

MEMORANDUM FOR

SUBJECT: Summary of Issues, Discussions, and Recommendations from CPT Solarium III, Group 7, Character Development

1. References.

a. MEMO (ATZL-CM), SUBJ: Captain Solarium III, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 11-14 July 2016

b. Army White Paper, Developing the Character of Trusted Army Professionals, *Forging the Way Ahead*, 19 Apr 2016.*

c. MEMO (ATLZ-MCV-L), SUBJ: Fiscal Year 16 Army Leader Development Program Priority List (APL), dated 9 Sep 2015.

d. HQDA EXORD 086-16 HUMAN DIMENSION, DTG: 221755Z Dec 15.

e. Mission Analysis, Character Development Project, as of: 10 Jun 2016.*

* These documents are available at: <http://cape.army.mil/character-development-project/>

2. Purpose. To summarize issues, discussions, and recommendations provided by Army Captains (n = 11) participating as members of CPT Solarium III, Group 7 (Character Development), during approximately 8 hours of facilitated dialogue.

3. Background.

a. The CPT Solarium is a Chief of Staff of the Army activity, organized and directed by the Center for Army Leadership, Mission Command Center of Excellence, Combined Arms Center, Training and Doctrine Command. The format is designed in the tradition of the analysis process initiated by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953. His intent was to marshal national security and foreign policy teams to develop recommendations addressing issues in the arenas of defense and international affairs. (www.eisenhowerinstitute.org)

b. This year, the central theme of CPT Solarium III was "Army Readiness." Participating Captains (n = 84) were assigned to one of seven groups designated to address supporting themes: personnel, equipment (availability and serviceability), unit training and proficiency, commanders' prerogatives, personal deployability, cultural awareness, and character development (ref 1.a.). In preparation for facilitated

discussions in Group 7 (Character Development), the Captains were asked to read and reflect on the Army White Paper, “Developing the Character of Trusted Army Professionals, *Forging the Way Ahead*” (ref 1.b.) and ADRP 1, *The Army Profession* (June 2015), with emphasis on Chapter 2, *The Army Ethic*.

c. Focused discussions were designed to gain insights informing the Army Character Development Project, operating under the authority of the HQDA EXORD, 086-16, Human Dimension and the Army Profession and Leader Development Forum. The Character Development Project addresses Army Capability Needs Analysis GAP #501028: “The Army lacks the capability to identify attributes of character and to assess the success of efforts to develop character so that Army professionals consistently demonstrate their commitment and resilience to live by and uphold the Army Ethic” (ref 1.c., d., e).

d. The Army Character Development Project supports the Army Operating Concept (TP-525-3-1) and the Human Dimension and Army Leader Development Strategies. Successful completion of this project contributes to Army Warfighting Challenges 4, 8, 9, 10, and 19 and directly enhances personal and unit readiness. The final product of this project is envisioned to be a CG TRADOC-signed White Paper that articulates a comprehensive and adaptable concept for developing the character of Army professionals within the process of leader development.

4. Discussion.

a. The plenary session keynote address was delivered by Dr. Leonard Wong, Phd., serving on the faculty at the Army War College. His remarks and the discussions they generated were based on published research, in collaboration with Dr. Stephen J. Guerras, Phd., entitled: “Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession. The subject was a meaningful and appropriate foundation for subsequent deliberations within Group 7 (<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1250.pdf>).

b. After initial introductions, administrative instructions, and a brief overview of the characteristics of the Army Profession, Army Ethic, and Character Development the group was divided into three teams addressing the first of four topics. At the end of the first day, participants were asked to complete a “homework” assignment and be prepared to discuss their perspectives the following day. Accordingly, the first topic on day two addressed these homework questions, culminating in summary expression of the issues, discussions, and recommendations formulated over both days’ work. These are summarized as follows:

(1) Topic I: Give examples of when you (or members of your unit/organization) experienced ethical challenges? How were the issues resolved?

- Issue: Command Influence/Pressure

- Discussion: A Battalion Commander attempted to interfere with an official investigation. The Investigator in conducting interviews gave a Captain, serving under the Bn Cdr, specific instructions not to divulge information obtained in the interview. However, the Bn Cdr asked the Captain to discuss the communication with the Investigator. This created a conflict between “duty” to abide by regulations regarding an investigation and perceived “loyalty” to one’s leader/rater.

- Recommendation: Ensure the Commander understands the situation – “The Investigator gave specific instructions not to discuss the case.” Ask the Commander: “What would you do? What do you want me to do?” For the Army Profession, this example illustrates the tension between “loyalty” (commitment) to another person or group; in contrast to the moral principles of the Army Ethic to obey legal orders and to honorably serve the nation with integrity. The Army Value of “Loyalty” must be recognized as “true faith and allegiance” to the Constitution.

- Issue: Supply Accountability

- Discussion: Records were inaccurate and equipment was unaccounted for in a “change of command” inventory. An investigation was initiated. A subordinate suggested a manipulation of the paperwork to cover the loss. The out-going Company Commander was faced with a decision. Accepting the offer to modify the records could avoid the consequences of having to pay for the lost items. However, it would also “teach” the subordinate that “lying” is an acceptable option. This would create a tension between “duty” and “expedience” -- leading to “ethical fading, ethical numbing” (i.e., the rationalization that because the records were inaccurate in the first place, this error should not result in adverse consequences that are unfair under the circumstances).

- Recommendation: Teach the subordinate that “lying” is not an acceptable option (the “ends do not justify the means”). Therefore, do not falsify official records. Tell the truth, be honest with the Investigator and let the investigation run its course. If the consequence is financially or otherwise punitive, accept the decision, learn from the experience, and always do what is right.

- Issue: Mission Essential Personnel and Deployability Standards

- Discussion: A member of a Reserve Medical Unit possessed key skills and competencies supporting an imminent deployment to a combat zone. However, the individual did not meet all the deployability requirements (e.g., APFT standards, height and weight). An option is to falsely report that the individual is within the standards, allowing him to deploy, and addressing the problem in-theater. The personnel system will not provide a suitable replacement prior to deployment and this individual’s skills are mission essential. This situation presents a tension between obedience to regulations (“duty”) and mission accomplishment (also a “duty”). The option to manipulate can be justified with the rationale that the deployment standard is “a dumb requirement.” The individual’s height and weight problem can be addressed “down range” and in the

meantime, the mission benefits from the individual's competencies. However, this also sends a message that "lying" is acceptable, compromising trust.

- Recommendation: Ensure the personnel system is designed to support the consequences of individuals failing to meet deployability standards. If members of the unit cannot deploy, then the system must be able to provide a suitable replacement. Otherwise, the Commander is faced with the option to "lie" or "compromise the mission." In addition, ensure that reasonable "exceptions to policy" are available (e.g., receive authorization to deploy with the individual(s) under such circumstances, avoiding the need to lie or potentially compromise the mission).

(2) Topics II & III:

IIa. Is "living by and upholding the Army Ethic" a meaningful ideal or an unrealistic expectation? Why?

IIb. Does the Army Ethic apply in all circumstances, "On and Off Duty"? Why?

IIIa. What can you do to strengthen character development and our shared identity as trusted Army professionals?

IIIb. Can you integrate character development within organizational training? How?

- Issue: Leader (Professional) Development and Ethical Decision-Making

- Discussion: The use of "case studies" is an effective means of introducing ethical reasoning within the decision-making process. People relate to "stories" and can then apply lessons-learned in the case-study to future ethical challenges. This approach has applicability at all levels of PME/CES and in unit professional development sessions. Address all issues in the process (e.g., "why" are ethical considerations important; "what" does it mean for an action to be ethical; "how" do we ensure our actions are ethical?).

- Recommendation: Ensure "Professional Development" sessions are "on the Training Schedule" – tailor towards specific issues based on assessment within the unit and demonstrate the courage to protect scheduled PD sessions from change. Include ethical reasoning in all decisions and in all scheduled training and operational activity (not just "PD"). Check on training to ensure this is happening. Synchronize the message; ensure all are using common language. Integrate character development, so that it is not regarded as an "add-on" or separate requirement.

- Issue: Can we develop shared identity as trusted Army professionals just by "talking about it"?

- Discussion: Lecturing or "talking" about the Army Ethic will not generate sufficient interest to spark thoughtful dialogue – especially in more senior NCOs who believe they understand Army Values. They will "tune-out." It is better to demonstrate

what is “right” through decisions and actions and explain the rationale (be transparent). Set the standards and express the expectations, then model the behavior. Allowing “voting” on what is ethical is a “two-edged sword” – it can develop cohesion as the team agrees on what is right and decides to do it – it can also result in a collective decision to do what is wrong and co-opts everyone in agreeing to do the “wrong thing.”

- Recommendation: Recognize those who do what is right. Similarly, identify those actions that are wrong. Challenge everyone to reason ethically (deductively from the moral principles of the Army Ethic and inductively based on specific instances of good and bad conduct). Treat Soldiers as adults. The ideal of living by and upholding the Army Ethic is reasonable and achievable, on and off duty. Remember that no one is perfect, learn from mistakes. Teach leaders how to develop character within the conduct of training and operations.

(3) Theme IV: Leaders are responsible for establishing a professional command climate consistent with the Army Ethic (e.g., mutual trust, cohesive teamwork, respect for the dignity and worth of all people, etc.).

IVa. What affect does the ethical climate have on character development?

IVb. What is your assessment of the ethical climate in your unit or organization?

IVc. What is the basis or evidence for your opinion?

IVd. How can the Army Profession and Army Leaders do a better job at assessing ethical climate?

- IVa. Discussion: An ethical climate is essential to support ethical decisions and actions. Without an ethical climate, trust is compromised. Within an ethical climate, trust is reinforced and team work (cohesion) is strengthened. In the absence of an ethical climate, there is evidence of double standards, morale is adversely affected, team members become cynical.

- IVa. Recommendation: Ensure leaders know what an “ethical climate” looks like and teach them what they must do to establish and assess the ethical climate within their units and organizations.

- IVb. Discussion: Current assessment of the Captain’s in Group 7 regarding the ethical climate in their units was mixed. There were 3 who felt it was negative, about the same number felt it was positive, and the remainder were ambivalent. Their perspective was informed by “Command Climate Surveys;” talking with subordinates, peers, and leaders; and consideration of incidents of mis-conduct-IG investigations. They all agreed it is important to know what to look for. There is no “one” way to assess all the factors affecting ethical climate.

- IVb. Recommendation: Routinely employ all indicators. Be “present” and listen to Soldiers – be open to feedback and criticism. Look for trends. Use “sensing sessions” (formal and informal).

- IVc. Discussion: Soldiers are the best source of information regarding the ethical climate and they want to contribute to establishing a positive, ethical command climate. However, they must know their input will be protected (anonymous) and considered and acted upon, as appropriate; and they can be candid without adverse consequences.

- IVc. Recommendation: Continue to offer the Command Climate Survey, without causing “Survey Fatigue”. Ensure Soldiers see results (otherwise there will be a loss of confidence in the leader’s commitment). Seek counsel on how to reinforce strengths and remediate weaknesses. Various Army resources (e.g., ARI, CAL, CAPE, ARD) offer support. Amend the Command Climate Survey to ensure it includes ethical issues and considerations. Make sure the essential elements of analysis include consideration of the character, competence, and commitment of the members of the unit or organization.

- IVd. Discussion: The approach to assessment of ethical climate must have Total Army applicability (e.g., National Guard, Army Reserve, Army Civilian Corps). It must be easy to use and credible.

- IVd. Recommendation: Assessment of ethical climate must be mandatory and results must be addressed. Leaders must know the characteristics of an ethical climate and must be taught how to achieve it.

(4) Reflection:

When you joined the Army, what were your expectations regarding Army culture, ethical climate, and exemplary leadership? Were these expectations realized? Why or why not? What has “strengthened, challenged, or adversely affected” your character since entering the Army? What can be done, at your level, to strengthen character development and our shared identity as trusted Army professionals?

Based on your answers to these questions: If you were the CSA, what would you do to strengthen character development and our shared identity as trusted Army professionals?

- Issue: Elimination of people who demonstrate a lack of character.
- Discussion: Presently, there are several means to identify and separate individuals who demonstrate a lack of character. These include performance reports influencing promotion, bars to re-enlistment, quality management programs, separation boards, various regulatory options, and UCMJ. The application and use of these resources depends on the “character, competence, and commitment” of the commander to uphold the standards and take appropriate action. There must be trust in the process. In addition, individuals must be able to “rebut” information that may be

incorrect and lead to an unjust consequence. The recently adopted senior rater profile is potentially helpful as a means of identifying marginal officers and non-commissioned officers as well as those who are outstanding.

- Recommendation: Ensure all officers understand the processes and procedures in AR 635-200, Chapter 14. Standardize the application of these instructions so that it is consistent across the Army. Retain the senior rater profile.

- Issue: Character Development as a priority in all education, training, and operations.

- Discussion: In order to reduce mandatory training hours on issues related to prevention of misconduct and risk related behavior -- reflecting a lack of character -- a knowledge test could be offered. Those who demonstrate satisfactory knowledge would be exempted from the hours of training. This frees them to engage in experiential, character enhancing, mission related training activities.

- Recommendation: After initial mandatory training is provided for enlisted Soldiers and Officers, all non-mission-essential mandatory training should be tested annually. Those who pass are exempted from taking the training hours for that topic. The subjects should be reinforced and updated at each level of PME and institutional training, as appropriate.

- Issue: Clear understanding of what is expected of all Soldiers regarding ethical conduct (character).

- Discussion: The use of a straight-forward "honor code" could help establish a clearly understood ethical "floor." Such a code could serve as a constant reminder of responsibility and support consequences for violations. This approach could be tested or piloted within the Army to determine if it will help establish an ethical command climate.

- Recommendation: Develop and test an Army (Honor) Code, based on the moral principles of the Army Ethic. The code should be adopted throughout the Army, beginning with recruiting. The code will establish the ethical "floor" and must be implemented with appropriate sanctions for violations. Continue to use and refine command climate surveys to assess the ethical climate within the unit and organization.

5. Summary:

- a. The Captains participating in focused discussions regarding Character Development affirmed the importance of explicit, integrated, coordinated, and progressive steps within education, training, and experience to continuously develop character (as demonstrated in decisions and actions consistent with the moral principles of the Army Ethic).

b. They unanamously agreed that this goal is achievable only within an ethical climate where the expectation is that all will live by and uphold the Army Ethic in conduct of the mission, performance of duty, and all aspects of life.

c. The Army concept for Character Development must be adaptable to all components of the Army and the Army Civilian Corps.

6. Forging the Way-Ahead. All Army leaders should consider and apply these results to strengthen ethical reasoning within decision-making and strengthen the ethical climate within their units and organizations. CAPE will incorporate the issues, dicussions, and recommendations developed in CPT Solarium III to inform the Author's DRAFT of the Army Concept for Character Development, for consideration within the Army-wide Character Development Project Team, then with the Total Army.

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