

# BUILDING COHESIVE TEAMS



Leader's Actions



Influence Member's  
Behaviors and Perceptions



Leads to Norms that  
Become the Climate



**CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED**

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## Foreword

“You have to take care of Soldiers and you can’t do it by lip service because they will find you out. It has to come from the heart. If it isn’t genuine, they’ll know it in a minute.”

William G. Bainbridge, 5th Sergeant Major of the Army

As we continue to deploy our Soldiers to disparate geographic locations around the world, it is important to revisit how to build cohesive teams that are highly trained, disciplined, and fit. First and foremost, there are no soft skills, there is just good leadership. Basic attributes like communication, interpersonal skills, empathy, and compassion are traits that fall under the umbrella of leadership at large. Parallel to society, Army culture also evolves. With this continuous evolution, Army leaders must remain agile and adapt to the needs of those they lead. Army leaders must exhibit genuine care for their Soldiers and ask the tough questions. We must remember that caring also means holding Soldiers accountable for their actions. When expectations are set, it is imperative that leaders follow through to ensure they are met.

Leading Soldiers is an honor and a privilege. However, this endeavor is sometimes difficult and does not come naturally for everyone. That is precisely why publications like this are so important. We ask our leaders to continually seek self-improvement, and this handbook is a great place to start. It will not provide you with all the answers, but it can serve as a road map to get you where you want to go.

People First!

Michael A. Grinston  
16th Sergeant Major of the Army



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Introduction**  
    **About this Handbook** .....9

**Chapter 1**  
    **This is My Squad: Overview** .....11

**Section I: Teams**

**Chapter 2**  
    **Building the Team** .....17

**Chapter 3**  
    **Resolving Conflict** .....27

**Chapter 4**  
    **Establishing a Positive Climate** .....39

**Section II: Individuals**

**Chapter 5**  
    **Individual Characteristics** .....55

**Chapter 6**  
    **Stressors and Behavior** .....59

**Chapter 7**  
    **Compliance versus Commitment** .....65

**Appendix I**  
    **Climate Assessment** .....69

**Glossary** .....75

**References** .....77

**FIGURES**

Figure 1-1. This is My Squad Overview. Adapted from SMA Grinston’s brief at the 2020 Maneuver Conference.....13

Figure 2-1. WHO Leadership Model .....20

Figure 4-2. Factors that Contribute to Climate .....44

Figure 5-1. The Big 5 Continuum .....57

Figure 6-1. Organizational Stress .....60

Figure 7-1. Hierarchy of Commitment .....66

**TABLES**

**Table 2-1. Team Leader and Team Member Roles and Responsibilities . . . . . 24**

**Table 3-1. Prioritizes, Organizes, and Coordinates Taskings . . . . . 28**

**Table 3-2. Process Conflict Indicators and Causes . . . . . 29**

**Table 3-3. Personal Conflict Indicators and Causes . . . . . 31**

**Table 3-4. Values Conflict Indicators and Causes . . . . . 32**

**Table 3-5. Information Conflict Indicators and Causes . . . . . 33**

**Table 3-6. Structural Conflict Indicators and Causes . . . . . 35**

**Figure 4-1. Climate versus Culture . . . . . 40**

**Table 4-1. Impact of Negative and Positive Climates on Organizations. . . . . 41**

**Table 6-1. Effects of Stress on the Mind, Mood, and Body . . . . . 61**

**Table 6-2. Adaptive Stress Reactions . . . . . 61**





## INTRODUCTION

# About this Handbook

### WHAT IS IN IT

This handbook contains information for leaders on how to build teams and contribute individually to team success, including how to create a cohesive climate and resolve conflict. There are vignettes throughout the handbook to help illustrate key points. These vignettes are experiences from Soldiers across the Army. Some are from the Sergeant Major of the Army's (SMA) "This is My Squad" panel, while others were gathered from interviews with leaders and squad members at various locations.

### WHAT IS NOT IN IT

There is no discussion of leadership styles in this handbook. Current Army doctrine no longer discusses leadership styles because they are too 'squishy' and without boundaries, and therefore there is plenty of overlap between the different styles of leadership. Styles are also dependent on team dynamics, such as cohort, rank, or position. Leaders must be flexible and adapt their style to the situation.

There may be areas in this handbook that seem like they need further discussion. Throughout this handbook there are references listed where a leader can go to learn more about a particular topic if interested.

The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) published a teambuilding handbook, the *Leader's Guide to Teambuilding: Building Adaptive High-Performing Teams*, 15 January 2015. This handbook is not intended to replace the previous version. The *Leader's Guide to Teambuilding* was about building "teams of leaders" in teams that did not have a habitual relationship between the members, whereas this handbook incorporates the "This is My Squad" initiative.

### HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

There are two sections in this handbook. The first section is for the leader of the team/squad, and discusses climate, conflict, and building the team.

The second section covers individual characteristics, including values and emotions, stressors, and commitment and compliance.

The reader should read both sections. We are all members of a squad and are likely the leader of a different squad. This handbook helps both followers and leaders create the highly trained and ready squads that the Army needs to fight and win the nation's wars.



## CHAPTER 1

# This is My Squad: Overview

“This is a cultural change that I want to be positive. Who is in your squad? It’s not necessarily an infantry squad, but everyone has a team of people we’re close with and take care of every day.”

SMA Michael A. Grinston  
16th Sergeant Major of the Army  
This is My Squad Live Panel  
Joint Base Lewis-McChord

Leaders at all levels should take pride and ownership in their squad and eliminate the behavior that is corrosive to building cohesive squads. In this sense, a squad refers to more than the rifle or engineer squad. It is the group of people you work with daily, the group for which you are responsible, and they are responsible to you. This concept is what led to the development of the “This is My Squad” initiative, led by the Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA), Michael A. Grinston.

Corrosive behavior can be best described as the behaviors that run contrary to Army values, like sexual harassment or assault, racism, suicide, alcohol incidents, and domestic violence. These behaviors are not present in cohesive squads and teams. A cohesive squad or team will not display these corrosive behaviors.

Every person on the Army team, including Soldiers, Army civilian professionals, contractors, and each of their family members are all part of a squad. Some of the squads you may lead, in others you may be a follower. Think of all the people you interact with on a daily or routine basis. Chances are that you are part of their squad as well. In this handbook, the terms team, squad, group, and organization are synonymous and used interchangeably.

In 1779, Friedrich Von Steuben published *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, or the “Blue Book,” as it was called for the color of the paper on which it was printed. This book described how to train Soldiers, and what to train them on to prepare them for war. It is also considered the first leadership publication in the Army. It was so successful that it stayed in print until 1812. Thoughts on Army leadership continued to evolve and were codified in 1946 with the publication of Field Manual (FM) 22-5, *Leadership Courtesy and Drill*, 1 January 1946, and later

in 1948 with the publication of Training Circular (TC) 6, *Leadership*, 10 July 1948, and Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet (PAM) 22-1, *Leadership*, December 1948. Though Army leadership theories have evolved, they have also remained consistent in the sense that they have always been Soldier-focused. Another constant is the knowledge that to build high performing teams that can deploy, fight, and win in any environment, we have to have highly trained, disciplined, physically fit, and cohesive organizations. This is not possible without mutual trust. Mutual trust is not possible without understanding. Understanding is not possible without knowing one another.

The squad leader is the most influential member of the squad. To each squad member, the squad leader is the leader with whom they are the closest and the person they can most trust.

The squad leader needs to take ownership of their squad. They must know their Soldiers, Army civilian professionals, and other team members well-enough to know what motivates them, know their values and goals, as well as their strengths and weaknesses. They must know when there is a potential issue, be it personal or professional, before the issue becomes significant enough to affect team performance.

There are four tenets that squads need to exhibit (depicted in Figure 1-1 in the dark green boxes). Squads must be:

- Cohesive,
- Trained,
- Disciplined, and
- Fit.

Army doctrinal publications (ADPs), FMs, and Army techniques publications (ATPs), as well as handbooks from organizations such as the Center for the Army Profession and Leadership (CAPL), cover the last three tenets. This handbook will attempt to expound upon CAPL's work, referencing much of it, and cover in detail the first tenet, building cohesive squads.

Building a cohesive team is not a soft skill. It is good leadership, and accomplished through feel, and being aware of team dynamics. However, there are principles and guidelines to follow. Instilling discipline, rewarding desired behavior, and punishing behaviors detrimental to cohesiveness are all of part of building a high performing team. Figure 1-1 depicts the SMA's "This is My Squad" initiative, and what the squad leader must do.

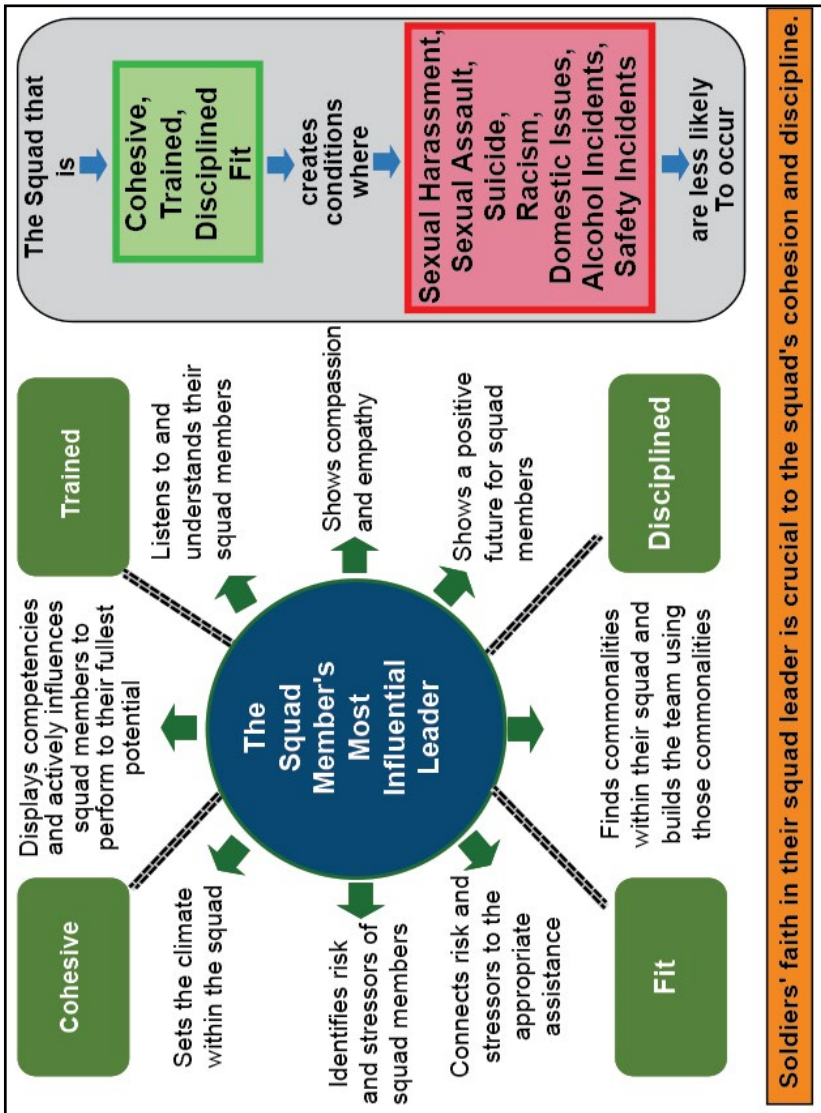


Figure 1-1. This is My Squad Overview. Adapted from SMA Grinston's brief at the 2020 Maneuver Conference.



**SECTION I**  
**TEAMS**





## CHAPTER 2

# Building the Team

A team is any collection of people that functions together to perform a mission or collective task.

Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22  
*Army Leadership and the Profession*  
31 July 2019

### CATEGORIES OF TEAMS

The Army is a team of teams (squad of squads). These teams may be permanent or temporary, internal or external. For the purposes of this handbook, think of permanent teams as those assigned to the unit that you work with every day. This may be your traditional squad, or it may be the platoon leader, platoon sergeant, and the squad leaders. A temporary team is a group that is selected for a specific mission, and after said mission, the team is disbanded. Examples include a team that is put together to write a standard operating procedure (SOP), or plan an event for an organization.

#### Internal Teams

“Internal teams are comprised of leaders, Soldiers, and Army career professionals who are assigned to a specific unit or organization.”<sup>1</sup> They do not contain anyone from outside of the organization. Internal teams are the most common. Internal teams have leaders who have formal leadership authority.

#### External Teams

External teams have, “...members from different organizations, cultures, or agencies, or have backgrounds or bring specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes to the team.”<sup>2</sup> When building an external team, leaders may have the ability to select members of the team, or at least the organizations that will provide personnel to the team. External teams are usually designed to solve complex issues.

## High-Performing Teams

Trust is the glue that holds organizations together, lubricates friction, and permits empowerment.

Lieutenant General (LTG) (R) Walter F. Ulmer Jr  
“Fifty Years of Thoughts on Leadership”  
Calvary and Armor Journal, January-March 2019

Building high-performing teams takes hard work, patience, and the interpersonal skills of the leader.<sup>3</sup> Most leaders do not have the benefit of selecting their own team members, they get what they are given and have to determine how to make it work. So how does one build a team that performs at a high standard and can incorporate new members on a recurring basis?

Teams that perform at a high level share certain characteristics. These characteristics are listed below, and expounded upon in ADP 6-22:

- Team members trust each other and are able to predict what each member will do.
- Members work together to accomplish the mission.
- The team executes their tasks thoroughly and quickly.
- The team meets and exceeds standards.
- The team adapts to demanding challenges.
- The team learns from their experiences and develops pride in their accomplishments.

### TEAM DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

ADP 6-22 states that teams experience three developmental stages:

- Formation,
- Enrichment, and
- Sustainment.

We will discuss each stage and how leaders can guide their team through each stage.

## Formation

During the formation stage, leaders should begin to build an inclusive environment within their team. To do this effectively, leaders must be able to evaluate and assess the skills of newly assigned personnel and quickly integrate them into the team where they can bring the most value, be successful, and allow their Soldiers to fully develop. The formation stage has two steps: reception and orientation.

As stated earlier, leaders do not normally have the ability to select members for their team based on skill set or personality. Later in this chapter, we will discuss how to build teams when the leader does have the ability to select team members.

**Reception.** Ideally, reception starts right after a Soldier is added to the gains roster and assigned to a position. The leader selects a member of the team as a sponsor and contacts the new Soldier to welcome them to the team. When selecting a sponsor, the leader should select someone who is fully committed to the team and exemplifies the organization's values. The sponsor should be required to complete either the sponsorship training requirements in the Army Learning Management System (ALMS) or the Electronic Sponsorship Application Training (eSAT). "Ensure like-gender, marital status, grade, and leadership positions are taken into consideration when assigning sponsors to the fullest extent possible."<sup>4</sup>

With new collaboration tools available on government systems, consider using video chat tools to meet with incoming Soldiers. This will expedite their integration to the team, and shorten the orientation process. See Appendix C of Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-8, *The Total Army Sponsorship Program*, 28 June 2019, for a sponsorship checklist.

**Orientation.** Orientation begins when the newly assigned Soldier arrives at the new duty station and meets the other team members, learns the layout and schedule of the workplace, and generally understands conditions.<sup>5</sup> If the Soldier has dependents, include them as much as possible when meeting the team. Remember, the Army reenlists Soldiers, but retains families.

Leaders should assess the incoming Soldier to determine their skills and best fit within the team. Candid discussions are the most effective way to accomplish this critical step. Soldier expectations and goals must also be a part of this discussion and will help determine specific assignments and roles for the Soldier, as well as the norms for the team.

One tool to help leaders during orientation to build inclusive teams is the Who, How, and Offer (WHO) leadership model (see Figure 2-1). This model allows leaders to know the unique attributes and characteristics that each Soldier brings to the team. To facilitate inclusive and cohesive teams, leaders should open up and share with their Soldiers using WHO leadership model questions. Building trust is a two way conversation with Soldiers.



Figure 2-1. WHO Leadership Model

Though not required, having lunch or dinner, or other social outing such as a hail and farewell with the Soldier and their family, helps integrate them into the team faster and on a richer level. Orienting them to the area, both on and off the installation, helps them acclimate faster to their new assignment.

Orientation is the first step where the new team member will meet their team face to face. This will leave a lasting impression. If done poorly team members will have more difficulty in becoming an effective team member and will not rapidly internalize its values.

## Enrichment

“Dedicate effort into molding your Soldier to be what you need them to be.”

Staff Sergeant (SSG) Gabriel Christiansen  
16th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB)

The enrichment stage for a squad is different from a temporary or situational work-group team. A squad will not have an entirely new group of members at the same time. Most members of a squad are already committed to the team, unless they are newly assigned to the team or the team is rapidly assembled. The enrichment phase is where the team strengthens relationships with one another and builds trust and commitment. New members begin to trust their leaders and peers, along with themselves. Newly assigned Soldiers begin to buy in to the team, embrace the culture of the organization, and acclimate to the squad. The squad or team establish goals. For example, 100 percent of the squad should earn the Expert Soldier Badge. A different squad may be comprised of a company commander, a first sergeant, an executive officer, and the training room clerks. Their goal may be to pass a command inspection.

During this phase, new Soldiers on the team should be getting comfortable in their role and how they add value to the team. They should be more likely to articulate their needs to better fulfill their role in the organization, and share with the leader how they see themselves progressing upward within the organization. While the new Soldier is beginning to trust their peers, peers are also beginning to trust the Soldier.

Team members develop accountability focused on the team rather than on the individual. The team begins to feel accountable to each other and accept accountability for the team's actions.<sup>6</sup> As team members develop accountability and trust, they feel more commitment, which leads to cohesiveness and members proudly proclaiming, “This is MY squad.”

## **Sustainment**

Once squad members reach the sustainment phase, they will do what is needed with little to no direction. Team members are confident in their abilities and motivated to overcome obstacles to complete the task at hand. Leaders should pay close attention for signs of complacency, especially during routine tasks, to ensure that bad habits do not become the new standard.

Managing conflict is important during any phase of team building, but it is especially critical during the sustainment phase. Complacency from some team members will cause conflict. When members fail to perform up to the established standards and norms, it breaks the trust within the team. The leader must step in and resolve the conflict to restore trust and accountability. This handbook covers conflict in more detail in Chapter 3.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING TEAM PERFORMANCE**

Many factors affect team performance. Composition, size, group norms, and cohesiveness all play a role in the performance of the team.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, in most cases leaders will not be able to select the members of their team. Choosing members normally only occurs if the team is temporary in nature. In these cases, there are many considerations for selecting the team members or the organizations providing members for the team. The issue or problem the team is trying to solve is a major factor when considering the composition of the group. Different problem sets will influence which members should be added to the team.

## **Composition**

Group composition refers to the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the members. If a group is homogenous, the members are similar in ways that are critical to the group. This could be the branch or military occupational specialty (MOS), rank, age, education, or cultural background. This applies if the similarities are relevant to the topic on which the group is working. If a group is heterogeneous, they differ in ways that are relevant to the topic at hand.

Homogeneous groups are likely to be more effective on a simple task when cooperation is necessary, the group tasks are sequential, or the task requires quick action. Homogeneous groups tend to have less conflict, better communication, and more interactions within the team. The risk of having a homogeneous group work on a complex problem is that they may not fully examine the task they are trying to accomplish and arrive at a quick, but not well thought out, solution.

Heterogeneous (diverse) groups tend to be more productive when tasks are complex, require cooperation between organizations, require creativity, and

prioritize thorough discussions over speed. Heterogeneous groups tend to have more discussions, which lead to more conflict. This is not necessarily a bad thing if the conflict is constructive, as it can enhance the group's decision making. A heterogeneous group working a simple task can take more time than necessary because of the conflicts that arise from the discussions.<sup>7</sup>

### **Group Size**

A team can be as few as two people and as many as can effectively interact and influence one another. Team size has an enormous impact on team performance. If a team is too small, members may not have the expertise or experience needed. If a team is too large, social loafing may occur. Social loafing is the tendency of some members to not put forth as much effort in a group situation as they would if they worked alone, and instead rely on other members to pick up their slack.<sup>8</sup> When this occurs there is normally conflict that the team must resolve. This will occur from either the other team members, which is preferred and indicates a high performing team, or the leader who must step in and resolve the conflict.

### **Group Norms**

When forming an external team, group norms are usually established early during the enrichment phase. Group norms refer to the standard against which appropriate behavior is judged. Norms can be either productive or counterproductive. Group members will usually follow the norms even if it results in a negative outcome. Group norms are enforced for only those actions that the group sees as important. High performing groups obviously will have productive norms.

Norms serve four purposes in organizations:<sup>9</sup>

- They help the group survive.
- They simplify and make more predictable the behaviors expected of group members.
- They help the group avoid embarrassing situations.
- They express the central values of the group and identify the group to others.

### **Group Cohesiveness**

The extent to which a group or team want to stay together is referred to as their cohesiveness. Cohesiveness is created by the attraction of the group, the resistance to leaving the group, and motivation to remain a member of the group.



Cohesiveness relates to the internal group dynamics of maturity, homogeneity, size, and how frequently the team interacts. External forces can also increase a group's cohesiveness: factors like competition or the presence of an external threat. Successfully completing a task, goal, or mission will also increase cohesiveness within a group.

If the team's goals align with an organization's goals, cohesive teams are productive and beneficial. However, an excessive amount of cohesiveness can lead to some issues within a team. Groupthink is one issue where cohesiveness and the desire to have a unanimous decision is more important than thorough and critical analysis of alternative courses of action. Groupthink occurs when individuals set aside their personal beliefs in order to achieve consensus with the group.

Emotional intelligence, the ability express emotions and perceive emotions, as well as the ability to understand and use those emotions in a positive manner, also promotes group cohesiveness.<sup>10</sup>

### **Informal Leadership**

Most groups or teams have a formal leader appointed by an organization. An informal leader is another member that the group looks to for leadership. It may be because of referent or expert power, rank, or some other factor, such as subject matter expertise. The informal leader can be a positive factor that adds to the group, if they work in the best interests of the organization. If they are counterproductive, remove them from the group.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Team leaders and team members each have responsibilities to fulfill in all phases of their lifecycle. Table 2-1 summarizes the major responsibilities for each.

**Table 2-1. Team Leader and Team Member Roles and Responsibilities<sup>11</sup>**

Team Leader	Team Member
Role: Provides guidance, instruction and direction to the team to achieve a common goal	Role: Be a disciplined, task-oriented member of the team who is open-minded, adaptable, and eager to learn.
Responsibilities	Responsibilities
Establish a positive climate	Build relationships
Create a shared vision and team identity	Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability
Provide clearly stated goals	Cooperate with other team members
Establish roles and responsibilities for members	Have a willingness to help others
Establish an environment of collaboration and dialogue	Respect others
Establish an environment that embraces learning	
Know the strengths and weaknesses of team members	

**Endnotes**

1. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 6-22.6, *Army Team Building*, 30 October 2015.
2. Ibid.
3. ADP 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*, 31 July 2019.
4. AR 600-8-8, *The Total Army Sponsorship Program*, 28 June 2019.
5. Ibid.
6. ATP 6-22.6.
7. Griffin, Ricky, Jean Phillips, and Stanley Gully, *Organizational Behavior: Managing People and Organizations*, 12th Ed, Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2017.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. ATP 6-22.6.



## CHAPTER 3

# Resolving Conflict

Conflict is the tension between individuals or groups because of real or perceived differences.<sup>1</sup> Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 6-22.6, *Army Team Building*, 30 October 2015, states that there are two types of conflict, task and personal. Other scholars claim that there are seven.<sup>2</sup> Many, if not all, of the conflict types could fall under what ATP 6-22.6 lists as the task category. This chapter will cover seven types of conflict and how to manage conflict within a team.

Conflicts can be a disagreement over:<sup>3</sup>

- **Task.** A disagreement about the task or goals.
- **Process.** A disagreement about how to accomplish the task.
- **Relationship (Personal).** An incompatibility between individuals or groups.
- **Values.** Differing and incompatible belief systems.
- **Information.** Occurs when people lack necessary information, are misinformed, interpret information differently, or disagree about which information is relevant.
- **Task Interdependence.** One person or team is dependent on another for resources or information.
- **Structural.** Results from structural or process features of the organization.

Not all conflict is bad. Conflict can be constructive or destructive, and constructive conflict can be beneficial to team performance, as long as the conflict is not personal. Constructive conflict may occur when a structural process in an organization is recognized as the issue and is changed as a result of the conflict to allow smoother operations and mission accomplishment. When conflict becomes personal, it becomes deconstructive. A leader cannot ignore personal conflicts. If the team does not confront the problem, the team will develop a negative climate.<sup>4</sup>

The tables associated with each type of conflict were adapted from Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Leader Development*, 30 June 2015. Use the strength and needs columns to see how a squad's behavior is a strength or a need. Use the underlying causes to identify possible solutions to improve performance.

## TASK CONFLICT

Task conflict can be beneficial in the early stages of planning after receiving a mission. In most cases, it will help people think critically about the stated task and all of the implied tasks. However, if task conflict becomes more detrimental to the team over time when tasks are complex as it can lead to ‘paralysis by analysis.’ See Table 3-1 for strength and need indicators for resolving task conflicts.

**Table 3-1. Prioritizes, Organizes, and Coordinates Taskings<sup>5</sup>**

Strength Indicators	Need Indicators
<p>Breaks down work into process steps or tasks.</p> <p>Accurately scopes out the length, sequence, and difficulty of tasks to achieve desired outcomes.</p> <p>Sets goals and clear objectives that are specific, measurable, and time bound.</p> <p>Facilitates subordinate and team task accomplishment without over-specification and micromanagement.</p>	<p>Operates ‘in the moment’ without deliberate thought of how to complete the task.</p> <p>Fails to identify road blocks that delay or prevent task accomplishment.</p> <p>Does not develop a plan of action when coordinating tasks across teams and groups.</p> <p>Reassigns tasks to different teams without evaluating the effect on existing workload priorities.</p>
Underlying Causes	
<p>Functions as a part of the reactionary environment, and does not seek to be proactive.</p> <p>Does not hold a clear sense of desired outcomes.</p> <p>Procrastinates and manages time ineffectively.</p> <p>Operates in isolation. Does not effectively delegate.</p> <p>Does not take time to see how all of the moving pieces fit together as a whole.</p>	

**PROCESS CONFLICT**

Process conflict is conflict about how to accomplish the task, who is responsible for sub-tasks, and how to delegate responsibilities to accomplish the task. Soldiers uncertain of their roles increase the likelihood of this type of conflict. Leaders can reduce the amount of process conflict by ensuring everyone on the team is clear in their role and have a thorough plan on how to accomplish the task. See Table 3-2 for information on how to assess your squad’s ability to resolve process conflict.

**Table 3-2. Process Conflict Indicators and Causes<sup>6</sup>**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Need Indicators</b>
<p>Explains how subordinate roles support the unit’s goals and work of others.</p> <p>Establishes procedures for monitoring, coordinating, and regulating subordinates’ activities.</p> <p>Informs subordinates of work expectations, particularly when taking on a new role.</p> <p>Successfully resolves subordinate conflicts regarding duty tasks or roles.</p> <p>Clearly outlines responsibilities and desired outcomes.</p>	<p>Provides subordinates with competing demands or contradictory messages about their role.</p> <p>Maintains a sink or swim attitude.</p> <p>Does not define or clearly communicate roles, desired outcomes, and goals to team members.</p> <p>Assigns tasks without determining if work is in the scope of an individual’s abilities.</p> <p>Refuses to be involved in subordinate conflicts and disagreements about “who does what.”</p>
<b>Underlying Causes</b>	
<p>Does not conceptualize how contributions of team members should fit together.</p> <p>Unable to see the benefit of providing a clear message or guidance on role expectations.</p> <p>Over-tasked (or under-tasked) and not able to allocate distinct work roles.</p> <p>Lacks knowledge of position requirements and personnel capabilities when assigning work.</p> <p>Uninterested in managing work or people.</p>	

## **RELATIONSHIP (PERSONAL) CONFLICT**

Interpersonal differences are a common trigger of this type of conflict, which is the result of incompatibility or differences between individuals or groups. These disputes often lead to other dysfunctional conflict. This conflict is a primary source of stress.

Because personal conflict is fueled by emotions and perceptions about another person or group and their personality, character, or motives, neither party may be interested in resolving the conflict. Because it is personal, it tends to become more extreme. Leaders must create a climate of mutual respect and open communication to reduce personal conflict. Table 3-3 lists strength and need indicators for personal conflict resolution.

**Table 3-3. Personal Conflict Indicators and Causes<sup>7</sup>**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Need Indicators</b>
<p>Identifies individual and group positions and needs.</p> <p>Sees conflict as an opportunity for shared understanding.</p> <p>Facilitates understanding of conflicting positions and possible solutions.</p> <p>Works to collaborate on solving complex problems in ways that are acceptable to all parties.</p> <p>Builds consensus by ensuring that all team members are heard.</p>	<p>Uses the same technique in every situation to influence others.</p> <p>Negotiates with others without recognizing their priorities or interests.</p> <p>Uses extreme techniques such as being too hard or too soft when resolving conflicts.</p> <p>Isolates team members and pressures them to align with personal goals and priorities.</p> <p>Does not seek to reconcile conflicting positions; only seeks to win.</p> <p>Focuses on negatives of others' interests.</p>
<b>Underlying Causes</b>	
<p>Does not seek the middle ground on issues, but demands that personal identified needs are met.</p> <p>Avoids conflict, and is uncomfortable in situations that demand identifying the conflict and solving the problem.</p> <p>Unable or unwilling to look for common causes or mutual goals.</p> <p>Is uncomfortable or does not like to work with teams towards common goals and priorities.</p> <p>Takes things personally.</p> <p>Does not maintain a solutions-based focus.</p>	



## VALUES CONFLICT

Soldiers and civilians come to the organization with their own set of values, and see the world from their own perspective. Some of these values may conflict with the Army values. A leader must resolve this conflict immediately. If the conflicted value is not congruent with the Army values, then the leader must motivate the individual or team to demonstrate the appropriate behavior. Whether the motivation comes from education, counseling, punishment, or all of the above. See Table 3-4 to assess a squad’s ability to resolve values conflicts.

**Table 3-4. Values Conflict Indicators and Causes<sup>8</sup>**

Strength Indicators	Need Indicators
<p>Displays high standards of duty performance, personal appearance, military and professional bearing, and physical fitness and health.</p> <p>Takes an ethical stance and fosters an ethical climate.</p> <p>Demonstrates good moral judgment and behavior.</p> <p>Completes tasks to standard, on time, and within the commander’s intent.</p> <p>Demonstrates determination and persistence when facing adverse situations.</p>	<p>Solves problems using the ‘easy path’ without regard for what is ‘the right thing to do.’</p> <p>Puts personal benefit or comfort ahead of the mission.</p> <p>Hides unpleasant facts that may arouse anger.</p> <p>Is publicly critical of the unit or its leadership, yet does nothing to help.</p>
Underlying Causes	
<p>Has not accepted one or more of the Army values.</p> <p>Overly committed to self-interests, career goals, and personal achievement.</p> <p>Unable to translate Army values to personal behaviors.</p> <p>Afraid of facing demands or hardships that following Army values might bring.</p> <p>Not aware of personal behaviors and how they are perceived by others.</p> <p>Personal values conflict with Army values.</p>	

**INFORMATION CONFLICT**

One of the leading causes of conflict is uncertainty. The lack of information because of poor communication increases the chance of this conflict type occurring. This is all but guaranteed to happen if the leader does not share the same information with all of the team or squad members (in-groups/out-groups). The best method of accomplishing this is to be open and honest with all members of the team. See Table 3-5 to determine a squad’s ability to resolve information conflicts.

**Table 3-5. Information Conflict Indicators and Causes<sup>9</sup>**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Need Indicators</b>
<p>Expresses thoughts and ideas clearly.</p> <p>Double checks that subordinates understand the communicated message.</p> <p>Reinforces the importance of current unit objectives and priorities for subordinates.</p> <p>Uses a communication method aligned with the information that will be expressed.</p> <p>Communicates to subordinates as well as superiors to ensure everyone is in the loop.</p>	<p>Creates inconsistent and confusing messages, arguments, and stories.</p> <p>Communicates technical subject matter without converting it into general terms.</p> <p>Places an emphasis on the wrong subject matter for an audience (too simplistic for management and too detail-heavy or strategically focused for subordinates).</p> <p>Shares information and understanding with only select favorites.</p> <p>Limits communication to subordinates and superiors in own chain of command.</p>
<b>Underlying Causes</b>	
<p>Has only a little preparation time before speaking to individuals or a group on a topic.</p> <p>Does not have accurate knowledge of the gaps in the audience’s understanding of the subject.</p> <p>Not skilled in creating messages or explanations suited to the audience’s background, comprehension level, language, culture, or other factors.</p> <p>Partial or incomplete understanding of the subject matter.</p>	

## **TASK INTERDEPENDENCE CONFLICT**

When one person or unit is dependent on another for resources or information, the potential for conflict increases. For example, a rifle company relies on others to deliver Class I, III, and V supplies before leaving the tactical assembly area. If those supplies are not delivered, there will be a conflict that results in the company missing their start point time. Refer back to Table 3-2 for information on how to assess your squad's ability to resolve task interdependence conflict.

## **STRUCTURAL CONFLICT**

Structural conflict can be horizontal (between similar groups) or vertical (chain-of-command). This most often occurs because of a regulation, process, procedure, or the task organization. Leaders should work to adjust accordingly and within their authority. See Table 3-6 to see strength and need indicators for resolving structural conflicts.

**Table 3-6. Structural Conflict Indicators and Causes<sup>10</sup>**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Need Indicators</b>
<p>Uses effective assessment and training methods.</p> <p>Challenges how the organization operates, especially those processes only done in a certain manner, “because they have always been done that way.”</p> <p>Discards techniques or procedures that have outlived their purpose.</p> <p>Regularly expresses the value of seeking counsel and expert advice.</p> <p>Encourages leaders and their subordinates to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Motivates and stimulates innovative and critical thinking in others.</p> <p>Seeks new approaches to problems.</p>	<p>Requires that others follow the rules, allowing no room for deviation or innovations.</p> <p>Holds on to techniques or procedures, regardless of their utility, efficiency, or effectiveness.</p> <p>Fails to seek advice or counsel when facing a new or complex task.</p>
<b>Underlying Causes</b>	
<p>Feels that rules and procedures were put in place to follow, no matter what the outcome.</p> <p>Supporter of traditional values and approaches to problems.</p> <p>Afraid of change and the possible difficulties and turmoil that accompany new techniques or procedures.</p>	

## **MANAGING CONFLICT**

When conflict arises in a team (and it will), it presents an opportunity to either make the team stronger or break it apart, depending on how the leader and the team resolve it. ATP 6-22.6 lists some ground rules for managing conflict that leaders should follow. Teams should establish rules before conflict arises so everyone understands how to work through conflict and use it to improve team performance.

### **Avoid Personal Attacks**

Address how team members' behavior or performance affects the team. Do not attack team members personally. When a member suffers a personal attack it can affect them for a long time, long after the member improves their performance or corrects the problematic behavior. This leads to resentment and other personal attacks in the future.

### **Prevent Heated Outbursts**

Angry outbursts cause other members to shut down emotionally. Outbursts do not resolve conflict, but rather drive it below the surface until it reappears, even more damaging than before. The team as a whole gets defensive, stops collaborating, loses trust, and damages the relationship with the member who had the outburst. Outbursts are emotional responses to other issues that can usually be resolved once emotions are removed from the equation. Early in the team development process, leaders must lay a ground rule that before emotions come out in an outburst, the team member should disengage from the conversation and reengage only when they feel they can discuss in a rational manner.

### **Approach Other Team Members Directly**

If a team member has a conflict with another member of the team, they should deal with that team member directly, face-to-face. Too often, team members discuss their issues with other team members. This erodes trust within the team. It is not always possible to have an in-person meeting. If the problem cannot wait until a face-to-face meeting is possible, a phone call is the next best solution. If a phone call is not possible, an email may suffice, but only as a last resort.

### **Never Assume Hostile Intent**

Miscommunication is the most common cause of conflict within a team. Members normally do not try to cause a conflict purposely. Either the meaning of the conversation or task was misunderstood, or something else went awry, as if the member did not fully comprehend the standards or how their behavior was interpreted. When attempting to resolve the conflict, team or squad leaders must understand that members are usually not trying to cause conflict.

## Act to Control Conflict

Leaders must learn when and how to control conflict. As stated earlier, conflict can improve team performance if handled effectively because it can lead to improved processes. If ignored, conflict can spread throughout an organization and grow to proportions that the leader cannot handle on their own. If the conflict occurs in a public forum, the team leader or another member of the team must intervene and move the parties to a private location. Conflict in a public form can have long lasting negative effects, even after the reason for the conflict is resolved.

Avoiding conflict is not a recommended course of action, as this allows the conflict to grow and affect team performance. As soon as a conflict arises to the attention of the leader, the leader should resolve it before it impacts team performance.

## Endnotes

1. ATP 6-22.6, *Army Team Building*, 30 October 2015.
2. Miles, Robert H., *Macro Organizational Behavior*, Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman, 1980.
3. Ibid.
4. ATP 6-22.6.
5. FM 6-22, *Leader Development*, 30 June 2015.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.



## CHAPTER 4

# Establishing a Positive Climate

Squad leaders set the climate in their squad. This is crucial to building a high performing team that embodies the Army values and helps the team become trained, cohesive, disciplined, and physically fit.

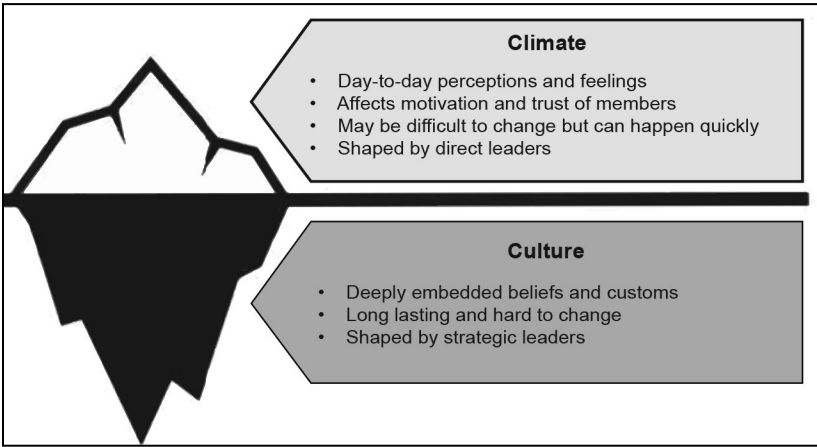
### CLIMATE

“Climate can significantly influence many critical outcomes such as readiness, performance, morale, motivation, mutual respect, and discipline.”

Center for the Army Profession and Leadership (CAPL)  
*Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook*  
July 2020

Climate is the atmosphere that leaders at all levels create within their organizations. Leaders establish a positive climate through their actions. Climates are much easier to change than culture. There is evidence every time there is a change in leadership within an organization. See Figure 4-1 to see how climate differs from culture.





**Figure 4-1. Climate versus Culture<sup>1</sup>**

Climate is how members think and feel about their organization, and it comes from shared perceptions and attitudes about the organization's daily functioning. It affects members' motivation and the trust they have in their teams and leaders.<sup>2</sup> Table 4-1 lists some of the impacts of a negative and positive climate.

**Table 4-1. Impact of Negative and Positive Climates on Organizations<sup>3</sup>**

Impacts of a Negative Climate	Impacts of a Positive Climate
Lower morale	Increased likelihood of mission accomplishment
Increased conflict among organizational members	Improved operational readiness
Decreased trust and cohesion	Increased productivity
Decreased communication both among organization members and between members and leadership	Improved overall unit and individual unit member performance
Decreased ability to accomplish mission tasks	Increased personal growth and development of unit members
Decreased Soldier and leader retention	Exercising disciplined initiative and taking appropriate risks within the commanders intent
Increased discipline problems	
Increased risk for sexual harassment and assault	

Studies indicate that a negative climate contributes to discipline issues within a unit. Of note, sexual harassment and sexual assault is more likely in organizations with a negative climate. Negative climates lead to a general lack of discipline both on and off duty, poor work ethic, and ineffective leadership.

### **Case Study 1: Impact of Trust on Building a Positive Climate**

Staff Sergeant (SSG) Bunnell had to make a choice. Where should he position his three sniper teams to watch over their battalion's 40-kilometer portion of Main Supply Route (MSR) Tampa, so they could best engage and destroy the insurgents emplacing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) along the route?

SSG Bunnell had been with this squad since just before the unit deployed to Iraq a month ago. This was the squad's first mission outside of the forward operating base (FOB) without the unit that usually conducted their left seat/right seat rides.

Insurgent IED activity had increased in recent days along the route, causing fatalities, injuries, and damaging or destroying vehicles. The squad all listened in when the staff briefed the mission. They paid close attention throughout the brief, but paid special attention when the S-2 updated on the pattern of the recent IED activity, and the times she believed they were emplaced.

SSG Bunnell gathered the squad around the map so he could collect their thoughts on selecting the site. His five-man-team selected three different positions, which all differed from where he had believed the best position would be. Bunnell had each team member explain the reason why they thought the team should use their selected position.

After each member had discussed their recommended positions, SSG Bunnell showed the squad the positions that he had selected. Only one of his positions matched with any of the team's recommendation. Bunnell went on to detail his thought process for selecting each position. Each of the squad members nodded in agreement at their squad leader's selected positions and reasons for selecting the sites.

"Why did you have us recommend a position to you if you already knew our sniper positions?" asked Specialist (SPC) Jackling.

SSG Bunnell replied, "Listen, I am not always going to have time to explain to you why I make certain decisions. Most of the time I am going to just direct you to do something and not have time to explain why I chose that course of action. Other times, like this, the situation allows me to explain my thought process. This way you can understand why I chose a specific course of action. You will understand how I think and what I look for to determine the best way to accomplish the mission. It is all about trust. You trusting me, me trusting you, and all of us trusting the team."

**Case Study 1: Impact of Trust on Building a Positive Climate Continued**

Another team member asked, “SSG Bunnell, if we know how you think, and the kind of information you need to make a decision, what should we do if you seem to go against your own way of thinking, or do not have all of the information?”

“Then you should raise the concern. I am going to make the best decision I can with the information that I have. Now that you know what info I need, if you have information that I need to know to make an informed decision, make sure I have considered that information,” SSG Bunnell replied.

**Question 1.** Do you think SSG Bunnell’s actions helped build trust within the squad?

**Question 2.** Do you believe that the squad is less likely to question decisions SSG Bunnell makes in the future?

**Question 3.** Are professional development opportunities also helpful for building trust within a formation?

All leaders establish a climate in their organizations. That climate can be either positive or negative. There are 10 factors that determine the climate (see Figure 4-2).

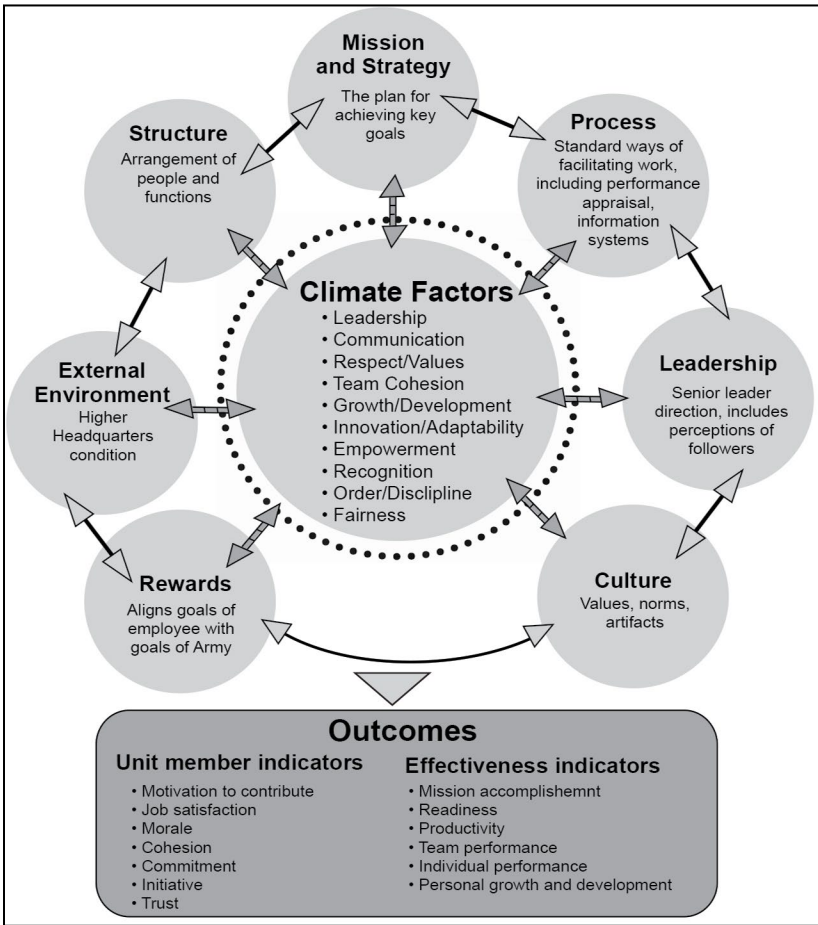


Figure 4-2. Factors that Contribute to Climate<sup>4</sup>

## LEADERS' ROLE IN FOSTERING A POSITIVE CLIMATE

A leader is responsible for establishing a positive climate in their organization. The elements that influence the climate are:

- Modeling appropriate behavior,
- Maintaining Army culture and core values, and
- Caring for members.

If a leader fails at any one of these, they will not have a high performing team and will possibly have a dysfunctional group. They are also more likely to have discipline problems. Either the team members will select an informal leader to follow, one who performs all of the elements, or they will follow the poor leader and become a squad that does not perform to standard.

### Modeling Appropriate Behavior

Modeling appropriate behavior is one of the competencies in the Army Leader Requirements Model, under Leads by Example. Effective leaders must demonstrate, not only by words but also by actions, the behaviors they want others to emulate. Other members of the team look to the leader to understand how they should behave and perform. When the leader is not present and a squad or team member is unsure of how to behave, they will look to an informal leader who will, if the climate is positive, demonstrate positive behavior. The following list from *Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook* shows other ways leaders can model appropriate behavior:

- **Displaying Character.** Leaders can display character by completing tasks on time and modeling standards for performance, personal appearance, physical fitness, and ethics. They can also display character by modeling sound judgement and reasoning, determination, persistence, and patience.
- **Exemplifying the Warrior Ethos.** Leaders can demonstrate the warrior ethos on and off the battlefield by showing resilience during prolonged and demanding conditions, and by doing the right thing despite adversity, challenges, and setbacks.
- **Leading with Confidence in Difficult Situations.** Leaders should demonstrate competence in their leadership abilities, display confidence and composure even when situations are not going well, and maintain a positive outlook in the face of adversity or setbacks.

- **Demonstrating Competence.** Leaders can demonstrate technical and tactical competence by performing their duties to a high standard. They should share their knowledge of how to use equipment, procedures, and methods, while also remaining innovative.
- **Demonstrating Conceptual Skills.** Leaders should think critically about complex situations, understand cause and effect relationships, develop plans, and lead others.
- **Seeking Diverse Ideas and Points of View.** Leaders should encourage honest communication and be open to alternative explanations and approaches for solving difficult problems.

“Winning Matters, and people are my number one priority. People are our Soldiers – Regular Army, National Guard and Reserve – their families, civilians, and Soldiers for Life – retirees and veterans. We win through our people, and people will drive success in our readiness, modernization and reform priorities. We must take care of our people...”

General James McConville, 40th Chief of Staff  
U.S. Army, *The Army People Strategy*, October 2019

## CULTURE

“Culture consists of a shared set of beliefs, values, norms, and symbols that unite a group and characterize the larger institution over time.”

CAPL  
*Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook*  
July 2020

Strategic leaders in the Army establish culture over time. “This is My Squad” is an example of the senior leaders wanting to ‘tweak’ the culture of the Army. Army culture has developed over 250 years. General McConville wanted to emphasize the people first culture in the Army, and did so when he published the Army People Strategy in 2019.<sup>5</sup>

Culture consists of the foundational values, beliefs, and behaviors that drive an organization’s social environment, and plays a vital role in mission accomplishment. The symbols, or artifacts, consist of material things like the Army flag, Medal of Honor, uniforms, etc., but artifacts also include stories.

General George Washington crossing the Delaware, General Ulysses S. Grant during the Civil War, the Rangers scaling Pointe du Hoc, the 82nd Airborne Division jumping into Normandy, the Big Red One assaulting Omaha Beach on D-Day. Stories of the heroics from Medal of Honor recipients like those that Audie Murphy, Roger Donlon, Thomas Payne, and Matthew Williams all add to the lore and reinforce the belief system, and thus the culture of the U.S. Army.

Changing culture is difficult. The Army has changed culture throughout its history, but it has always been a slow and difficult process. The U.S. Army is one of the most trusted institutions in all of government. After World War II, the Army and military as a whole were viewed as victors, and an institution whose members deserved the utmost respect. Those feelings began to shift after the Korean and Vietnam wars. What changed is that the public had more access to operations than ever before. Any missteps by Soldiers or leaders were broadcast on national television immediately, influencing the public perception and ultimately the culture of the Army.

Today's Army lives in an even more open environment. Social media provides everyone the opportunity to receive news and opinions in near real time. Social media influencers can sway public opinion rapidly, which has an effect on military culture.

### **Maintaining Army Culture and Core Values**

As stated earlier in this chapter, culture takes a long time to change, and strategic leaders drive that culture. The Army core values align with the Army culture. Soldiers need to understand and embrace the Army values, living them in all aspects of life.

The Army values are:<sup>6</sup>

- **Loyalty.** Bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers.
- **Duty.** Fulfill your obligations.
- **Respect.** Treat people as they should be treated.
- **Selfless Service.** Put the welfare of the nation, the Army, and your subordinates before your own.
- **Honor.** Live up the Army values.
- **Integrity.** Do what is right, legally and morally.
- **Personal Courage.** Face fear, danger, or adversity.



## Caring for Members

“Getting to know my Soldiers and their families on a personal level allows me to understand their values and connection to the Army. It demonstrates [to them] that they are a valuable asset to my team.”

SSG Carolina Ruiz

2nd Infantry Division (2ID) Division Artillery (DIVARTY)

Sergeant Major of the Army’s (SMA) “This Is My Squad” Live Panel

Joint Base Lewis McChord

The best leaders take care of the entire Army team, which consists of Soldiers, Army civilians, and their families. Good leaders balance the needs of the mission and the welfare of their members by knowing their squad, and regularly assessing their mental, physical, and emotional well-being and providing appropriate relief when needed.<sup>7</sup> A leader cannot assess and detect changes in their subordinates unless they know them. Looking a team member in the eye and talking with them, and not just about work-related issues. Meeting the families and understanding the challenges each Soldier and Army civilian face is an important part of building the mutual trust every Army member should strive to achieve and maintain.

**Case Study 2: Balancing Family Needs with the Mission**

The Blue Spaders had just returned from a 14-day exercise in Hohenfels, Germany. After performing recovery operations on Friday and Saturday, and having Sunday and Monday off, the battalion was back at it on Tuesday with Day 3 recovery operations. Sergeant First Class (SFC) Cajina was watching his platoon in the motor pool lay out all their equipment for the afternoon inspections. He noticed SSG Brown, the 2nd Squad Leader constantly checking his cell phone and looking upset about something.

Cajina knew that SSG Brown was normally upbeat and constantly engaged with his squad in whatever they were doing. SFC Cajina pulled SSG Brown to the side for some privacy and asked if everything was all right.

Brown replied, “SFC Cajina, you know my daughter Olivia. She’s having her first piano recital now at school; my wife has been blowing my phone up asking if there is any way I can make it. Olivia is nervous and was really wanting me to be there. I told her we have an inspection and I cannot.”

SFC Cajina then asked SSG Brown if one of his team leaders could handle the inspection without him. “Of course he can, he has done this a few times” Brown replied.

SFC Cajina explained to SSG Brown “Listen, most of the time the Army, mission will come first. Other times you need to take care of family first. When the Army has to come first, you are going to know it. Right now, you have a little girl who needs her daddy. Go be there for her.”

SSG Brown left the motor pool with a huge smile on his face as he texted his wife to tell her to save him a seat.

**Question 1.** What are your thoughts on SFC Cajina’s decision?

**Question 2.** Is this an example of taking care of your members?

**Question 3.** How do you think SSG Brown’s family felt about that decision?

**Question 4.** What do you think the other members of the platoon thought of the decision?

Caring for members also includes professional development. Assessing their professional and functional education needs, and aligning those with organizational needs. Selecting team members with potential to attend school benefits not only the Soldier, but also the unit and the Army as a whole. Balance the needs of the Soldier and Army with the needs of the unit and leader. Many leaders struggle with this when determining whether to send a Soldier to their professional military education training or when conducting a combat training center rotation.

Rewards and punishment are also a part of taking care of Soldiers. Reward the desired behavior, the behavior that demonstrates the Army values. The reward should be meaningful, and in front of the team. It does not have to be a military award. It could be something as simple as a three-day pass, or early release from a duty day.

Conversely, punish those whose behavior contradicts the Army values. Punishment can range from counseling, to withholding promotions, to non-judicial punishment.

To be effective, rewards and punishments should be fair, and consider the whole person when administering. It is important to enforce standards.

Members will know that their leader cares for them when they take ownership of what their squad does or fails to do. The leader must own it! Leaders must know their team members, know their families, know where they are from, what they like to do for hobbies, etc. A leader will find it difficult to see indications of issues early on if they do not know about their Soldiers or team.

### Case Study 3: Knowing Your Soldiers

SSG Christiansen knew his squad. He knew what they liked to do on the weekends during their off time. Every Friday he did what he liked to call “oak tree” counseling with each of his Soldiers. He would talk to each of them, ask how they were doing, and ask them what their plans were for the weekend. He noticed one Friday that one of his Soldiers looked a little off, a little different from normal. When he asked this Soldier what his plans for the weekend were, the Soldier replied,

“I’m going to stay in my room and play video games. I probably won’t go out for the next few months.” SSG Christiansen’s antennae were up.

“What’s going on? You feeling sick or depressed? Is something going on that you want to talk about?” SSG Christiansen asked.

The Soldier opened up and explained that he had been the victim of a financial scam, and lost more than \$20,000.

After identifying the issue and with assistance from others in the chain of command, SSG Christiansen was able to formulate a plan to help this Soldier resolve this issue and get back to financial stability

**Question 1.** Do you know your squad members well enough to notice when they are a “little off”?

### Endnotes

1. CAPL, *Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook*, July 2020.
2. U.S. Army, *The Army People Strategy*, October 2019.
3. CAPL, *Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook*, July 2020.
4. Ibid.
5. U.S. Army, *The Army People Strategy*, October 2019.
6. Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22, *Army Leadership and the Profession*, 31 July 2019.
7. CAPL, *Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook*, July 2020.



**SECTION II**  
**INDIVIDUALS**



## CHAPTER 5

# Individual Characteristics

Each team member (and we are all members of a team), has responsibilities they must meet in order to be a valued team member. This chapter will discuss individual responsibilities, as well as why individual characteristics affect behaviors in organizations.

### INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Team members have responsibilities they must meet to be successful. Each of these responsibilities are interrelated. That is, a team member cannot just successfully demonstrate one of these responsibilities and fail at the others. A team member must be successful at all of them to be an effective member. Those responsibilities include:<sup>1</sup>

- Building relationships,
- Demonstrating flexibility and adaptability,
- Cooperating with other team members,
- Having a willingness to help others, and
- Respecting others.

### Building Relationships

Developing a solid working relationship with other team members is arguably the most important responsibility for each team member. Key to this is building a personal rapport with each of the other team members, sharing experiences and hardships, and spending time together. When team members have good working relationships, trust, cohesiveness, and improved performance are the result.

### Demonstrating Flexibility and Adaptability

Teams that remain flexible and can adapt to fluid situations are more successful. Members who consider different points of view and compromise when needed strengthen teams.

### Cooperating with Other Team Members

Without cooperation, having a solid relationship with other members and remaining flexible will not lead to a high performing team. The team must be able to work together to accomplish any mission. They can only be successful at doing so if they cooperate with one another, despite any differences about style or perspective.



## Have a Willingness to Help Others

Team members should demonstrate support for one another as they accomplish their missions. They should have a sense of team loyalty, encourage the team as a whole, and help individual team members who have trouble. They do this by words and actions, teaching, coaching, and mentoring as needed to accomplish the task.

## Respecting Others

All team members must treat others with dignity and respect, especially members of their own team. When team members cannot meet this basic responsibility, there will be conflict and the team will not perform to a high standard.

## INDIVIDUAL VALUES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Every Soldier or Army civilian professional enters the Army possessing a set of individual values, shaped by their lifetime of experience. The leader must then instill the new member with the Army values, while leveraging the diversity that their individual values and characteristics bring to the organization.

When organizational theorists talk about individual characteristics, what they are referring to is the individual's personality.<sup>2</sup> Personality is the relatively stable set of psychological attributes that distinguish one person from another.

Leaders should understand basic personality attributes, how they can affect a team member's behavior, and how they will fit in the team. They should also understand the team member's perceptions and attitudes toward the organization.

## The Big Five Framework

The Big Five model is the most widely accepted personality theory held today. It claims that an individual's personality can be described in the following five core factors:<sup>3</sup>

- **Agreeableness.** Ability to get along with others.
- **Conscientiousness.** Extent to which a person can be counted on to get the job done.
- **Neuroticism.** How well a person can handle stress and pressure.
- **Extraversion.** Reflects a person's comfort level with relationships.
- **Openness.** How rigid a person's beliefs and their range of interests.

These five factors are not measured by a yes or no but rather on a continuum where a person can be anywhere on the scale (see Figure 5-1).

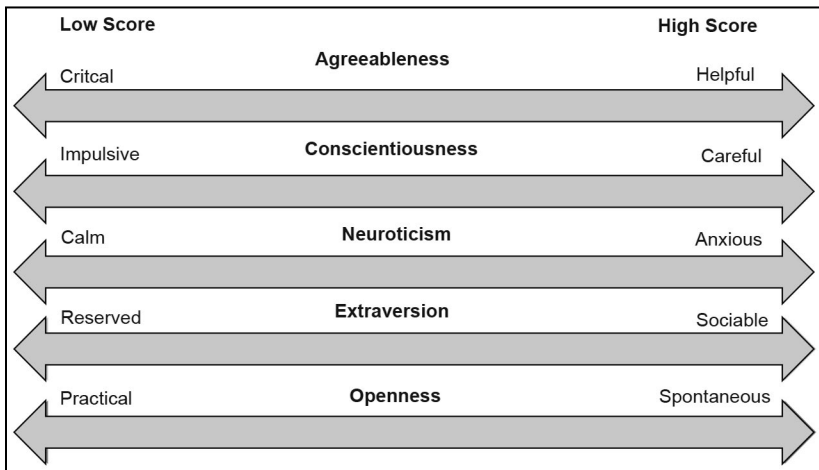


Figure 5-1. The Big 5 Continuum<sup>4</sup>

**Agreeableness.** This trait refers to how people treat relationships with others. People who have a high level of agreeableness are normally trusting, well liked, helpful, and cooperative. Others view them as trustworthy.

**Conscientiousness.** Those who have a high degree of this trait are more organized, disciplined, detail-oriented, and careful. They control their impulses, which allows them to complete tasks and achieve goals.

**Neuroticism.** People who are less neurotic can be expected to handle stress and pressure better than those who score high on this trait.<sup>5</sup>

**Extraversion.** Extroverts are energized by social interaction, while introverts find too much social interaction tiring. Extroverts tend to be more assertive and outgoing while introverts are more reserved and prefer listening to others rather than talking.<sup>6</sup>

**Openness.** Openness refers to the person's willingness to try new things as well as engage in imaginative and intellectual activities. It includes the ability to "think outside of the box." Those who are more closed like routine and dislike change, unless the change is back to a more traditional method.<sup>7</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 6-22.6, *Army Team Building*, 30 October 2015.
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3. Ackerman, Courtney, “Big Five Personality Traits: The OCEAN Model Explained,” Positive Psychology.com, 29 January 2021, <https://positivepsychology.com/big-five-personality-theory>.
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## CHAPTER 6

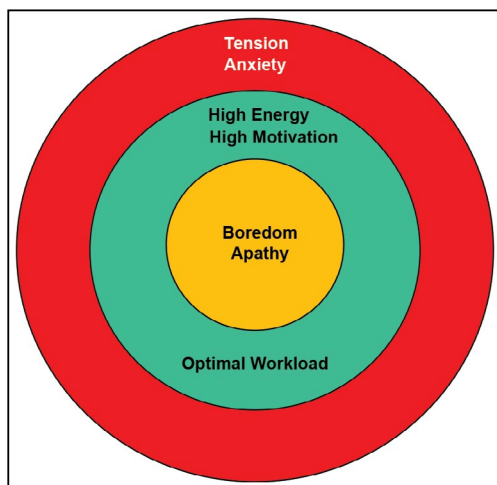
# Stressors and Behavior

Stress in the workplace is inevitable. Given the mission of the U.S. Army, stress is going to occur. Leaders must understand that stress, in and of itself and in moderation, is not a bad thing. Studies show that people perform better and are more motivated when there is a moderate amount of stress in the workplace. This chapter will examine stress, the types of stressors, and dysfunctional behaviors that can occur when there is too much stress.

### STRESS

Stress is a major part of leadership conditions. Major sources of stress include the ever-changing geopolitical situation, combat stress, operational stress and related fears, the rapid pace of change, and the increasing complexity of technology. A leader's character and professional competence are important factors in mitigating stress for the organization and achieving mission accomplishment, despite environmental pressures and changes. When dealing with these factors, adaptability is essential to success.

Like conflict, some stress can be productive and increase motivation, job performance, and mission accomplishment. Studies show that people perform best when there is some stress in the workplace. If stress is too high, people will reach burnout. If stress is too low, they will become apathetic. A leader must know how to manage stress, both when it is too stressful and not stressful enough. Figure 6-1 shows different levels of stress and how some stress in the organization optimizes performance.



**Figure 6-1. Organizational Stress<sup>1</sup>**

**Organizational Stress.** A number of things can cause stress at the workplace. Four types of organizational stress a person may experience are:

- **Task Demands.** Stress caused by a specific job or duty a Soldier or civilian performs.
- **Physical.** This could be the physical location of the member, or the physical activity the member performs.
- **Role.** Stress from the expected behaviors related to the position within the organization (commander, chaplain, other leadership position, etc.).
- **Interpersonal.** Stress from group pressures, leadership, personality conflicts, etc. This stress is usually not productive.

**Life Stress.** Stress caused by factors outside of the organization can be referred to as life stress. Everyone experiences it. Home and family life, finances, births, deaths, marriage, and divorce can cause either good or bad stress. Leaders must know their team members and understand what events outside of the workplace are the sources of potential stress.

## **EFFECTS OF STRESS**

The effects of stress on the individual can be significant. According to the Mayo Clinic, stress can affect your mind, mood, and body. Table 6-1 shows some of the common effects of stress.

**Table 6-1. Effects of Stress on the Mind, Mood, and Body<sup>2</sup>**

<b>Body</b>	<b>Mood</b>	<b>Behavior</b>
Headache	Anxiety	Overeating/ undereating
Muscle tension or pain	Restlessness	Angry outbursts
Chest pain	Lack of motivation or focus	Drug or alcohol misuse
Fatigue	Feeling overwhelmed	Tobacco use
Change in sex drive	Irritability or anger	Withdrawal from social activities
Upset stomach	Depression	Exercising less
Sleep problems		

**REACTIONS TO STRESS**

When stress occurs, the individual will react in some form or fashion. Either that reaction will be to adapt to the stress, which enhances individual and unit performance, or they will react in a maladaptive or dysfunctional way.<sup>3</sup>

**Adaptive Stress Reactions**

Stressors, when combined with effective leadership and strong peer relationships, often lead to adaptive stress reactions. Examples of adaptive stress reactions are provided in Table 6-2.

**Table 6-2. Adaptive Stress Reactions<sup>4</sup>**

Horizontal Bonding	The strong personal trust, loyalty, and cohesiveness, which develops among peers in a small military unit.
Vertical Bonding	Personal trust, loyalty, and cohesiveness that develops between leaders and their subordinates.

<p>Esprit de Corps</p>	<p>Defined as feeling of identification and membership in the larger, enduring unit with its history and intent. This may include the unit (such as battalion, brigade, or other Army organization), the branch (such as infantry, artillery, or military police), and beyond the branch to the U.S. Army level.</p>
<p>Unit Cohesion</p>	<p>The binding force that keeps Soldiers together and performing the mission in spite of danger and adversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cohesion is a result of Soldiers knowing and trusting their peers and leaders and understanding their dependency on one another.</li> <li>● It is achieved through personal bonding and a strong sense of responsibility toward the unit and its members.</li> <li>● The ultimate adaptive stress reactions are acts of extreme courage and almost unbelievable strength. They may even involve deliberate heroism resulting in the ultimate self-sacrifice.</li> </ul>

### Maladaptive Stress Reactions

Stress can also lead to a number of dysfunctional behaviors, especially if the unit is poorly trained or undisciplined. A dysfunctional behavior is anything that detracts from team performance. This behavior can cause team members to not perform to standard. Referencing Table 6-2, a member who lacks motivation or focus may not be able to complete a task they can normally perform when not feeling stressed. Alternatively, they might be causing conflict within the team because of angry outbursts. If the stressors are not mitigated, this can lead to even more issues, like alcohol or drug use.

Another dysfunctional behavior is known as self-handicapping.<sup>5</sup> Self-handicapping is when an individual creates obstacles for themselves that make success less likely. One example would be a Soldier who fails to prepare for a promotion board. The Soldier could then explain the failure to themselves and preserve their own sense of self-competence.

Other dysfunctional behaviors include a Soldier going absent without leave, sexual harassment, bullying, personality conflicts, lack of respect for others, or just not being cooperative with the rest of the team.

## Endnotes

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## CHAPTER 7

**Compliance versus Commitment**

Commitment relies on acceptance, the degree to which team members are committed to the team's vision and mission, and the degree to which they believe in what the team is trying to accomplish. Team members who have acceptance take ownership of the team's direction and put out the extra effort to ensure the team's success.

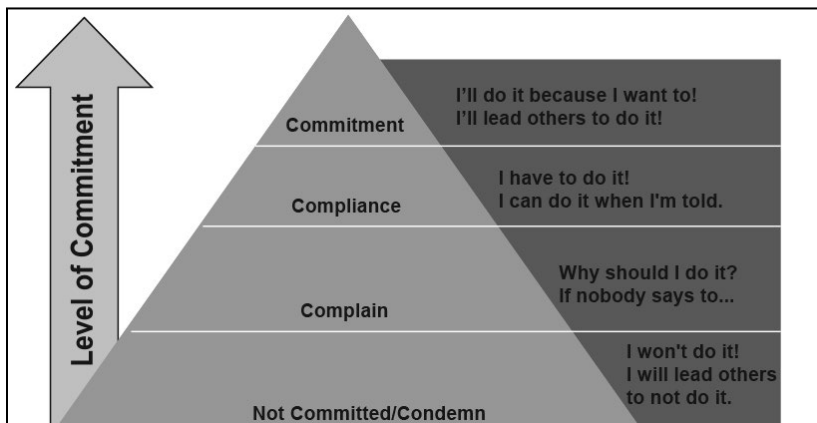
Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 6-22.6  
*Army Team Building*  
30 October 2015

Commitment is the synergy in groups when individuals put aside personal needs for the benefit of the team. In other words, it is the higher purpose. Commitment is an individual's psychological attachment to the organization. A team that has commitment creates clarity around directives and priorities which aligns the entire team around common objectives.<sup>1</sup>

Compliance is when people are legally required to perform a task or duty, or ordered to by leadership. Individuals will perform the task in most circumstances, until the risks of performing the task outweigh the benefits.

Below the compliant group is the complainers. They will only do what the leaders make them do. Leaders need to determine if the issue with this group is that the member has not bought in to the organizational or Army values. Do they not believe what they are doing is productive and will lead to mission accomplishment?

The most destructive group is those who will not commit, and attempt to get others to not commit with them. If not dealt with immediately, people in this group will destroy a team. Leaders must remove those who attempt to undermine the team. See Figure 7-1 for the hierarchy of commitment.



**Figure 7-1. Hierarchy of Commitment<sup>2</sup>**

We all want to be a part of teams and squads who are committed instead of compliant. A team with members who all are serving something bigger and greater than they are. Those are the teams where trust and cohesion are highest

### **BUILDING COMMITMENT**

Building commitment is a process involving everyone on the team. Soldiers and Army civilian professionals foster an enduring commitment to the Army, its mission, its people, and the continued practice of the fundamental aspects of the Army culture. Army families are an extension of that team. Commitment to the purpose and values of an organization provides a clear sense of direction.<sup>3</sup>

Commitment relies on acceptance, the degree to which team members are committed to the team's vision and mission, and the degree to which they believe in what the team is trying to accomplish. Team members who have acceptance take ownership of the team's direction and put forth extra effort to ensure the team's success.<sup>4</sup>

Teams use these techniques to build and maintain commitment:

- Encourage team identification,
- Reward cooperation,
- Provide the team with a clear vision, and
- Communicate team commitment.

## **Encourage Team Identification**

Leaders encourage a sense of self-identification by describing the team vision and defining the values the team should have. These values should align with the Army values, but may include other values such as sharing information, being physically fit, etc. When a leader articulates the vision and values, it encourages members to view the goal positively and determine how they can best help the team achieve the goal.

## **Reward Cooperation**

Leaders should reinforce positive team behaviors, like commitment, through rewards. Rewarding good teamwork will encourage others to behave the same. As long as the rewards are fair and timely it will foster a sense of belonging and gain even more commitment.

## **Provide the Team with a Clear Vision**

A team member cannot commit to something if they do not understand exactly to what that are making a commitment. They need to clearly understand the goal and know that it is meaningful. A helpful technique is explaining the “big picture” to subordinates so they can fully understand the purpose.

## **Communicate Team Commitments**

Communication is the key. Team members must understand their commitment and the purpose of the mission. They must also understand that the entire team is fully committed to the same team vision and mission.

## **OTHER KEY WORK RELATED ATTITUDES<sup>5</sup>**

There are a number of other attitudes that can influence how committed team members are to the team and organization. The two factors we will cover in this handbook are job satisfaction and employee engagement.

### **Job Satisfaction**

As the name implies, job satisfaction is a person’s attitude and feelings about their job. The work itself, along with attitude, values, and personality, have the greatest influence on job satisfaction.

What position the person holds within the team, known as the person-job fit, can greatly affect their commitment.<sup>6</sup> If their ability fits the demands of the job, and their desire and motivation fit the attributes and rewards of the job, they will likely be more satisfied and more committed.

One retired platoon sergeant described the case of a new Soldier assigned to his infantry platoon who was a botanist, that is, he studied plants. The Soldier volunteered for the infantry because he was convinced that an infantryman would see many different plants and trees. Needless to say, the person-job fit was not good for this Soldier.

Person-vocation fit is the fit between a person and the vocation. Being a Soldier, Airman, Marine, or Seaman is a vocation. Their realities of the vocation may not match their expectations. In cases like the one above, the person-vocation fit might not be optimal.

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is the connection that a person has for their job, organization, leader, and coworker. If the person is highly engaged, they will put forth extra effort to their work. As a leader, it is important to stay engaged with subordinates to provide them valuable and meaningful feedback on their performance through counseling. Personal conversations lead to other connections that will lead to greater commitment from team members.

### **Endnotes**

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**APPENDIX I**

**Climate Assessment**

(Source: the Center for the Army Profession and Leadership [CAPL], *Building and Maintaining a Positive Climate Handbook*, July 2020)

Use the information below to assess your organization’s climate. Multiple indicators of needing improvement in one of the ten factors indicate there may be an issue that needs addressing within your organization.

**LEADERSHIP**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members take prudent risks and exercise disciplined initiative.</p> <p>Members are engaged in tasks.</p> <p>Members volunteer for challenging assignments.</p> <p>Individual members and the overall organization perform at high levels.</p> <p>Leaders are available to meet with members.</p> <p>Leaders serve as a role model for members.</p> <p>Members have the resources to complete tasks.</p>	<p>Counterproductive leadership behaviors are observed.</p> <p>Accidents occur at a high rate.</p> <p>Members lack enthusiasm when completing tasks.</p> <p>Members struggle to manage their workloads.</p> <p>Members perceive that leaders are not being authentic.</p>

**COMMUNICATION**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members raise issues with their leaders.</p> <p>Leaders seek advice and help from members.</p> <p>Individual members and the overall organization perform at high levels.</p> <p>Leaders inform members about issues affecting their organization.</p>	<p>Conflict between members is common.</p> <p>Members often do not meet expectations.</p> <p>Members perceive that leaders do not act on information they receive.</p> <p>Leaders rarely provide feedback.</p>

**RESPECT/VALUES**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Diversity and inclusiveness are supported and celebrated.</p> <p>Prohibited practices are prevented and stopped.</p> <p>Leaders treat members respectfully.</p> <p>Members perceive that leaders model Army values.</p>	<p>Hazing, bullying, and discrimination are observed.</p> <p>Diversity and cultural differences are misunderstood or feared.</p> <p>Members experience sexual harassment and/or sexual assault.</p>

**TEAM COHESION**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members exhibit a willingness to work together toward shared goals.</p> <p>Members overcome challenges together and adapt to changing conditions.</p> <p>Members regularly share best practices, lessons learned, and guidance with one another.</p> <p>Individual members and the overall organization perform at high levels.</p> <p>Members socialize and have good relationships.</p>	<p>Conflict between members is common.</p> <p>Members feel excluded and that they do not belong.</p> <p>Members do not help each other when other members struggle.</p> <p>Members lack trust in one another.</p>

**GROWTH/DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members regularly participate in formal and informal development activities.</p> <p>Members have individual development plans (IDPs) and their IDP goals align to mission achievement.</p> <p>Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities.</p> <p>Leaders delegate tasks appropriately.</p> <p>Leaders give members challenging or stretch assignments as opportunities to grow.</p> <p>Members take disciplined initiative.</p>	<p>Members do not receive adequate opportunities to learn desired skills.</p> <p>Members do not seek out career development opportunities.</p> <p>Members do not have clear career paths, developmental goals, or awareness of the competencies they need to develop.</p> <p>Organization and member performance do not meet expectations.</p> <p>Members avoid taking risks.</p> <p>Leaders do not discuss career development goals with subordinates.</p> <p>Leaders do not offer coaching and mentoring opportunities.</p>



**INNOVATION/ADAPTABILITY**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members share new ideas.</p> <p>Members use creative problem solving.</p> <p>Members take prudent risks and disciplined initiative.</p> <p>Members view challenges as opportunities.</p> <p>Leaders encourage open communication.</p> <p>Leaders recognize members for sharing creative ideas.</p> <p>Members question traditional assumptions.</p>	<p>Members struggle to adapt to changing environments.</p> <p>Members do not take risks.</p> <p>Members focus solely on getting work done and do not allocate time to develop ideas for improvement.</p>

**EMPOWERMENT**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members know what is expected of them and have the authority to carry out their work.</p> <p>Mistakes are treated as learning opportunities.</p> <p>Members are allowed to take prudent risks and exercise disciplined initiative to accomplish tasks.</p> <p>Leaders delegate tasks appropriately.</p> <p>Members are allowed to solve their own problems.</p> <p>Leaders provide members constructive feedback.</p>	<p>Leaders micromanage their members.</p> <p>Assignments are unclear and ambiguous.</p> <p>Decisions are second-guessed and sometimes reversed.</p> <p>Members lack trust in one another and leadership.</p>

**RECOGNITION**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members are motivated to improve their performance.</p> <p>Members understand how their performance affects the overall success of the organization.</p> <p>Members feel that they are a valued part of the team.</p> <p>Leaders recognize their members' achievements.</p> <p>Healthy competition is observable.</p>	<p>Members struggle to understand performance expectations.</p> <p>Members fail to take the initiative.</p> <p>Members lack job satisfaction.</p>

**ORDER/DISCIPLINE**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Members understand the expectations to which they are held.</p> <p>Standards are enforced consistently.</p> <p>Organization events have high attendance.</p> <p>Members pay attention to details.</p> <p>Workspaces are clean and organized.</p>	<p>Disciplinary issues are common.</p> <p>Leaders do not maintain order.</p> <p>Members are often late or absent from scheduled events.</p>

**FAIRNESS**

<b>Strength Indicators</b>	<b>Areas of Improvement Indicators</b>
<p>Guidelines, requirements, and policies are applied equally to all team members.</p> <p>Members have equal opportunities to expand their skillsets.</p> <p>Assignments are based on members' skills and abilities.</p> <p>Evaluations are objective and accurate.</p>	<p>Leaders receive a high number of complaints.</p> <p>A perception of favoritism exists.</p> <p>Members lack job satisfaction.</p>

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## GLOSSARY

### ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

2ID	2nd Infantry Division
ADP	Army doctrine publication
ALMS	Army Learning Management System
AR	Army regulation
ATP	Army techniques publication
CAB	combat aviation brigade
CALL	Center for Army Lessons Learned
CAPL	Center for the Army Profession and Leadership
DA	Department of the Army
DIVARTY	division artillery
eSAT	Electronic Sponsorship Application Training
FM	field manual
FOB	forward operating base
IDP	individual development plan
IED	improvised explosive device
LTG	lieutenant general
MOS	military occupational specialty
MSR	main supply route
NCO	noncommissioned officer
PAM	pamphlet
SFC	sergeant first class
SMA	Sergeant Major of the Army
SOP	standard operating procedure
SPC	specialist
SSG	staff sergeant
TC	training circular
WHO	who, what, and how



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