

Future Training for Junior NCOs in Garrison during Expanded Dwell Times

Kara L. Orvis
Pacific Science & Engineering
San Diego, CA
karaorvis@pacific-science.com

Krista Langkamer Ratwani
Aptima, Inc.
Washington DC
kratwani@aptima.com

Jeffrey E. Fite
Army Research Institute of the Behavioral and
Social Sciences
Ft. Hood, TX
jeffrey.e.fite.civ@mail.mil

ABSTRACT

For the past ten years Army non-commissioned officer (NCO) training has necessarily focused on developing essential wartime skills that influence combat effectiveness. However, as deployments decrease and Soldiers begin to return home, NCOs must focus on other duties related to effectively leading, training and maintaining Soldier and unit performance while in garrison. Most warfighters agree that leading in garrison is more difficult in many respects and may require the application of leadership skills and processes in a manner that is different from leading in theater. While attention is now turning to address NCO garrison training needs, many discussions have focused on emulating past garrison environments, with leaders focusing on basic soldiering and discipline (e.g., Tan, 2011a). Although those are important foci, conceptualizing garrison leadership solely from pre-9/11 experiences may not meet the training needs of today's NCOs, as both Soldiers and missions have changed. It is likely that leading in garrison for 2012 and beyond will require some different knowledge and skills than leading in garrison during the 1980s and 1990s. The purpose of this research was to examine concerns related to leaders being prepared for the challenges that they may face in the garrison environment during expanded dwell times and develop recommendations related to how leaders can best meet those challenges. The results of this research provide recommendations for how to best prepare leaders and Soldiers to operate within the garrison environment and are based on semi-structured focus groups conducted with Army enlisted Soldiers, NCOs and officers.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Kara Orvis is an Industrial-Organizational Psychologist and Director of Training at Pacific Science and Engineering (PSE). Dr. Orvis has expertise in the areas of leadership, team collaboration, culture, dispersed leadership, and training technologies. At PSE, she leads projects related to military assessment, formation, training, and development. Prior to joining PSE, Dr. Orvis worked as a principle scientist at Aptima and as a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow for the Consortium of Universities at the Army Research Institute where she led research projects involving teams, leadership, and training technologies. During her graduate training, Dr. Orvis helped manage an Air Force funded lab investigating process training, performance measurement, and feedback practices for multi-team systems. Dr. Orvis has also worked as a private consultant in international training. Dr. Orvis holds an M. A. and a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from George Mason University and a B.A. in Psychology from Ohio Wesleyan University. She is a member of the American Psychological Association and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

Krista Ratwani is a Senior Scientist and the team lead for the Leadership and Team Training team at Aptima, Inc. She has experience in leader development and training, training evaluation and design, survey development, and qualitative data analysis. At Aptima, Dr. Ratwani serves as a project manager and principal investigator on efforts focusing on the development of training programs to foster adaptive capabilities within leadership teams, the

investigation of cross-cultural competencies and skills, and the development of tools to aid decision-makers in choices made regarding training programs. Prior to joining Aptima, Dr. Ratwani was a Research Fellow at the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI). Dr. Ratwani holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from George Mason University and a B.A. in Psychology from Monmouth University.

Jeffrey E. Fite is a Senior Research Psychologist with the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI), Fort Hood Research Unit. He holds an M.A. degree in Psychology from the University of Nebraska-Omaha (1998), and a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2002). Since joining ARI in 2007, Dr. Fite's work has focused on the training needs of U.S. Army Soldiers, particularly difficult-to-train skills.

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INTRODUCTION

For the past ten years Army operational commitments have been elevated, and Soldiers have been in a cycle of deployments in rapid succession. As of 2008, the Army had provided over 1 million troop-years to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), and most Soldiers were on their second or third tour (Bonds, Baiocchi, & McDonald, 2010). The demand for deployed forces led to the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) rest, train, and available cycle in which leaders have focused on developing units and rotating in and out of war. Overall, the majority of Soldiers have experienced a ratio close to 1:1 when comparing dwell time (time spent at home station) to time spent in theater at deployed locations, with the middle ranks of the officers and the non-commissioned officers (NCO) bearing the brunt of the deployments (Bonds et al., 2010). However, at this point in time with the recent drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq and the expected drawdown in Afghanistan, it is projected that deployments will decrease, and Soldiers will return home for expanded dwell times (e.g., Tan, 2011a). This change represents a significant departure from the rapid deployment cycles in which Soldiers have become “transient tenants” of garrison (Department of the Army, 2010, p. 37), resulting in recent military articles and reports (e.g., Department of the Army, 2010; Institute for Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development, 2010; Tan, 2011b) raising the question of whether NCOs, who have been focusing on preparing units for deployments, are prepared for duties related to effectively leading, training and maintaining Soldier and unit performance in garrison.

With the impending drawdown, discussions have started to occur to determine how best to meet training

and leadership needs within an expanded dwell time environment. To date, it seems that these discussions have touted the importance of going back to past garrison environments in which leaders focused on basic soldiering and discipline (e.g., Tan, 2011a). However, the shift from the Army being singularly focused on a well-defined mission with a well-defined enemy may prevent garrison life from being as routinized and proceduralized as it once was (i.e., there is no singular focus from which to shape training events and activities). In addition, the Army is beginning to move toward teaching Soldiers at all levels 21st Century Competencies (grouped into categories associated with things like lifelong learning and critical thinking) that promote development and growth throughout one’s career (INCOPD, 2011). Finally, after 12 years of combat, the Soldiers NCOs are leading may be drastically different than those who served in the 1990s. Conceptualizing garrison leadership solely from pre-9/11 experiences may not meet the training needs of today’s leaders. What is not yet clear are the skills leaders must possess to be effective in a garrison environment. Therefore, additional analysis is needed to understand the purpose and performance requirements of today’s garrison environment, to be followed by an analysis specifically focused on the leadership requirements targeted toward fostering effective performance within this environment.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to articulate the prospective leadership challenges of the garrison environment during expanded dwell times after a decade of war, and provide recommendations for how best to overcome those challenges through training. The approach taken for this effort was to combine both leadership theory and operational input to identify leadership

performance requirements and then translate those requirements into training recommendations. In other words, this research focused on understanding what good performance looks like in today's garrison environment (the performance requirements), followed by an analysis of what leaders need to know and do to foster and promote that performance. This paper outlines the methodology for analyzing the garrison environment and developing the requisite training recommendations.

Although the conclusions and recommendations put forth in this report may be applicable to multiple echelons of Army leaders, the explicit focus for this effort was on junior NCOs (corporal through staff sergeant), who, as junior Army leaders, have direct responsibility for caring for Soldiers (Department of the Army, 2002). INCOPD describes all NCOs as having four core roles: Lead; Train and Educate; Care for Soldiers and Equipment; and Maintain and Enforce Standards (2011). Within these core roles, INCOPD outlines junior NCOs as the first line supervisors for Soldiers who are responsible for tasks such as mentorship and role modeling, assessment and training, and building team cohesion. Hence, because junior NCOs serve as the leadership figure that Soldiers observe and interact with most directly, it follows that this group of leaders should be the ones with the most direct influence over their Soldiers. Junior NCOs must be the leaders responsible for ensuring Soldier success in any environment, including garrison. In addition, because junior NCOs are the direct supervisors of Soldiers, they are likely the first ones to be impacted by some of the challenges of the garrison environment. If Soldiers today are different than in the past and not accustomed to operating within a garrison environment, junior NCOs will be the first leadership level to see difficulties that Soldiers are having. Therefore, junior NCOs must be better prepared to be effective within garrison and meet the leadership challenges with which they are presented.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

For this research effort, the researchers conducted a literature review of recent documents discussing the general challenges of leading in a 21st Century operating environment, as well as documents specifically posturing a concern over leaders' preparation for leading in garrison (e.g., Department of the Army, 2010; Hertling, & Prowell, 2010; Proctor, 2009; U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2010). The literature review was complemented by semi-structured focus groups conducted at two Army installations. The purpose of the literature review was

to obtain initial ideas on needed leadership competencies and concerns about leaders being trained on those competencies. The focus groups expanded those findings, confirming and identifying challenges specific to the garrison environment. The result of the literature review and the focus group sessions was the identification of areas in which leaders needed to develop skills specific to garrison.

The first set of focus groups was conducted at Ft. Leavenworth, KS with 29 Command Sergeants Major (CSM) who were completing a two-week course. The average age of the participants was 43.89 (SD = 3.69), and the average time in the Army was 23.67 years (SD = 2.94). The focus group was conducted with all 29 participants for three hours. The objective for this data collection was to obtain the senior NCO perspective on challenges when leading in garrison. In order to accomplish that objective, participants were asked to break up into groups to brainstorm and generate a list of the challenges of leading Soldiers in garrison environments, encompassing all levels of leadership. After the Soldiers reconvened in a larger group, they took turns articulating the identified challenges (e.g., less access to Soldiers, not understanding Army systems). As each challenge was stated, researchers asked follow up questions to better understand the issue. Example questions included asking whether the challenge existed in the pre-9/11 environment and what the specific role of a junior NCO might be in relation to that challenge. In addition, as each garrison leadership challenge was discussed, the researchers attempted to gain information about what a leader needed to do to successfully manage that challenge (i.e., the leadership tasks associated with that challenge), as well as the requisite leadership knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes (KSAO). Throughout the focus groups, participants completed worksheets as the discussion progressed. The worksheets asked them to indicate whether the environmental challenges, leadership tasks, and KSAOs were associated with the garrison environment prior to 9/11, the environment of today, or if they believed it would be part of the future environment.

The second set of focus groups was held at Ft. Lewis, WA. The focus groups spanned two weeks and included 55 participants across 19 sessions (ranging from 1 to 5 participants per session). Participants for this effort included enlisted personnel (private first class to command sergeants major) and officers (lieutenant and captain). The average age was 31.83 (SD = 6.56), and the average time in the Army was 9.81 years (SD = 6.80). The objective for these focus group sessions was to delve deeper into the *performance requirements* for effective Soldiers and units in garrison. These performance requirements can then be

translated to leadership requirements from which KSAOs and training recommendations can be derived. In order to obtain the performance requirements, participants were asked to list (on sticky notes) the requirements of high performing units and Soldiers in the garrison environment; in other words, they were instructed to think about all the things that *must* be accomplished in garrison for units and Soldiers to be considered successful and to write those things down. After allowing the participants to brainstorm for about 10 minutes or so regarding these requirements, each sticky note was put up on the wall to facilitate a discussion among all session participants. Discussion questions centered around actions involved in each task (and the involvement of the junior NCO); the challenges of accomplishing each task within the garrison environment; the importance of each task to the deployed environment; and the perceived importance of each task today, as compared to a few years ago.

During focus group sessions at both Ft. Leavenworth and Ft. Lewis, all participants read and signed an informed consent form and also completed a demographic questionnaire to collect general information about deployments, garrison experience, and military occupational specialty (MOS)/branch.

RESULTS

Garrison Leadership Challenges

The focus groups identified several concerns regarding the preparedness of junior NCOs in garrison. The final list of specific challenges is presented in Table 1 and discussed below.

First, NCOs are typically with their troops to a much greater degree during deployments, NCOs are able to monitor well-being, and have open access to training without distractions. However, when troops are home, leaders have less immediate access and their Soldiers are faced with more distractions. There potentially is more distance between a leader and his or her Soldiers. With this increased distance, leaders must find new ways to remain cognizant of Soldier well-being and promote motivation in a lower-stakes environment. Unfortunately, this type of environment may be foreign to many leaders, as it is possible that they have spent more time deployed than home during their Army careers. This lack of time spent in garrison has put leaders in a situation in which they do not have a model for effectively leading Soldiers in garrison.

The second concern is that there seems to be an overall leadership skills gap. Reports (e.g., Department of Army, 2010) note that Soldiers have been promoted at record rates and have not had time to focus on

developing leadership skills required for advancing leadership positions. Further, with the focus on training Soldiers to be warriors, those promoted leaders have not had access to supporting leadership courses. For example, a core NCO course which promotes skills related to garrison leadership, the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC), has been significantly shortened. In its new form (as the Warrior Leader Course, or WLC) it is no longer primarily focused on basic leadership skills. The high operational tempo necessitated that training of NCOs focus on combat-related leadership skills that allow them to be effective in deployed settings. In regard to this specific challenge, focus group participants almost unanimously expressed a desire for the WLC to go back to teaching basic leadership principles (e.g., PLDC and other similar courses that emphasized doctrine and leadership).

Third, the Soldiers that NCOs are leading in garrison may be drastically different than those in the 1990s. It has been reported that 81% of Soldiers today have never known a garrison environment in which there are extended times at home (Department of Army, 2010). Soldiers may have difficulty adjusting to changes associated with being in the garrison environment for longer amounts of time. In current garrison environments, leadership is focused on letting Soldiers reintegrate and spend time with their families, followed by preparation for the next deployment. With the drawdown, it is likely that traditional garrison tasking such as ceremonial drills will become more of a focus. Further, Soldiers will likely find an increased emphasis on standards and discipline. There is a risk that experienced post 9/11 Soldiers will find garrison life disenchanting. These Soldiers have grown accustomed to deployed environments in which their mission is extremely clear, which may not be the case in garrison. Finally, Soldiers have been allowed a great deal of autonomy in the field and may feel stifled by leadership in a garrison environment which places more emphasis on standards and discipline.

Fourth, consensus across participants at both Ft. Leavenworth and Ft. Lewis was that leading Soldiers in garrison was more difficult than leading while in theater. Specifically, the application of leadership knowledge, skills and processes is different from leading in theater. One of the more noted challenges was that leaders did not know how to accomplish day-to-day tasks in garrison. Overall, there was a lack of understanding of how to use post/Army resources to solve Soldier problems.

Table 1. Challenges Leaders Face in Garrison

Challenges Leaders Face in Garrison
Increased Distance between Leaders and Soldiers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader disengagement from Soldiers upon redeployment. • Less face-to-face time with Soldiers due to geographical and time restrictions. • Communication challenges due to fragmented environment. • Rapid unit member turnover.
Preparedness and Training of Junior NCOs for Leading in Garrison <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High OPTEMPO has led to an accelerated promotion rate, even without the requisite leadership trainings helpful for promotions. • Lack of junior leader mentorship as a priority from more senior leaders. • Lack of adequate knowledge about Post/Army resources to assist in solving Soldier problems • Lack of knowledge of the systems required to function in garrison. • Lack of understanding about how to translate effective operational leadership practices from deployed environments back into garrison environments. • Greater emphasis from institutional training programs (e.g., Warrior Leader Course) on combat skills, and not on leadership skills. • Lack of time management and planning skills in relation to increased tasking and requirements.
Challenging Soldiers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived lower quality Soldiers often attributed to low enlistment standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Lack of self-discipline. ◦ Lack of experience living in a garrison environment and understanding the norms of the routine. • View that garrison tasks are not important/not mission relevant, less interesting. • Perceived feeling of entitlement from Soldiers due to multiple deployments or observed norms and behaviors of the recent past.
Different Environment Compared to Theater <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient time for junior leaders to attend requisite training for developing leadership skills due to over-tasking. • Outside distractions and nonmilitary influences on time demands. • Non-routinized schedule as compared to deployed environments. • Not enough time for training of subordinates due to large number of tasks to accomplish.

Garrison Performance Requirements

A key goal of the focus groups was to identify the performance requirements for units in garrison. Performance requirements are the things needed for units/Soldiers to be considered successful in garrison. Without having a sense of what must be done in garrison to succeed, it is not possible to identify areas of development for junior NCOs. As seen in Table 2, the focus group participants put forth a variety of tasks and conditions as an important part of being a successful Soldier or unit within garrison. According to focus group input, garrison success is built upon six overarching requirements: exhibiting high military standards; managing Soldier needs; appropriately and effectively organizing daily activities; engaging in continuous training and learning; displaying high morale; and effectively socializing new Soldiers. Within the garrison environment, units and Soldiers must accomplish activities within each of these six categories to be high performers.

Table 2. Performance Requirements for Soldiers and Units in Garrison

Performance Requirements for Soldiers and Units in Garrison
Units and Soldiers Exhibit High Military Standards through the Following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passed inspections. • Correct drill and ceremonies. • Fully maintained equipment. • High levels of physical fitness. • Tasks performed to standard. • High standards displayed by Soldiers. • Display of ethical and moral decision making.
Units and Soldiers Manage Needs Effectively and Efficiently through the Following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soldiers identify and use resources to aid in task accomplishment. • Soldiers identify and use resources to manage personal activities (e.g., financial, spiritual, etc.). • Soldiers accept and act on feedback provided to them (e.g., during counseling). • Crises managed effectively and quickly.
Leadership Interaction with Subordinates/ Counseling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good accurate counseling and NCO Evaluation reports (NCOERs). • Develop motivation to succeed within Soldiers. • Guide Soldiers. • Crisis management.
Units Appropriately Task and Organize Soldiers for Daily Activities
Units and Soldiers Engage in Continuous Training

and Learning Activities through the Following:

- Units effectively deliver training and education.
- Soldiers display continuous learning.
- Soldiers display basic soldiering skills.
- Soldiers understand the full range of military operations.

Unit and Soldiers Display High Morale**Units Effectively Socialize New Soldiers****Leader Performance Requirements**

Table 3 translates the unit and Soldier performance requirements (Table 2) into leader performance requirements, or those tasks and activities that leaders must engage in to support effective unit and Soldier performance. The leader requirements illustrate what leaders can do to ensure these critical Soldier and unit requirements are met. The items listed in this table represent leadership activities such as engaging in learning themselves, modeling good behavior, counseling and monitoring Soldiers, managing training activities, and developing units as a team.

Table 3. Leader Performance Requirements for Garrison Environments

Performance Requirements for Leaders in Garrison**Leaders Ensure the Exhibition of High Military Standards by Units and Soldiers through the Following:**

- Model high military standards
- Convey and teach expectations for passing inspections (barracks, uniforms)
- Teach Soldiers correct tasks to standard under varied conditions
- Monitor standards by conducting inspections
- Teach correct drill and ceremony procedures
- Convey and teach expectations for proper maintenance of garrison equipment
- Convey, monitor, and teach expectations for physical fitness and fitness training
- Convey expectations for, and monitor, ethical behavior and moral decision making

Leaders Ensure Management of Needs by Units and Soldiers through the Following:

- Learn and understand Post resources necessary to help Soldiers.
- Teach Soldiers how to acquire and use necessary resources.
- Provide necessary and appropriate.
- career/performance counseling.
- Provide necessary and appropriate counseling referrals and personal support.
- Monitor, identify and provide support during crises.

Leaders Ensure Organized Soldier Tasks and Daily Activities through the Following:

- Schedule and plan garrison activities
- Manage on-time completion of garrison activities

Leaders Ensure the Occurrence of Continuous Training and Learning Activities through the Following:

- Provide opportunities for Soldiers to learn
- Basic soldiering skills to gain tactical and technical proficiency, (e.g., weapons)
- Full range of military operations
- Engage in personal continuous learning, and encourage such learning in subordinate Soldiers
- Mentor/teach Soldier learning outside of the classroom
- Foster/engage in cross-training (where Soldiers know and learn each other's jobs)

Leaders Ensure the Display of High Unit and Soldier Morale through the Following:

- Engage in team building activities
- Plan and conduct morale building activities (e.g., family time, platoon day/MWR activities)
- Participate in off duty activities with Soldiers
- Instill and maintain a positive command climate

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Leaders Ensure the Socialization of New Soldier through the Following:

- Provide instruction to new Soldiers regarding Post facilities and operations and the surrounding area
- Ensure that new Soldiers meet in-processing expectations

Knowledge and Skill Development Recommendations

The challenges and performance requirements were analyzed and categorized into four different areas in which leaders in garrison need to acquire knowledge and skills for their units to be successful. First, leaders require an *Understanding of the Army Systems* to be effective within garrison. This category subsumes KSAOs such as critical and reflective thinking; setting clear direction and standards; and problem solving. Second, leaders need to be proficient in *Time Management and Planning*, which contains KSAOs such as completing missions on time; utilizing resources available; and balancing the care of others

with mission requirements. The third category is *Counseling and Mentoring Techniques*; this category includes KSAOs such as interpersonal skills and communication (e.g., active listening; nonverbal communication). Finally, one additional category of *Team Building and Motivation* includes KSAOs such as motivating and influencing subordinates.

Learning Area 1: Understanding Army Systems.

The focus of this first learning area is to develop an increased awareness within junior NCOs that, in principle, the systems that are in place and effective in theater are essentially the same systems that can be used in garrison. In this case, “systems” refers to programs, processes, procedures, and functions. There are two important issues addressed by helping junior NCOs understand the commonalities between theater and garrison. First, this focus area addresses the challenge that many leaders are not familiar with how to handle problems within the garrison environment. In an operational environment, young leaders are going to be exposed to different systems and possibly in a more intimate manner than in garrison. For example, logistical systems will be pushed down to a much lower level allowing a more direct meeting of small unit requirements for ammunition, rations or fuel. In garrison, young leaders may have a poor understanding of logistics because it all occurs at the company level. Helping young leaders understand that an Army system was created to meet this predictable need (resupply) may then transfer to the realities of garrison. Second, by helping junior NCOs make connections between garrison and theater, they may begin to view garrison tasks and requirements as more important, and be more motivated to complete necessary tasks and adhere to standards. Their understanding of the importance of garrison should then be communicated to their subordinates, combating motivational challenges at both the subordinate and leader level. It should be noted that one of the challenges brought up during the data collection sessions was a lack of a repository of standardized procedures focusing on how to accomplish garrison activities. The issue with creating such a repository is that it fails to take into account the adaptive and flexible learning for which documents such as the Army Learning Concept (ALC) 2015 (Department of the Army, 2011) call. In addition, if the garrison environment becomes as standardized as some individuals within data collections expressed a desire for, the types of critical thinking and analytical skills necessary for effective leadership will not be fostered. Therefore, the intent of this learning area is not to teach junior NCOs a routine procedure for solving problems. Instead, the focus is on developing critical thinking skills based on what is understood about functioning in theater to help with a lack of standardized procedures in garrison. The result should be junior NCOs who cannot

only solve Soldier problems related to resources and procedures within garrison, but also be more motivated leaders and Soldiers.

Learning Area 2: Time Management and Planning.

The second learning area primarily stemmed from the challenge that, when in garrison, there are many tasks to accomplish prior to the end of the day, and leaders do not have as much time with their Soldiers as they did when deployed to train, mentor, and counsel Soldiers. In garrison, Soldiers are continually getting pulled away for other tasking, and hence, the time that leaders have with their Soldiers has been minimized. This more decentralized environment creates leadership and training challenges. Therefore, the intent of this learning area is to teach junior NCOs to become more aware of how the tasks that they would like to accomplish with their unit fit in with the larger mission. Once junior NCOs have a broader understanding of how all the tasks within garrison fit together, they are more apt to be able to make maximal use of the time they do have with their Soldiers, and to also find more creative strategies to implement training. Even within a distributed environment, junior NCOs can find teaching moments within every activity in order to facilitate training. Therefore, once the larger picture is understood, junior NCOs can be taught how to turn everyday tasks and routines into teaching opportunities. Just as with the first learning area, this learning area teaches leaders how to think more critically about issues in front of them. However, the result here should be junior NCOs who make the most of the time with their Soldiers, and hence have units that are well-trained and engaging in continuous learning activities.

Learning Area 3: Counseling and Mentorship Techniques.

The focus for the third learning area is on teaching junior NCOs how to maximally develop their subordinates. Once they understand the different opportunities that can be used for training (Learning Area 2), they need to be trained how to make each of those opportunities the most effective that they can be. Therefore, within the learning area, there are two interrelated foci. The first focus is on teaching junior NCOs how to be more aware of their Soldiers’ preferences and tendencies so as to better understand developmental needs; this portion also is important for teaching NCOs how to capitalize on the skills that their Soldiers learned while deployed. Subsequently, the second focus in this learning area is on teaching leaders techniques for how to maximize learning for each individual Soldier based on the assessment of developmental needs. Within this learning area, junior NCOs will be provided with opportunities that help them learn how to pick up on Soldier preferences, and also how to best promote self-reflection and goal-setting within Soldiers, to foster a continuous learning

process. The end result of this focus area should be leaders who are more attune with their Soldiers' needs, and development opportunities that are tailored to address those needs. Leaders should be more engaged with their Soldiers, and Soldiers should be more motivated to accomplish training activities because it is building upon experiences that they have already had (including those while deployed).

Learning Area 4: Team Building and Motivation.

Finally, Learning Area 4 focuses on teaching junior NCOs how to build a strong unit climate among decentralized Soldiers that helps to create a larger sense of purpose and direction within garrison. Within this focus area, leaders will learn basic motivational strategies that will create a unit climate that promotes team processes. This learning area is important because, similar to Learning Area 3, it will help leaders engage more with their Soldiers. It should also help leaders and Soldiers feel more motivated to succeed within the garrison environment. Ultimately, this focus area should lead to the creation of units that are grounded within leader and Army priorities.

These recommendations all build upon one another. First, Learning Area 1 focuses on teaching leaders how to operate effectively within the garrison environment within the larger Army system. Once they have a handle on basic operations, they can move to conducting more effective training events for their Soldiers (Learning Area 2). Third, within the context of those training events, NCOs need to be provided with guidance on how to maximize the learning and development of their subordinates (Learning Area 3). Finally, Learning Area 4 focuses on the development of a climate that promotes team building and motivation within subordinates at the unit level.

DISCUSSION

The military has been operating in a high OTEMPO environment with the focus on asymmetrical warfare. It is anticipated that the Army will be entering a time when warfighters will be spending more time in garrison but also be called on to support full range of military operations. Leaders must be prepared to facilitate the success of their unit in garrison while also preparing them for the future fight. The things that make a unit successful in garrison are not always in alignment with what makes units successful in theatre. Accompanying such environmental changes is a need to reevaluate the functions and requirements of leaders within the garrison environment and restructure training to best fit within current and future operating environments. The theme of I/ITSEC 2012 is "The Power of Innovation-Enabling the Global Force." This research proposed that rather than falling on past

examples, we take a forward leaning approach to understanding future leader requirements based on past experiences (10 years of asymmetrical warfare) and future operating environments (e.g., longer dwell times and full range of military operations). This research was a first step in understanding the challenges faced by leaders in garrison and uncovering training recommendations to facilitate their success.

Overall, the results of this research found that there is a genuine concern about the preparedness of leaders to lead in garrison. The majority of leaders interviewed agreed that leading in garrison is more difficult and different than leading in deployed settings. They were also able to point to specific concerns such as less access to Soldiers and understanding of the Army systems. The leaders interviewed were also able to articulate performance standards for units and leaders in garrison, which in some instances, look different from deployed settings.

This research identified four learning areas that respond to the challenges of leading in garrison: 1) Understanding of the Army Systems; 2) Time Management and Planning, 3) Counseling and Mentoring Techniques; 4) Team Building and Motivation. These learning areas are based on an understanding of the challenges faced by garrison leaders as well as the requirements for unit success. Future work should further address these learning areas and specify how to translate them into specific training events for junior NCOs.

As the Army continues to operate in the context of new missions and operating environments, its' leaders must stay adaptive. Analyzing performance requirements for a specific operating environment is one method by which to understand how leaders can be effective within that environment. To be effective within the garrison environment, leaders will need to translate lessons and skills learned from a deployed environment (e.g., critical thinking) in order to continue fostering growth and development, maintain discipline, and still prepare Soldiers for the unpredictable future fight.

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