

# ITEP Made Simple

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The Individual Training Evaluation Program (ITEP), implemented in 1983, is made up of three parts: the Commander's Evaluation, the Common Task Test (CTT), and the Skill Qualification Test (SQT).

Much has been said concerning the ITEP, and major commands may assume it is universally understood, but some commanders may need additional guidance on how to go about implementing it. In case you are one of these commanders, I would like to offer you some straight talk that will enable you to implement ITEP successfully, without being burdened with administrative tasks, and to link the ITEP with your unit's Mission Essential Tasks Lists (METLs).

I have to assume here that you plan your training day primarily around training your soldiers for your METL missions; that is, faced with the choice of having them spend a training day playing volleyball or having them conduct a reconnaissance patrol, you would choose the latter.

I further assume that you know you can find individual and leader tasks either in the Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks or in Soldier Training Publications (STPs), depending upon the skill level of the tasks involved. If you have read Field Manual 25-100, and if both of my previous assumptions are valid, then the ITEP is not so difficult to deal with.

The Commander's Evaluation is the most important portion of the ITEP, but the title is misleading. Think of it instead as a green-tab evaluation, and don't worry about what form to use to record it on. Any time soldiers take part in a collective task or a battle drill, both in-

dividual and leader tasks are performed, and an evaluation is made (hopefully, an objective one). A soldier receives his performance feedback during the after action review or maybe during footlocker or monthly performance counseling. The point here is that an evaluation is made, and this is a Commander's Evaluation in action.

You can evaluate your soldiers on *anything*, but specifically you should



concentrate on the things that promotion recommendations are based upon. The Commander's Evaluation is one warfighter's evaluation of another warfighter in action—a formal title for the informal teaching, counseling, and mentoring a commander does constantly.

The Common Task Test is a locally administered, locally scored hands-on test of 18 tasks from the Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks. NCOs administer the training, the test, and if necessary, the retest. You need not stop with the 18 tasks identified on the CTT notice. Although most of your unit's mission essential individual and leader tasks are

taken from the common task manual, you are encouraged to train and evaluate your particular warfighting tasks as well. And you record your results on the Commander's Evaluation.

The most controversial portion of the ITEP is the Skill Qualification Test. When you look at the SQT notice you will quickly see that many of the testable tasks have no relationship to your unit's METL. But take heart. If the particular individual or leader tasks on your METL are not from the Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks, they are from the STPs (depending upon the skill level of the task). If you are training toward your METL, you are probably already doing a decent job of preparing your soldiers for the SQT, but it is vital that they are also trained to the tasks, conditions, and standards of the appropriate STP.

What about the other SQT notice tasks that are not included in your METL, such as "Operation of the Improved 81mm Mortar" for your 4.2-inch mortarmen? The answer is not a happy one: We study, we train, and we prepare our men for the test. We commanders just have to bite the bullet on this one. It may not be right, but we have to do the best we can to take care of our soldiers on this issue. Otherwise, we have not done our part in caring for their careers and promotions.

I hope that I have made ITEP a little easier for you to get a handle on while you go about your daily task of preparing your soldiers to fight and win.

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