

AT4s requires planning, and engagement must continue until the desired target effect is attained; that is, until the target vehicle begins to burn or the crew abandons it.

Similar techniques are required when engaging tanks with Dragon or TOW missiles. Instead of volley fire, however, successive fire is required in which a second and possibly a third gunner is ready to engage the same target if the previous missile fails to destroy it.

During the early days of the Korean War, the gunners in Task Force Smith made direct hits with their antiarmor weapons, and still the Russian-made T-34 tanks rolled on. One lieutenant fired 22 rounds into the rear of a tank without stopping it. The Americans destroyed only four tanks and slightly damaged three others. The tanks continued through the position and overran the artillery battery. About 150 men of the task force were killed, wounded, or

reported missing in action, and their howitzers and most of the crew-served weapons were abandoned. The success of the enemy in this battle affected the course of the entire war.

Leaders must recognize and guard against the negative training lessons that some training devices and gunnery standards may instill in their soldiers. For example, SIMNET (a command and control trainer) uses an unrealistic "cardboard" target that burns when hit. And the reason Bradley fighting vehicle gunnery standards require gunners to hit a target with three out of five rounds is not because a BMP can actually be killed with three rounds. The expectation is that soldiers who can hit a target with three rounds out of five can continue to hit the target until it has been destroyed. Similarly, LAW and AT4 gunnery has soldiers individually firing one round instead of squads practicing volley fire. The prevailing attitude during this gun-

nery is that one shot equals one hit, which equals one kill. While this may be suitable for gunnery training, it does not match the reality of the battlefield, where at least two rounds are often required for a light armor kill.

Obviously, there are differences between targets for gunnery and actual enemy armored vehicles, and leaders must keep this in mind. Obtaining and using the appropriate JMEMs is the best way to make sure that our soldiers' training accurately prepares them for the real battlefields of the future.

Michael R. Jacobson is an intelligence research specialist in the Directorate of Threat and Security, U.S. Army Infantry Center at Fort Benning. He is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve assigned to the 87th USAR Division (Exercise). During 12 years of active duty, he held various armor and military intelligence positions.

The Battalion HHC Commander

COLONEL COLE C. KINGSEED

Few officers play as big a role in the combat readiness of an infantry battalion as the headquarters and headquarters company (HHC) commander. Unfortunately, many HHC commanders never reach their true potential because they, like their battalion commanders, have not taken the time and effort to analyze the qualities that lead to the success of a commander at the HHC level.

On the basis of more than five years' experience as leader of an infantry platoon and commander of a company and a light infantry battalion, I would like to offer some personal insights into what I believe makes an effective HHC commander. Although these comments are based mainly on my light infantry expe-

rience, I think they could be applied in any unit across the broad spectrum of infantry-related activities.

First, the HHC commander is frequently the senior company commander in the battalion and brings to the unit a breadth of experience and wisdom that marks him as one of the battalion's most valuable company-grade officers. Moreover, the HHC is the largest and, by its nature, the most diverse and complex company; this is true at both brigade and battalion levels. Senior commanders therefore often dictate that successful command of a line company be a prerequisite for HHC command.

One of my colleagues once commented that many officers perceive HHC

command as an exercise in stewardship instead of leadership. The distinction is important. As a steward, the commander would serve chiefly as an instrument of the staff sections and an administrator of discipline. Remaining behind a desk and focusing on administration, he would seem content to allow the appropriate staff officers to train the platoons that they must employ in field situations. Finally, the steward's approach to command is often more reactive than active.

Diametrically opposed to stewardship and the managerial approach to command is that of a proactive commander, who is not only more effective but also a major contributor to the battalion's

combat effectiveness. Only two officers in the HHC wear the coveted green tabs of an infantry commander—the battalion commander and the HHC commander. Accompanying those tabs are the inherent responsibility to lead and the willingness to make critical decisions that affect the unit's soldiers. That responsibility cannot be executed from behind a desk.

In a sense then, command of HHC is much the same as any other company command, except that the challenges are greater. To demonstrate, let us examine a few areas:

Command-staff relationships. A good working relationship with the other commanders and the battalion staff is essential for success. The core of this relationship must be mutual respect and total dedication to the accomplishment of the mission essential tasks as articulated in the Army training and evaluation program (ARTEP) and the battalion commander's guidance. There is absolutely no room for destructive competition between the HHC commander and the line company commanders, or between the HHC platoon officers and their staff affiliates. The HHC commander bears a singular responsibility to ensure that his command style does not detract from the battalion's overall mission effectiveness.

A new commander's effectiveness in cultivating a good relationship with the staff often determines his effectiveness as a leader. Accordingly, a prudent HHC commander will quickly establish a close personal relationship with the battalion executive officer (XO) and the command sergeant major (CSM). Support from the XO is important, because he can ensure that the staff sections release their personnel for mandatory training events. In addition the XO is indispensable to the HHC commander's efforts to improve unit maintenance. The CSM is essential because he can often deal more effectively with the staff noncommissioned officers (NCOs) than either the HHC commander or the first sergeant. (An HHC commander must not rely too much on the XO or CSM but should use them only as a last resort or when attempts to coordinate directly

with the staff officers and senior NCOs have proved fruitless.)

The best HHC commanders I have observed have gone to great lengths to gain the trust and support of the staff officers and section NCOs through personal visits to their offices. By coordinating training and administrative requirements directly with each staff's senior leaders, the commander ensures that unit status report (USR) statistics are maintained at an acceptable level. In 22 years of infantry service, I have never seen an effective HHC commander who ran the company with only minimal contact with the staff.

The HHC commander should also develop a positive relationship with the rifle company commanders. This allows him to use their ranges and training activities to add flexibility to the HHC training schedule, especially for soldiers serving in the staff sections. The temporary inconvenience to line units of the HHC's "piggy-backing" on their training is more than offset by the good support they get in return. Naturally, this relationship should be reciprocal.

Training. How does an HHC commander maintain his unit's readiness? It begins with a command philosophy that is built on a foundation of solid training. One former HHC commander described it this way: "If the bayonet—the symbol of the infantry—represents an infantry battalion, then the companies are the blade, and HHC is the hilt and steel behind the blade." No matter how sharp the blade is, the true quality of the weapon is in the steel. Regardless of how well-trained the line companies are, their sharpness dulls after the initial engagement if HHC does not serve as the tempered steel that supports them. Consequently, the HHC commander must train his unit to the same standards as the line companies with respect to live fires, field marches, and mission essential task training.

Before assuming command, an incoming HHC commander should familiarize himself with the weapons organic to the company, reading the appropriate manuals and seeing that subordinate leaders do the same. He

must not delegate the supervision of the training meeting to his XO or the training NCO. He should direct that the platoon leaders submit their training plans to him for approval. The HHC commander, not the staff officers or the battalion XO, is the principal trainer of the company. Of course, the XO will train the staff in staff functions, but the commander can assist him by coordinating routine tactical operations center (TOC) and communications exercises to ensure efficient staff procedures.

The HHC commander should avoid over-managing his platoon leaders. Just as he is often the senior company commander in the battalion, his platoon leaders also have often been hand-picked by the battalion commander and merit a greater degree of latitude than their line company counterparts. They are quite resourceful in planning and conducting challenging training to support the company's mission essential tasks.

Does this mean the commander must be technically competent in all the company's diverse specialties? Obviously not. Few commanders are expert medics or knowledgeable in all the communication skills. But the HHC commander must participate in training so he can actively assess unit performance, resource training requirements, and generally evaluate the way training is conducted. The familiar adage that the only things that are accomplished are those the commander checks is just as true in an HHC company as in a line company.

There is additional benefit associated with participating in platoon training. First, it provides the commander with the diverse technical expertise that can be used in future leadership situations. Additionally, soldiers respect a leader who listens to instruction, solicits their ideas on training, and demonstrates tasks to standard. Frequent participation also allows the commander to evaluate the trainers in his command and leads to a greater appreciation for the competence of these NCOs in their garrison and tactical training.

The commander might also use the specialty platoons to make the most of cross-training opportunities. Scouts

should regularly attend mortar live fires to obtain practical experience in calling for and adjusting indirect fires. He should conduct live fire exercises that focus on the synchronization of platoon fires and coordinate with other company commanders for the integration of his organic platoons in unit combined arms live fire exercises.

The commander should plan for an occasional collective training event that involves the entire company, using innovative ways to get staff soldiers away from the office. A training highlight that my battalion's HHC commander developed involved a convoy live fire exercise during which staff soldiers were organized into squads. After being ambushed along the route, the squads dismounted and negotiated a maneuver live fire lane. The soldiers loved it and gained a greater appreciation of what their line counterparts encountered on a routine basis. As an additional benefit, these varied training activities improved unit cohesion.

One last word about training. Often the only time an HHC commander sees his entire company on a daily basis is at morning physical training formation, and he should use this opportunity. He might conduct at least one company run a week and devote the rest of the week to ability runs, endurance activities, and other physical training. Regardless of what he decides, he should make sure everybody understands and meets his standards. He might use his medical platoon sergeant or platoon leader to supervise all special category soldiers in a specifically designed program that manages soldiers who are overweight, on profiles, or physically substandard. He might also conduct centralized Army Physical Fitness Tests and unit weigh-ins to ensure quality control. The first sergeant will be invaluable in developing a viable physical conditioning program.

Operations. A tactical environment presents some complex challenges for any officer about to assume command of an HHC. Where does he belong in the field? Is it in the trains, the TOC, or with his platoons? What are his personal

responsibilities in a tactical environment?

First and foremost, he (and his first sergeant) should avoid becoming "waterboys" or "ration-runners." The supply sergeant or another headquarters NCO can be used for these tasks. Nor should he allow himself to be a regular TOC shift officer, because that is not a commander's job, and there is no way he can properly command a company in the field if he is tied to a fixed location. What, then, are some alternatives?

As the officer principally entrusted with company training in garrison, he is negligent if he relegates that authority to staff officers when the company deploys to the field. The battalion commander, XO, and S-3 will determine the mission of the HHC platoons in the field, but the HHC commander can provide recommendations on the basis of his intimate knowledge of each platoon's capabilities. Who better than the company commander knows the strengths and weaknesses of his subordinate units? Certainly not some staff officer who sees the platoons only when he deploys from garrison.

The HHC commander should consider two of his critical roles in the field—that of a special team commander and of a high-salaried "sales representative." Because of the complexity of infantry operations, many battalion commanders form special teams to conduct specific operations, such as counter-reconnaissance, convoy operations, mass casualty or non-combatant evacuation, and other tactical missions. The magnitude of the operation may dictate that a more senior officer, such as the HHC commander, command this team. Since most HHC commanders are on their second command tour, they have a level of experience that far exceeds that of even the most proficient platoon leader.

Additionally, the independent nature of many infantry operations may lead the battalion commander to form a fourth "line company" to give the battalion more control and operational flexibility. As a junior officer who commanded a combat support company, for example, I was once directed to com-

mand the detachment left in contact while the battalion withdrew to more defensible terrain.

In his role as a "sales representative," the commander can assist his subordinate leaders in their attempts to recommend specific plans and missions to the battalion commander or the S-3. The platoon leader can be allowed to make the initial sales pitch on how he could best support the upcoming operation, but the HHC commander can play an important role in the formulation of a platoon leader's concept and development of alternative courses of action. Moreover, in the absence of the platoon leader, the HHC commander can present a persuasive case for the employment of his individual platoons.

Clearly, the senior company commander in the battalion cannot play an effective role if he simply surrenders control of his units to the battalion staff and abrogates his command responsibility as soon as he leaves garrison. Specific circumstances may dictate that he offer his services for TOC duty periodically, but a prudent HHC commander should resist formal taskings of this nature.

Maintenance. Maintaining the company's equipment is everyone's business, but HHC owns most, if not all, of the battalion's vehicles and special weapons. The challenges that confront the HHC commander in this area are staggering, if for no other reason than that few battalion commanders spend much time in the motor pool. As a former XO at company, battalion, and brigade level, I can attest to the infrequency of command visits to unit motor pools. The primary method of insuring materiel readiness is the development of *command* maintenance programs founded on weekly motor stables, aggressive services programs, and a comprehensive recovery plan. The commander, not the company XO or platoon leaders, is responsible. Certainly, the XO will serve as point man, but if the commander does not participate in motor stables and conduct at least part of the recovery inspection, his subordinate leaders may relegate their maintenance responsibilities to their own subordinates.

The HHC commander might also consider asking the battalion XO, or quite possibly the battalion commander, to conduct the command inspection once a year. This, too, will demonstrate to the soldiers that maintenance is a command responsibility. The battalion XO might be asked to select the best platoon's vehicles or address the mechanics—frequently the battalion's unsung heroes. If the HHC commander does not do this himself, he might ask the battalion commander to present the mechanic and driver awards to deserving soldiers.

This command involvement in unit maintenance in no way detracts from the responsibility of subordinate leaders to maintain their own equipment. The commander should demand that platoon leaders spend motor stables in the motor pool and brief him on their respective maintenance programs. He must also coordinate with the staff sections to ensure that their equipment is always combat ready. The battalion XO will be the HHC commander's most important ally in any maintenance related activity.

In addition, the HHC commander should not underestimate the time required to return the company to a high

state of readiness following an extended field problem. This task is complicated by the normal support functions that must continue while recovery procedures are in effect. Three full days should be allowed for a complete recovery, including layout inspections of operator's vehicle material, basic issue items, personal clothing and equipment, and weapons.

The challenges of commanding an HHC are numerous and varied. My best advice to an incoming commander would be "Don't take your soldiers for granted." They should be respected for the complexity of the roles and missions they must accomplish if the battalion is to succeed. Commanding a headquarters company may not sound as exciting as leading a rifle or airborne company on a night attack to seize an enemy objective, but the potential rewards are greater.

Without the HHC, the battalion simply ceases to function as an effective unit. The commander should therefore strive to build unit cohesion. Although individual platoons usually have a degree of cohesion, allegiance to the company is frequently lacking. A

mandatory company party once a year or a unit dinner with spouses and friends can help build cohesion.

When it comes to awards and badges, the commander should attach as much significance to a soldier who earns the Expert Field Medical Badge or a mechanic badge as to a soldier who earns the Expert Infantryman's Badge. The badges authorized for drivers with excellent safety records should be awarded on the spot, and a personnel activities center clerk who does an exceptional job should be recognized as often as a fire team leader.

In the final analysis, command of an HHC is not a reward for successful command of a line company. It is a recognition of an officer's potential to command the most diverse and complex company in the battalion.

Colonel Cole C. Kingseed commanded the 4th Battalion, 87th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division, and is now assigned to the Department of History at the United States Military Academy. He is a 1971 ROTC graduate of the University of Dayton and holds a doctorate from Ohio State University.

The New Executive Officer

Management by Objective

LIEUTENANT PATRICK M. WALSH

An infantry lieutenant normally begins his Army career as a platoon leader. During this time, he learns and develops his own leadership style and managerial techniques. After about a year, he changes jobs and leads a specialty platoon, such as mortars, or becomes the company executive officer (XO).

Until recently, the XO was usually chosen from the senior lieutenants in the company, but due to the drawdown in today's Army and the overstrength of the officer corps, this has become a luxury. Now an XO, even a first lieutenant, may not be senior to all the platoon leaders working with him. As with any new job or promotion, the period of adjust-

ment can be difficult. Today's XO must overcome such adversities and learn his new job, often with little or no transition time.

To succeed, a lieutenant undertaking the job of XO must skillfully use and integrate management by objectives (MBOs). This process is not new to the Army. Initially, performance evalua-