HUMAN RESOURCES
ADVANCED / SENIOR LEADERS COURSE
42A

FACILITATED ARTICLE #11

Developing the Next Generation of Leaders

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Facilitating the Discussion

Facilitators can orchestrate discussions using the following questions to help choreograph group discussion/class participation. The sequence of the questions builds logically from a taxonomy point of view, i.e., a lower level of learning/thinking to a higher level of learning/thinking, by moving from comprehension of the material to a synthetic or evaluative discussion of the material. Facilitators should ask open-ended questions and allow the students to respond. Facilitators should also ask questions that cause students to interact. A facilitator’s goal should be ensuring that students do not participate in synthetic or evaluative discussion until confirming that the basic concepts and key points of the article are clarified and fully understood. Don’t forget to be patient after posing a question and use silence to your advantage. Lastly, remember it’s the facilitator’s job to include everyone in the discussion. Adapted from The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools, Richard Paul and Linda Elder, Foundation of Critical Thinking, 2001.

1. The main purpose of this article is _________________________________________.
   (State as clearly as possible the author’s purpose for writing the article.)

2. The Key question that the author is addressing is ___________________________________.
   (Figure out the key question in the mind of the author when s/he wrote the article.)

3. The most important information in this article is _____________________________________.
   (Figure out the facts, experiences, data the author is using to support his/her conclusions.)

4. The main inferences/conclusions in this article are ____________________________________.
   (Identify the key conclusions the author comes to and presents in the article.)

5. The key concept(s) we need to understand in this articles is (are) ____________________.
   By these concepts the author means _________________________________________.
   (Figure out the most important ideas you would have to understand in order to understand
   the author’s line of reasoning.)

6. The main assumptions(s) underlying the author’s thinking is (are) ____________________.
   (Figure out what the author is taking for granted [that might be questioned].)

7. a) If we take this line of reasoning seriously, the implications are ____________________.
    (What consequences are likely to follow if people take the author’s line of reasoning
    seriously?)

   b) If we fail to take this line of reasoning seriously, the implications are__________________.
    (What consequences are likely to follow if people ignore the author’s reasoning?)

8. The main point(s) of view presented in this article is (are) _________________________.
   (What is the author looking at, and how is s/he seeing it?)

9. Last and certainly not least, what’s the point of reading this article and how can it be applied
   to our profession and for improving critical thinking?
Developing the next generation of leaders

NCOs must adapt to meet the needs of the Army of 2020

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. DANIEL A. DAILEY
U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

Since 9/11, our Noncommissioned Officer Corps has truly lived by the NCO Creed. During more than a decade of combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, NCOs demonstrated time and again that they are the backbone of our Army. In countless small-unit actions, we proved our technical and tactical proficiency while executing our two primary responsibilities: accomplishing the mission and taking care of Soldiers. We can rightfully be proud as NCOs, leaders and American Soldiers.

Yet, there are many challenges ahead. We concluded our combat mission in Iraq and began drawing down our forces in Afghanistan while transitioning the mission to NCOs in the Afghan National Security Forces. Our nation’s leaders published a new strategy, one focused on preparedness for a wide range of military operations potentially anywhere in the world.

We must be prepared to lead Soldiers and teams for humanitarian assistance missions at home or abroad. And we must be equally prepared to lead them to deter and defeat enemy forces in the Asia-Pacific Region, the Middle East or wherever else conflict erupts. The requirement to deploy almost anywhere and execute the full range of military operations is a significantly different challenge than that of counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan — not a harder or easier challenge, just a different one.

In order to meet the challenges of the Army of 2020, we are adapting doctrine, organizations, training and leader development. We are leveraging technology for both warfighting and training, and we are evolving our procedures for readiness, deployment and operations. As we transition to the Army of 2020, we are leaning forward to prepare the NCO Corps to lead that Army. Here are some of the initiatives the Army’s NCO leaders are taking to ensure that you remain the leaders our nation and our Army needs.

**The NCO development timeline**

To prepare our NCO Corps to lead the Army of 2020, we structured our NCO development timeline so that each NCO is proficient in the competencies necessary for the four NCO roles of leading, training, maintaining standards, and caring for Soldiers and equipment at the skill level they are entering, the leadership position they will hold and the organization they will lead. This timeline is a synchronized relationship between professional military education, promotions and assignments in a way that is deliberate, continuous, sequential and progressive. During their careers, all NCOs will progress successively through NCO Education System courses, developmental assignments, and Structured Self-Development.

The NCO development timeline is designed to ensure that each NCO is prepared for new challenges and increasing responsibilities. While it assists NCOs to understand their role in their own career progression, it more importantly signals to leaders their roles in developing subordinates.

For example, for a number of reasons during the last decade of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, we could not always ensure our subordinates attended the next NCOES course when scheduled. But, as the pressure of short dwell time and manning deploying units eases, each leader should ensure subordinate NCOs are scheduled for NCOES courses on time and are able and prepared to attend. We must reduce our backlog of NCOs who have not yet attended the courses they need to be pro-
moted and assume positions of greater responsibility. As leaders, that is our responsibility in taking care of Soldiers and our Army.

**Warrior Leader Course**

Shortly after the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, our Army recognized that the NCO Education System was not meeting the needs of our leaders in the challenging environment of warfare in the 21st Century, when any unit could be required without warning to transition to active combat against smart, capable enemy forces. One of our key initiatives was transitioning our initial NCOES course, the Primary Leader Development Course, to the Warrior Leader Course. The focus of the Warrior Leader Course was just that — preparing NCOs from every branch to be warriors leading warriors.

WLC has served us well, as for a decade our NCOs have successfully built cohesive and effective teams and led our Soldiers to victory in combat in every imaginable situation. We continue to improve the WLC to meet the needs of our NCO Corps and our Army.

Over the past year we gathered feedback on NCOES and the WLC from units downrange, from NCO leaders, from schoolhouses and from Soldiers. Based on that feedback, we have piloted an improved course. Slightly longer, the course will add more land navigation, more physical fitness and the Army Physical Fitness Test, and will increase education in counseling and assessing subordinates. The new WLC will provide our newest and youngest NCOs the education they need to develop and lead Soldiers and teams for new missions in new locations under a variety of conditions.

**Developing NCO Instructors**

“Competence is my watchword,” the NCO Creed states, and we achieve such competence through quality, effective instruction. Each of us as NCOs has a responsibility as an instructor — whether in NCOES courses, in organizational training, or in individually coaching and mentoring our subordinates.

As NCOs we develop our subordinates in six major areas: the Army as a profession, comprehensive fitness, professional competence, adaptability, team building and life-long learning. Yet, the environment in which NCOs instruct and Soldiers learn has changed considerably in recent years. Formal and informal simulations, social networks, and learning communities affect how we conduct instruction and achieve learning. Each of us as NCOs must master these instructional tools.

To improve these capabilities, we proposed developing a cadre of expert instructors through an Instructor Development Program. We will formally select NCOs for par-

▲ Cpl. Lane B. Tucker of the 202nd Military Police Group (Criminal Investigation) readies to recite the Oath of the Noncommissioned Officer during his WLC graduation ceremony May 24 at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Grafenwöhr, Germany. PHOTO BY PFC. CHALON HUTSON

DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE →
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— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. DANIEL A. DAILEY

Structured Self-Development

The NCO development domain in which we have made the greatest progress is that of self-development. Though improvements have been made to NCOES in the institutional domain, and our NCOs are gaining incredible depth of experience as leaders in the organizational domain, it is the self-development domain where our NCOs can broaden their knowledge base and competencies.

The first initiative I’d like to address is Structured Self-Development. We’ve known for a long time that there were gaps or delays in our individual development — primarily the years spent in between schools, such as the gap between completion of One Station Unit Training or Advanced Individual Training and attendance at the Warrior Leader Course. SSD enables us to fill those gaps while developing knowledge and competencies that build the confidence of our Soldiers to lead at the next higher level.

Soldiers and NCOs conduct SSD entirely online. It is self-paced to account for different schedules based on MOS, duty position, rank and unit schedules. We deliver SSD to each individual through interactive multimedia instruction, accessed via the Army Learning Management System. SSD topics range from combat operations to administration and logistics to training and leadership.

For example, SSD-1 for Soldiers preparing for WLC, consists of 36 distinct distance learning packages totaling 80 hours of instruction. We fielded SSD-1 in October 2010 and SSD-3 in May 2011 for NCOs who have completed the Advanced Leader Course and are preparing for the Senior Leader Course.

Thus far, over 21,000 Soldiers have completed SSD. Our current rate of completion is over 2,000 Soldiers and NCOs per month. But we can and must do better.

SSD is self-paced, but it must be completed in order to attend the next level NCOES course. Online instruction at first may seem challenging, but those who have completed SSD demonstrate for all of us that it can be done. For further information on SSD contact the Institute for Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development at (757) 501-5637/5446 or www.tradoc.army.mil/INCOPD/contact.html.

College of the American Soldier

A second initiative in the self-development domain is the College of the American Soldier. It provides the opportunity for virtually all training and education in an NCO’s career to be translated into college credits at colleges across the nation. Examples of training and education that can be converted into college credits include Initial Military Training, NCOES courses, Army correspondence courses, functional courses, self-development and, under certain circumstances, experience in operational units.

Today, almost 40 civilian colleges and universities are integrated into CAS, and NCOs can earn degrees in management, business administration, organizational development, human resources management and organizational leadership. CAS provides opportunities to earn college degrees despite the incredibly busy schedule our NCOs encounter, whether deployed or at their home stations.

Conclusion

NCOs have achieved much during the past decade, accomplishing missions and taking care of Soldiers. Yet, our job is never done. We must continue to adapt ourselves and our teams for new challenges in new environments.

As we transition to the Army of 2020, the initiatives discussed above represent our path to strengthening and adapting our NCO Corps. Each of us must continuously strive to develop ourselves and our subordinates in the three domains of organizational experience, professional military education, and individual self-development. I look forward to serving and working with you as we provide outstanding leadership to each and every Soldier.