



IG Newsletter

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Thoughts from the IG

By LTC Christopher Hatley

I read an interesting book over the weekend titled, Fish. I think it was about \$14.95 at Barnes and Noble. It's only 107 pages and is easily read in a couple hours. I recommend leaders read this book for its insight. Maybe it's not earth shattering, but it puts a feasible managerial team building program into easily understandable words. All that is left is implementation. I bring this up because as the IG for JRTC and Fort Polk I come across situations where leaders could benefit if they take some of this book to heart. As a matter of fact, I am trying this approach in my office.

The title seems off the wall, but this is a great reference for building a strong team at the office. The author uses a financial institution and its employees as he outlines an approach to team building. The situation centers around a new office manager who inherits a less than enviable supervisory position over a group of workers. Their office is termed the "toxic waste dump" by other employees in the company.

Sure, the author uses a civilian work place as the centerpiece for his story, but his points are relevant to our military profession. When you read the book, you may conclude that this doesn't apply to the Army. I postulate that, given thought, you will realize that the lessons are applicable to what we do and they make perfect sense. You probably use some or all of the techniques presented in the book.

The approach is simple and straight forward. There are four parts to this "remarkable way to boost morale and improve results." The basic building block is one's attitude. What attitude are "you" bringing to the office every morning? Everybody has a choice to make regarding the attitude they bring to work. Choosing your attitude is critical because without the proper attitude, the rest of the model is a waste of time. So, first off, employees must come to work with a good attitude.

The second piece to the author's team building model is "play." The intent is to try and have fun while at work. There isn't anything that says that you have to be serious and stoic all the time in order to do great work. Sometimes, I see soldiers looking serious all the time and maybe that's because they want people to think they are hard at work. Your appearance is important, but isn't it basic human nature that we look forward to doing those activities that are fun for us? I think this is true. It follows that if we are having fun at work, we will enjoy what we are doing and our efficiency and productivity will improve.

Thirdly, you must strive to "make their day." This relates to how we treat customers or, in our business, how we treat soldiers, family members, etc. Since you have a positive attitude at work and you are having fun doing your job, go ahead and try to include others who come to your office for assistance. What you perpetuate is a positive, comfortable atmosphere that fosters inclusion. It's almost as if outsiders find themselves wanting to be in and around your office and co-workers because of the constructive environment that exists.

The last part of the team building program is "be present." This is more than just being at work. I think you know where this is going. Right. Be engaged at work. Our leadership training teaches all of us to be engaged with others. This is all about really "being there" and listening to others with whom we work. It's being a productive member of the team and not just punching a time clock, so we can make money to pay our bills. It's not daydreaming or spending inordinate amounts of time on the phone or on the internet. Being present means exactly what the words say.

There it is. That's all there is to building a cohesive team. The author is brilliant in his simplicity. I recommend that leaders give this book a chance and read it. It is well worth the time required. We can all benefit from others with good ideas!

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Leave and Pass Approval Authority

By MAJ Karen Ward

Can the commander delegate leave and pass approval authority? Yes, but only if the commander *properly* delegates this authority. There is conflicting interpretation among leaders on the installation concerning the proper delegation of leave approval authority. The regulations that have bearing on this subject are AR 600-8-10, "Leaves and Passes," AR 25-50, "Preparing and Managing Correspondence," and AR 600-20, "Army Command Policy." Whether commanders delegate leave approval authority properly or improperly, commanders are responsible for everything their command does or fails to do.

A commander may never delegate "command responsibility" without the existence of specific conditions. Only when the commander "dies, becomes disabled, retires, is reassigned, or is temporarily absent," will the inherent "responsibility" of command transfer to "the senior regularly assigned United States Army soldier." The authority by which the commander (during a period of absence) can transfer his command responsibility is via assumption of command in memorandum format. This is explained in AR 600-20, "Army Command Policy."

When in command, it is not possible for a commander to delegate his responsibility of command. Simply stated, "commanders are responsible for everything their command does or fails to do." So, when attempting to understand the manner in which commanders subdivide responsibility and authority to subordinate commanders and staff members, it is important to first understand proper delegation of authority. AR 600-20 clearly distinguishes between the officer "chain-of-command" and the NCO "support channel." Proper delegation of authority flows through the chain of command.

If the commander delegates the signature authority, the commander does not delegate responsibility. "Delegation of signature authority...needs to be in writing and accompanied by an explanation of the material for which the commander has approved signature delegations. Individuals delegated signature authority will use their own signature blocks and titles," paragraph 6-1b, AR 25-50. **BOTTOM LINE:** Signature authority must be in writing.

With all these standards, can the commander delegate leave and pass approval authority? Yes, but only if the commander *properly* delegates this authority. There is a misinterpretation of AR 600-8-10 among company commanders that the commander may delegate leave and pass approval authority to a designee of choice.

This misperception originates in paragraph 1-4f, which states, "Commanders of installations, including companies and separate detachments, will approve requests for leave and pass periods and may delegate authority to chiefs of divisions, branches, and sections of any headquarters or activity." First, the company commander must properly delegate this authority. According to the proponent for entitlements at DFAS and DCSPER, a noncommissioned officer under normal conditions, is not the "chief of a division" as intended in AR 600-8-10. Delegating leave approval to the company first sergeant, for example, is a misinterpretation of this paragraph. Proper delegation would be to the company executive officer. It is possible to delegate signature authority to the first sergeant, but approval authority must pass to the "chief of the division." This paragraph is intended for large organizations whereby a commander may delegate leave approval to a subordinate commander/chief of a division within the organization. **BOTTOM LINE:** Within a regular company, proper delegation (of leave approval) flows through the chain of command, from the commander to the executive officer.

Another misinterpretation of AR 600-8-10 lies in paragraph 4-3c, which lists rules to request ordinary leave: "The unit commander or designee is the approval authority for ordinary leave requests." This "designee" must be the subject of proper delegation of authority. Additionally, in paragraph 12.1e, which lists rules for processing leave: "The unit commander is the approval authority for ordinary leave under normal circumstances." The definition of "normal circumstances" is open for interpretation. One should interpret this sentence to agree with the intent of AR 600-20 that specifies when and how the commander may delegate command responsibility.

Commanders must be careful of delegating authority because they are ultimately responsible for everything their unit does or fails to do. When the unit is the subject of the violation of a regulation or policy, the responsibility ultimately rests with the commander.

What do Army regulations say about hair color for soldiers?

By MRS Nancy Mantooth

Army Regulation 670-1, paragraph 1.8.a states, "If dyes, tints, or bleaches are used, colors must be natural to human hair and not present an extreme appearance." According to the proponent, MSG Messman, PERSCOM, "natural" refers to any human hair, not just for a particular soldier's ethnic or racial background. Also, the regulation does not make a distinction between male or female soldiers. However, the commander is the individual who determines if a soldier's appearance is "extreme." The chain of command should use their best judgement when considering a soldier's appearance.

Must I own and use a government credit card?

By SFC Martha E. McClelland

In accordance with **Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation, (DoD FMR) Volume 9, chapter 3, Section 030301A.**, all DoD personnel shall be required to use the government-sponsored, contractor-issued travel charge card for all expenses arising from official government travel, unless otherwise exempted. This requirement is not new to most of us, however, not too many personnel are aware of the exemptions to this rule, provisions regarding infrequent travelers, and authorized methods of payment.

The exceptions are found in sections **030302, Government Wide and DoD-Wide Exemptions and 030303, Exemptions Made by the Heads of DoD Components.**

Section **030302A2j**, is of particular interest because it states that military or DoD civilians that are determined to be infrequent travelers are exempt from this policy. An infrequent traveler is defined as one who travels two or less times per year. Too often, personnel have also been told that if they do not use the government travel card, they will not be reimbursed for authorized expenses. **Section 030301A**, specifically states that although a traveler may be required to use the travel card, failure to use the travel card will not be a basis for refusing to reimburse the traveler for otherwise appropriate charges. However, It also states that such failure may subject the traveler to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action.

Section 030304, lists payment methods authorized when personnel are exempted; these methods are: personal funds, including cash or personal charge card, travel advances, and Government Travel Requests (GTR).

There are a great deal of facts that are not widely known; for more information regarding government travel card usage, contact Alene O'Neal, Janice Gainous, and Sandra Ogle, at 531-2084/4044.

The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the Department. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or of the command, but wherever possible, are supported by referenced Army regulations, policies, or procedures.

I am a pregnant soldier, can the commander make me work in the motor pool?

By SFC Matt Weegens

It depends on many variables. Pregnancy profiles define what pregnant soldiers can and can not do and define environmental restrictions. The pregnant soldier's OB/GYN physician determines the limits of the profile. Some issues of concern are: Prolonged exposure to fumes, improper ventilation of the work area, and lifting. The profile should address these issues and the soldier should adhere to these restrictions. If there are questions concerning a pregnant soldier's limitations, the command should refer to AR 40-501 and the exception to policy of AR 40-501, paragraph 7-9 and 7-10. Commanders can also call occupational health for guidance.

If a person goes AWOL and later surrenders, does the person return to his unit?

By SFC Richard Gregg

Yes, effective 1 September 2001, soldiers assigned to Forces Command (FORSCOM) units and activities that are absent without leave and individuals dropped from the rolls of FORSCOM units as **deserters will be returned to their FORSCOM parent unit.** This includes individuals whose desertion packet is still being processed, individuals not yet reported to the USADIP, individuals reporting or surrendering to a U.S. Army or other military installation, and individuals reporting to a personnel control facility (PCF).

The provisions of AR 600-10, requiring the return of FORSCOM deserters to a PCF are waived. Individuals who have been reported as deserters from closed FORSCOM installations will be processed at a PCF. Based on DA MILPER MESSAGE 071834Z, FORSCOM units and activities no longer need CG, PERSCOM approval to return deserters, based on reasons that best serve the interests of the Army. All other commands will continue to request CG, PERSCOM approval IAW AR 630-10, paragraph 4-6a(5).

Can my government quarters be inspected by the chain of command?

By SFC Joseph A. Pipes

It depends, IAW JRTC & FP Pamphlet 210-2 & AR 210-50 Housing Management, the commander (or representative) can inspect government quarters under certain conditions.

While preservation of health and sanitation is ultimately the responsibility of the sponsor, the Government has a valid interest in preventing hazardous health, unsanitary conditions, and deterioration of government quarters. The Chief, Housing Division or his delegated representative, reserves the right to conduct inspections of family or bachelor housing areas to ensure they provide a healthy, sanitary environment for all occupants residing in government controlled housing.

Commanders are responsible for all aspects of health and sanitation of soldiers of their command who reside in government-controlled housing and the mobile home park. A commander who receives a complaint of a health hazard or unsanitary conditions in the mobile home park or damages in government-controlled housing, will report that complaint to the Chief, Housing Division. The commander or his representative will accompany the Family Housing Representative to the soldier's quarters.

Type of quarters inspections:

Consensual: inspections may be conducted without authorization of the Garrison Commander.

Nonconsensual: inspections may be directed by the Garrison Commander upon receipt of credible information, which indicates the existence of a hazardous health or unsanitary condition.

Major factors, which substantiate a report of unsatisfactory standards:

- (1) Unsightly and odoriferous garbage.
- (2) Floors stained or dirty with grease, food particles or pet excrement.
- (3) Build-up of grease, dust, and stains on kitchen appliances.
- (4) Excessive dirty walls, doors, and bathroom fixtures.
- (5) Odoriferous or unsightly yard which has not been maintained for a long period of time.
- (6) Any structural damage, which contributes to the deterioration of government property.

**** A report of each inspection will be made a part of housing records. A Memorandum of Warning, with a copy of the inspection, will be sent to the sponsor, allowing five calendar days for corrective action, at which time a follow-up inspection will be made. If corrections are not made, the Garrison Commander may issue an eviction notice.**

“THE COMMANDER SHOULD ALWAYS SEEK LEGAL ADVICE”

Can the commander have me come in before 0600 to do a battalion/squadron run?

By SFC Ward A. Miller

Yes. IAW Command Policy Memorandum #S2, the approval to conduct PT activities at times other than 0630-0730 rests with the unit's chain of command.

What can soldiers do for corrective training?

By SFC James P. Jacks

AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, Paragraph 4-6 b(1 & 2) states that the training, instruction, or correction given to a soldier to correct deficiencies must be directly related to the deficiency. It must be oriented to improving the soldier's performance in their problem area. Corrective measures may be taken after normal duty hours. Such measures, which assume the nature of training or instruction, are not punishment. Corrective training should continue only until the training deficiency is overcome. Authority to use it is part of the inherent powers of command. An example of inappropriate corrective training is having your soldier low crawl in the company area for not shining his boots to Army standard.