

# The Next Evolution of Army Training

Training must be done right in order to develop competent Soldiers and ready formations. The Army G-4 shares five lessons he has learned about training sustainers.

■ By Lt. Gen. Aundre F. Piggee



“Training is how we fulfill our missions; it is the way we develop the competent Soldiers, leaders, and ready formations that support the Army’s number one priority: readiness.”

Duke University’s Mike Krzyzewski, one of the winningest coaches in college basketball history, got his start 50 years ago playing and then coaching at the United States Military Academy, where he began forming his training philosophy.

“I try to see each new season as a new challenge,” this Soldier for Life says, “because I have a new team to work with, new opponents to encounter, and often new ideas and theories to try.”

That philosophy could just as easily describe the approach the Army takes in training. Each year, new commanders have new Soldiers to work with in their units.

The Army encounters new threats not only in the Middle East but in Europe, Asia, and every region of the world. Most of all, the Army must be bold and innovative in exploring new ideas and developing future systems.

In this issue of *Army Sustainment*, one of my colleagues on the Army staff, Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, the deputy chief of staff, G-3/5/7, provides insights into many such innovative systems, including one known as Objective Training (Objective T). This new system will provide a clearer and a more objective measure of a unit’s readiness to deploy.

The Army has always been good at calculating equipment readiness, but measuring training readiness has been more subjective. With Objective T, the evaluation will have detailed criteria with precise metrics. Training will become more measured and results-oriented. Commanders will not be able to just say,

“Things look great.”

A long time ago, I learned you can only implement bold new programs if first you do the basics right. With this in mind, I will share five lessons that I have found most helpful in training sustainers in companies and battalions.

## Manage Time Wisely

First, understand that the most important aspect of training management is time. You can always ask for more people. You can ask for more funding. Those resources will fluctuate. But you cannot gain more time.

And it will take far longer to plan, prepare, and execute operations than you think it will. So manage your time wisely.

Make full use of all available time to ensure your Soldiers are competently trained and your formations are ready to execute their wartime missions. As the old adage goes, “In the Army, training is everything and everything we do is training.”

Make sure to include time to re-train at all levels, immediately after individual task training, and after returning from a combat training center rotation. Also include time for leader development.

## Hold Better Training Meetings

Second, we all need to hold better training meetings. After a decade and a half of low-intensity, counterinsurgency fighting, we have developed a knowledge and experience gap in training management.

This issue’s hip-pocket guide is a handy reference on how to conduct better training meetings. Read it,



share it, and use it.

The Army G-3 is updating core training doctrine with newly published versions of Field Manual (FM) 7-0, Train to Win in a Complex World, and Army Doctrine Publication and Army Doctrine Reference Publication 7-0, Training Units and Developing Leaders.

Review the changes, particularly Annex C of FM 7-0, which details the proper conduct of company training meetings (and replaces Training Circular 25-30, A Leader's Guide to Company Training Meetings).

Weekly training meetings are the basis of all of our planning for training. They are opportunities for commanders to re-emphasize published guidance, for staffs to lay out training plans for future events, and for unit leaders to review what went right and where the unit can improve.

Key to effective meetings is having the right attendees present. All primary unit leaders should participate; if they are not there, it sends a message that the meeting is not important. Conduct your meetings at routine times and integrate them into your battle rhythm.

Always have a detailed agenda and reinforce the "T-week" concept. Well-run meetings are conducted in phases. They include a review of the previous week's training, detailed mission planning of short-range events (T-5 through T-1), and an examination of future planned training (weeks T-7 and T-6 and milestones for T-8).

The new FM 7-0 directs that command training guidance at the battalion and brigade levels will now be issued as an operation order developed through the use of the military decisionmaking process. The company level can expect published troop leading procedures captured in training schedules and balanced with the T-week concept.

Following these doctrinal techniques will ensure your unit training management plan conforms to

Army requirements and maximizes available time.

Take advantage of training opportunities in all their various forms. Consider using all live, virtual, and constructive training resources.

Ensure your noncommissioned officers (NCOs) have plans for hip-pocket training. Conduct mission-

learning are important, but they are not as important as the Soldiers themselves, who need to be part of a tight-knit team, make each other better, and build effective sustainment fighting forces.

We should all be cross-training and understanding what our Soldiers are doing, left and right.

Realize that it is better to train to standard on a limited number of tasks and meet those standards than to do a great deal but not meet the standard. As the saying goes, "crawl, walk, and then run."

focused sergeant's time training.

Keep in mind that white space on the training calendar is not bad, but make it a deliberate decision when incorporating it into your training schedules.

### Train to Standard

Third, train to standard. Units that train to standard do better at combat training centers and in combat. Never lower your standards or you will start down a path you do not want to take.

Realize that it is better to train to standard on a limited number of tasks and meet those standards than to do a great deal but not meet the standard. As the saying goes, "crawl, walk, and then run."

### Develop Subordinate Leaders

Fourth, develop your company commanders and NCOs to effectively manage training. Officers lead collective training while NCOs handle individual training. The challenge for senior leaders is to meld it all into multiechelon, synchronized execution so the various planned efforts and events support the attainment of full mission-essential task list proficiency.

All the tasks that your units are

### "Be" Army Ready

Fifth, I believe in the "be" characteristics. These are qualities that make every trainer great.

We must be competent, committed, proud, demanding, calm, caring, confident, complete, fair, loyal, punctual, proactive, flexible, a team player, and safe. Individually, being each of these qualities is important; but incorporating them all together will make us Army ready for whatever mission comes our way.

Training is how we fulfill our missions; it is the way we develop the competent Soldiers, leaders, and ready formations that support the Army's number one priority: readiness. Training results in the muscle memory needed in combat to defeat our nation's foes. Train on!

Lt. Gen. Aundre F. Piggee is the Army deputy chief of staff, G-4. He oversees policies and procedures used by all Army logisticians throughout the world. Prior to joining the Army staff he served as the director of logistics and engineering for the U.S. Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

