

# PROFESSIONAL FORUM



## LADP Leadership Assessment and Development Program

MAJOR HARRY CHRISTIANSEN

Our infantry leaders are entrusted with the Army's most precious resource—~~our soldiers. We therefore have a moral obligation to see that those soldiers get the best leaders possible.~~

Toward that end, the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) directed in 1988 that formal leadership assessment be integrated into all resident leader development courses at the various service schools, using the U.S. Army Cadet Command's Leadership Assessment Program as a model. The Center for Army Leadership (CAL) at Fort Leavenworth was designated the executive agent to coordinate the assessment programs within TRADOC.

The Infantry School began using leadership assessment in the Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC) in September 1988 and in the Infantry Officer Advanced Course (IOAC) in January 1989. Within a few months, however, CAL recognized that the program was not being consistently executed throughout the service school system. Subsequently, the center developed the Leadership Assessment and Development Program (LADP) to standardize the assessment procedures and the criteria for integrating LADP into the individual courses of instruction. Within this guidance, each

service school is developing its respective assessment programs. At Fort Benning, the advanced and basic officer courses and the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC) are scheduled to implement LADP this fiscal year.

The LADP is a structured process that focuses on developing a student-leader by giving him immediate feedback on his performance in certain selected events throughout the course; by counseling him on his strengths and weaknesses; and by preparing a plan he can use to improve his future leadership performance.

### POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

The program is designed to be a positive and useful experience, not one that intimidates a student or otherwise affects him in a negative way. Thus, the information obtained through the LADP process is not used for assigning grades or academic points, or for rank ordering the students. Neither are the results of an assessment tied to a student's Service School Academic Evaluation Report. In fact, it is left to the individual student to decide whether he wants to use the feed-

back to improve his leadership performance. If a student believes he has a moral obligation to give soldiers his best possible leadership, his decision should be an easy one.

The doctrinal basis for the program is FM 22-100, Military Leadership, and the manual's nine "leadership competencies" provide the framework for all of the assessments. These are communications, supervision, teaching and counseling, soldier team development, technical and tactical proficiency, decision making, planning, use of available systems, and professional ethics. They establish broad categories of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that define the leadership areas in which infantry leaders must be competent.

Three techniques are used in LADP to give each student different views of his leadership performance—self assessment, associate assessment, and instructor or cadre assessment.

Self assessments help a student identify those leadership competencies upon which he needs to focus his self-development efforts. The Leadership Assessment Form (Self) consists of 36 leadership performance indicators (four for each competency) on which the student rates himself on a scale of one to five.

Associate assessments give each student information on how other students perceive him. This information helps him identify the areas in which he needs to improve. The Leadership Assessment Form (Other) used for this purpose consists of the same leadership performance indicators and rating scale that is found on the self assessment form. Along with each associate assessment, each student must also complete a self assessment. This allows him to compare the way he sees himself at that point with the way others see him.

Instructor or cadre assessments are conducted by trained assessors to give each student multiple, independent assessments of his leadership performance. These assessments are based upon selected training events in which a student demonstrates leadership while performing a task. The length of an assessment can be less than 10 minutes (Leader Reaction Course) or as much as 24 hours (a platoon leader on a field training exercise). An assessor must be knowledgeable of the task a student is performing and must be able to give him feedback on his performance as a leader.

Assessors (instructors or cadre members) observe the behavior of a student-leader, record it, classify it into competency areas, rate the student's performance in each area, and provide feed-

back in the form of an after action review. Senior assessors (small group instructors or platoon trainers) consolidate and integrate the assessment data, then counsel each student and help him create a leader development action plan of his own.

A student's leader development action plan, which is based upon all the assessment information collected during the course, represents actions he can take to improve his leadership ability. Each student is expected to take this plan with him to his follow-on assignment and use it to become a better leader. There is no requirement for the commander of his new unit to do anything with the plan.

### MASTER ASSESSORS

The Center for Army Leadership trains and certifies Master Assessors to design assessment programs, train other assessors, and administer and evaluate the program. Only Master Assessors can perform these functions, because they are trained to ensure that there will be high quality in a program's development, implementation, and evaluation.

In the Infantry School, the Combined Arms and Tactics Department administers and evaluates the LADP. Each leader training course (IOBC, IOAC, and AN-COC) has a Master Assessor to design

and implement its specific program.

The Directorate of Training and Doctrine also has a Master Assessor to conduct assessor training for all the courses, while the Directorate of Evaluation and Standardization evaluates the effectiveness of the program and provides the results to the program administrator for action.

The Infantry School's Officer Candidate School (OCS) and Ranger Course are excluded from the program because of the nature of their missions. Since the OCS mission is similar to that of the Cadet Command, the OCS leadership assessment program is designed along the lines of the Cadet Command's program. In the Ranger Course, leader performance is already tied directly to graduation requirements.

The Infantry School's leader training courses provide an environment in which the student's leadership skills can be properly assessed and in which they can be helped to grow professionally. The Army's infantrymen deserve the best leaders they can get, and the Leadership Assessment and Development Program helps the School provide those leaders.

---

Major Harry Christensen is a leadership instructor in the Infantry School and the LADP Manager.

---

# Developing Lieutenants

CAPTAIN CRAIG J. CURREY

As you prepare to take command of your infantry company, one of your key tasks will be to develop your lieutenants. You may have had only limited experience in leading officers and limited training in techniques aimed specifically at developing lieutenants. But building a strong base of platoon leaders

in your company will eliminate a number of problems and create a more cohesive unit.

The following tips are presented to stimulate thought on how you might approach the job of professionally building new officers. These tips concentrate on day to day activities apart from a

formal officer professional development program. They may at least cause you to think about something you may have overlooked.

The first is to consider your attitude toward your officers and the tone of your relationship with them. Remember the techniques you liked when you were