent to each major command identifies the fast track soldiers who are going to them, and each successful graduate is awarded a Department of the Army Certificate of Achievement that will be placed in his military personnel record jacket (MPRJ). Every soldier has an additional letter placed in his Individual Training Record (ITR) and his record is annotated with the additional tasks he has been taught.

The Center's efforts in the Fast Track Program are aimed at giving infantry units throughout the Army better trained and more highly motivated soldiers who are capable of functioning as fire team leaders.

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Weapons, Terrain, and Tactics

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Successful tactics result from the proper employment of weapons on terrain against a reacting enemy. These three elements—weapons, terrain, and enemy—interact with each other to produce certain dynamics that every tactical commander must understand if he is to employ his unit to the best advantage. An analysis of these fundamental elements and the dynamics that they produce may shed some light on the foundations of proper tactics and give tactical commanders a frame of reference they can

use under differing field or combat conditions.

The most likely place to start such an analysis is with weapons, since tactics have generally been developed to take advantage of the effects of the weapons or to counter these effects. The close-order, shoulder-to-shoulder tactics of Napoleon and Wellington were a product of the slow-firing, short-range, muzzle-loading weapons of the time.

Conversely, the open-order infiltration tactics of World War I were a reaction

to the machineguns, the rapid fire artillery, and the barbed wire that were present on those battlefields. In each case, the tactics resulted from the weapons employed at the time.

Today, our tactics still reflect our weapons. And as before, good modern tactics must be designed to make the most of the effectiveness of our weapons while reducing their limitations.

Since military organizations are a blend of men and weapons, the role of our tactical unit leaders is to apply these