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Leadership in Small Military Units

by

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Prefatory Note

This paper was prepared as background for participants in the sessions on Military Leadership at the Fourth International Congress on Applied Military Psychology in The Hague, The Netherlands, September 1967. Dr. Jacobs presented an earlier version of the material at Canadian Forces Leadership Training Conference at Canadian Forces Headquarters in March 1965.

The research reported in the paper was performed by the Human Resources Research Office under Work Unit OFFTRAIN, Studies in Leadership and Leadership Training. The research was begun at HumRRO Division No. 3 (Recruit Training), at Monterey, Calif., and completed at HumRRO Division No. 4 (Infantry), Fort Benning, Ga.

LEADERSHIP IN SMALL MILITARY UNITS

T.O. Jacobs

In this paper I will discuss the process by which Carl Lange and I developed a leadership training program for junior officers. In broad overview, there were two significant steps in the overall process. First, there was a systematic analysis of leadership at the platoon leader level, in which the focus of attention was placed on the actual behavior of the platoon leader as he interacted with his men. Second, there was a developmental stage in which we built a leadership program of instruction that currently is used in the U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Program. As I deal with these two stages, I will first give you some of the historical background that led to the initial research; then I will describe that work and the findings, and finally the program of leadership instruction itself.

After dealing with the course, I will discuss some of the ideas we now have about leadership training, and about leadership itself. As you probably are well aware, it is not unknown for a leadership training program to fail to produce lasting results. Fleishman, Harris, and Burt (1), for example, have a well documented failure which, fortunately, probably contributes more to our knowledge of theory and techniques of leadership training than would a whole series of poorly documented successes. In the final part of this paper, I will make some general statements about leadership training that their study suggests, and that, I think, are confirmed by the work we did.

Historically, the leadership research prior to and during World War II was marked by a search for traits or characteristics that could be used to distinguish the leader from the non-leader. This research may well have been guided by theories of personality current at that time, which were themselves heavily trait-oriented. At any rate, a very large number of studies appeared during that time in which the object was to find and measure enduring personality characteristics that would distinguish leaders from non-leaders. And, in retrospect, it is perhaps not unreasonable that this emphasis existed. In addition to the stimulus of trait theories of personality, psychologists also had the stimulus of the highly successful tests that had been constructed both during and after World War I, measuring cognitive, or intellectual variables. What could have been more reasonable than the expectation that it would be possible to measure non-cognitive, or non-intellectual variables which would be as useful in predicting leadership as the cognitive tests were in predicting subsequent skill performance?

However, three rather comprehensive reviews of trait-oriented leadership studies were published during the period 1947 to 1952

(Gibb, 2; Stogdill, 3; Sanford, 4). They reached the conclusion that the trait approach to the study of leadership had proved essentially unfruitful, and that it was necessary to adopt a new approach. Both Stogdill (3) and Sanford (4) summarized the new orientation by emphasizing the need to study not only the leader and the characteristics he brings with him into a leadership situation, but also his followers, with their needs and characteristics, and the situation in which the leaders and followers interact. Most of the studies of leadership published in the past 15 years or so have utilized this situational approach, studying not only the leader, but also the followers and the situation.

An additional emphasis, which came from the situational approach, was the recognized need for study of the leader's behavior, as opposed to his personality characteristics, particularly as he interacted with his followers in leadership situations. This expressed need for an interactional approach to the study of leadership was the basis for the initial work of Carl Lange and associates in the study of platoon leadership (5).

In order to put this work into better perspective, let me first describe the rationale that led to selection of his methodology. Perhaps a good first question is, "What is leadership?"

Bass (6) notes that Bentz, in an unpublished study, listed 130 definitions of leadership obtained in a sampling of the literature prior to 1949. Among more recent examples, Stogdill (3) said that leadership ". . . appears . . . to be a working relationship among members of a group, in which the leader acquires status through active participation and demonstration of his capacity for carrying cooperative tasks through to completion." Gibb (2) noted that ". . . leadership is not an attribute of the personality but a quality of his role within a particular and specified social system." I could give many more examples. The essence of the great majority of them is that of interaction between the leader and his followers, but more than simple interaction—rather, interaction with a purpose.

Involved here is a distinction that I will want to make more explicitly a bit later—that between appointive leadership and emergent leadership. Emergent leaders do in fact emerge from groups of former peers, by the consensus of the group. The appointive leader does not. He is selected for leadership, or as Gibb (7) puts it, "headship" by someone higher than himself within the organization. There are certain highly important differences between emergent leadership behavior and appointive leadership behavior that I will discuss later. For now, I simply want to emphasize that Dr. Lange was deliberately choosing methodology suitable for appointed leader groups.

A basic assumption was that performance of groups with appointed leaders is influenced by the behavior of the leader as he interacts with his followers in relation to goals imposed on the group by higher sources of authority. He further assumed that performance on assigned tasks is a function of two factors, ability and motivation. Ability

includes such things as adequate job knowledge through prior training, knowledge of the goal, awareness of standards of excellence expected, and so on. Motivation was assumed to be composed of two different kinds of elements. One was intrinsic motivation, that is, pleasure that comes from accomplishment of the work itself. The second was extrinsic motivation, that comes from rewards and/or punishments that are contingent on performance.

The importance of the leader's behavior in goal-directed situations comes from his ability to modify both the capability of the followers to accomplish assigned goals, and their extrinsic motivation to do so. The leader, theoretically, defines task goals, and paths to these goals. He also, by previous actions of dispensing rewards and punishments, has modified the expectations of his followers as to what will happen if they do or do not perform according to his expectations. This can also be done by communication acts at the initiation of a task, when the task is in process, or at its completion.

Thus, an extremely important subject of study is the actual behavior of the leader as he interacts with his subordinates, in goal-oriented situations. This initial study was designed to study this kind of interactive behavior.

The source of data was enlisted men in 42 platoons from an Infantry division stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington. A research team interviewed an average of seven members in each of these platoons, asking them to describe actual leader behavior they had observed themselves in several different kinds of situations. Examples of these situations are:

- (1) When the Platoon Leader was telling the entire platoon, or a part of the platoon, or even a single individual, about a new task to do.
- (2) When he was checking work that was being done poorly, though it had not been finished.
- (3) When he was checking work that was being done very well, though it had not been finished.
- (4) When he was reviewing tasks that had been finished, and had been finished well, on the one hand, or poorly on the other hand.

In each of these, as well as in others, the question was: What was the job that was being done, or had been finished, and what did the lieutenant do and say, and to whom did he say it?

In addition to the material collected in these interviews, enlisted men within the platoons studied were asked to rate their platoon leader as an all-around leader of a platoon, how good the platoon leader is in seeing that the platoon's work gets done, how well the platoon leader knows his job, how they would feel about going into combat with that particular platoon leader, and so on. Company commanders were also asked to rate their platoon leaders on another criterion instrument.

In deriving behavior variables from the interview material, specific leader behaviors related to situational contexts were categorized and translated into quantitative scores which were defined by frequency of

occurrence in most cases. This is a fairly standard kind of content analysis procedure. The resulting category scores were correlated with the ratings of the platoon leaders by subordinates, and superiors. A basic assumption is that this process would identify those variables influential in producing positive and negative platoon member evaluations of his leader. I would add, however, that this is indeed an assumption. Within a correlational design, such as this one was, it is impossible to prove the truth of the assumption.

The detailed findings of this study (5) are too extensive to review at this time. However, the major areas of leader behavior that emerged are:

- (1) Defining
- (2) Pre-Task Motivation
- (3) Post-Task
- (4) Handling Disruptive Influences
- (5) Getting Information
- (6) NCO Use and Support

Subsequently, results of work that Dr. Lange and I did jointly will be shown, including the correlations of selected variables within these major areas with the principal criterion, which was ratings by subordinates.

The long-range objective of this research was, of course, to develop a leadership training program for inexperienced platoon leaders. At the time we began the next step in the overall series of experiments (8), we were quite interested in performing an experimental evaluation of the training that we were going to produce. Further, it seemed most desirable to evaluate the success of the training in terms of the behavior of leaders who had taken the course. That is, we wanted to see whether the leadership training would make the *behavior* of platoon leaders more effective. For this, we, of course, needed a behavioral criterion. For various reasons, among which was our desire to see a cross-validation of the initial findings, we turned to the development of the criterion measure before we started work on training. We felt that it had to be done anyway, and that by doing the criterion work first, we would be able to provide ourselves with cross-validation of the initial findings in a different situation, as a part of the criterion development process.

Because we wanted to avoid the expense of the interview and content analysis procedures used in the initial research, we turned to the development of a questionnaire that we hoped would yield essentially the same results. This questionnaire was based on the variables identified in the first study. Its items consisted of statements describing behaviors that in the earlier study would have been classified into the categories of leader behavior they were intended to measure—for example, "He told you he wanted you to do a good job," "He pulled a man's pass for fouling up an important job." In most cases, we actually went back to the behavior protocols that had been used in the content analysis and used verbatim statements to the extent that we could. For each item, the respondent was asked to

indicate how frequently he had observed the particular behavior during the previous month, using the following response scale: never, once, two or three times, four or five times, several times, many times.

There were 243 different items on this questionnaire, grouped to obtain measures of 53 different leader behavior variables. Forty-four of these were classified into the six areas stated above. The remaining variables fell into a miscellaneous behavior area.

The questionnaire was administered to 257 members of 46 different platoons in an Infantry division. The subjects were the ranking members of their platoons, and had served under their respective platoon leaders at least one month. These restrictions were designed to maximize the likelihood of interaction between platoon leaders and platoon members in the period prior to testing. Criterion rating booklets, containing essentially the same criterion questions as were used in the initial study, were distributed individually to respondents as they returned a completed questionnaire. Using Ebel's (9) formula, intra-class correlation coefficient reliabilities were computed for the criteria. When variation across items was used, the reliability was .96; when variation across platoon members was used, the criterion was .74.

In the analysis of the questionnaire, all items categorized as measures of a given variable were summed for all members of each platoon. The mean of this sum then supposedly represented the average frequency with which a platoon leader was reported to have done the specific behaviors that defined that variable. Similar means were obtained for the responses of platoon members on the criterion measure. These two sets of means were then correlated, across platoons.

The first of the areas that had emerged from the initial study was called Defining (Table 1). Defining behaviors are closely related, at least in concept, to behaviors that would be categorized as Initiating Structure, one of the factors Halpin (10) extracted from Hemphill and Coons' (11) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire. Examples of behaviors so scored are: specifying tasks that are to be done and specifying standards of performance. Figure 1 shows the behavior variables that fell within this area, together with their reliabilities and correlations with subordinate ratings.

These reliabilities are the same types as were obtained for subordinates' ratings. For items, it is a measure of internal consistency; for respondents, it is a measure of agreement between members of a platoon.

I think it is quite significant that not one of the correlations between the variables within this area and subordinates' ratings was negative. If these variables are in fact closely related to the initiating structure variable, it appears that the more structure a platoon leader initiates, the higher he is rated by his subordinates. Further, the highest correlations, which fall at the bottom of the figure, deal with clarity of defining and with critiques of both good and poor performance, all of which undoubtedly serve to structure the

Table 1
Area 1: Defining Behaviors^a

Variable	Reliabilities		Correlation with Subordinates' Ratings	
	Items	Respondents	Study II	Study I
Specifying the roles of new men in the platoon and stating platoon policies	.83	.60	.32*	.37*
Stressing observance of military courtesy, good appearance	.84	.61	.28	.30
Specifying how and when work will be evaluated	.82	.42	.12	.04
Making expected standards of performance clear	.62	.06	.29	
Assigning work at a detailed level	.64	.48	.38**	-.02
Defining clearly	.72	.99	.68***	.43**
Critiquing good and poor performance	.89	.51	.54***	.30
Explaining reasons for actions	.75	.51	.50***	

** indicates $p < .05$; * indicates $p < .01$; *** indicates $p < .001$.

Task Assignment and Evaluation

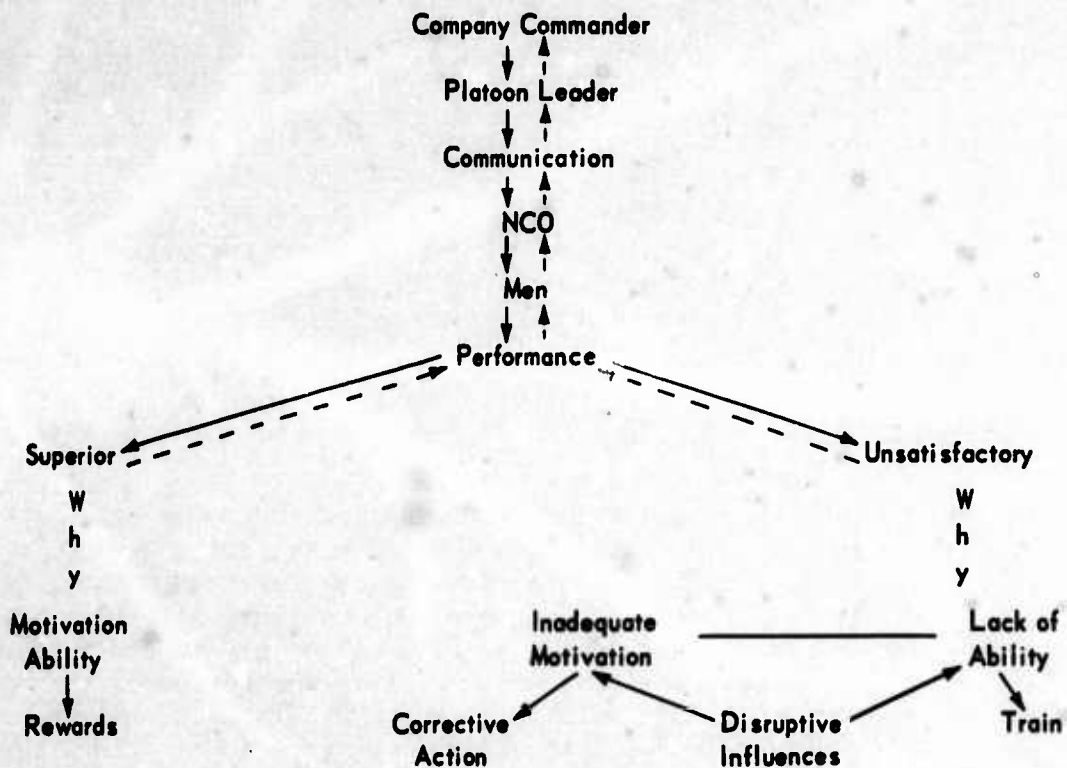


Figure 1

subordinates' expectations of exactly what the platoon leader expects of them. We feel that this has very important implications for leadership training.

Table 2 shows the correlations with the variables in Area 2, Pre-Task Motivation; this area consisted of behaviors designed to elicit good subsequent performance. Although the internal consistencies of the item groups were satisfactory, and agreement between respondents was not too poor, correlations between subordinates' ratings and the variables were uniformly low, and with one exception, nonsignificant. However, the fact that the negative pre-task motivating variables did not yield significant negative correlations with leader ratings has interesting implications for the relative importance of various sources of leader power within this type of group. Since the leader apparently is not rejected for such behaviors, it is possible that they are viewed by his subordinates as being within his prerogative as a "legitimate" power figure within the group.

Table 2
Area 2: Pre-Task Motivation^a

Variable	Reliabilities		Correlation with Subordinates' Ratings	
	Items	Respondents	Study II	Study I
Promising tangible rewards for good performance	.81	.62	.18	.38*
Appealing for good work performance without naming tangible rewards	.88	.49	.36*	.47**
Threatening specific tangible punishment for poor future performance	.88	.69	-.19	-.23
Warning against bad performance without specifying tangible consequences		.56	-.12	.10

^a * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$.

The variables in Area 3, Post-Task Motivation, are shown in Table 3. Rather than discussing them individually, I will point out a few of the more significant findings. First, the leader who punished privately was better accepted than the leader who punished publicly. Second, the leader who did not realistically base rewards and punishments on work performance scored lower on the criterion than the leader who did. The leader who reacted to individual failure in a manner indicating derogation of the individual also scored lower. Finally, the leader who promised and gave rewards for completed effective performance scored high.

However, within the limitations of those variables just described, actual frequency with which punishments were dispensed was essentially unrelated to the criterion. It looks very much as though context variables largely determine how a platoon member will react to rewards and punishments.

Table 3
Area 3: Post-Task Motivation

Variable	Reliabilities		Correlation with Subordinates' Ratings	
	Items	Respondents	Study II	Study I
Giving tangible rewards	.82	.63	.45**	.19
Promising tangible rewards for completed work	.90	.59	.50***	
Praising for good work	.95	.61	.35*	.30
Giving light punishment for poor performance	.90	.68	-.27	.09
Giving heavy punishment for poor performance	.65	.45	.06	
Promising light punishment for poor performance		.42	-.18	
Promising heavy punishment for poor performance	.47	.13	-.09	
Warning of light punishment for repetition of poor performance	.74	.58	-.13	
Warning of heavy punishment for repetition of poor performance	.82	.61	-.03	
Total light punishment for poor performance (D+F+H)	.90	.71	-.24	
Total heavy punishment for poor performance (E+G+I)	.84	.54	-.02	
Blaming men for poor performance	.91	.71	-.41**	-.16
Blaming men in emotional or aggressive manner for poor performance	.84	.77	-.46**	-.35*
Punishing for failure attributed to lack of motivation to do well	.38	.41	.42**	-.02
Requiring correction of work done incorrectly	.70	.47	-.09	.33*
Giving constructive extra duty		.47	-.08	
Giving inappropriate or excessive punishment	.73	.57	-.45**	-.50***
Failing to base rewarding-punishing action on work performance	.69	.30	-.54***	-.37
Punishing privately vs. punishing publicly	.36	.46	.48***	

* indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$; *** indicates $p < .001$.

Incidentally, before proceeding, I would like to make an observation that probably is quite significant for leadership training methodology. Consider the first finding that I mentioned, that is, that the leader who punished privately was better accepted than the leader who punished publicly. This in itself is not anything really startling. I suspect that almost all experienced leaders well know that publicly given punishment has detrimental results. From a leadership training point of view, perhaps the more significant observation is that this kind of behavior *was* found to occur among platoon leaders, in both studies. The question is, why does this kind of behavior occur? From the leadership training point of view, this leads to a more general question—why people behave in a way that may in fact be maladaptive, even though outside the situation they may respond verbally in a manner that would indicate that they know that what they did was incorrect and also that they know what should be done. I will return to this subject after discussing the leadership training course developed from these findings.

The variables in the fourth area, Handling Disruptive Influences, are shown in Table 4. To some extent, these are related conceptually to the Showing Consideration factor of Hemphill and Coons' (12) Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire. As you can see, the correlations of these variables with the criterion are uniformly high and significant.

Table 4

Area 4: Handling Disruptive Influences^a

Variable	Reliabilities		Correlation with Subordinates' Ratings	
	Items	Respondents	Study II	Study I
Maintaining welfare of men	.92	.60	.59***	.40**
Taking action on problems and complaints	.88	.50	.77***	.48**
Protecting men from unfair treatment or excessive details	.71	.50	.69***	.30
Helping men in difficult work situation	.39	.55	.72***	NS

** indicates $p < .05$; *** indicates $p < .01$; **** indicates $p < .001$.

The behavior variables in the fifth area, Getting Information, are shown in Table 5. These variables describe behaviors that consist of both direct and indirect means of obtaining information relative to the performance of individual members of the group. All these correlations were positive and significant.

The variables in the final area, NCO Use and Support, are shown in Table 6. Unfortunately, the internal consistencies of these item clusters were not satisfactory; nor was the agreement among respondents satisfactory. While I have no satisfactory answer to the question of why the item internal consistencies were not sufficiently high, the reason for the low agreement between respondents probably resulted from heterogeneity of rank. However, regardless of cause, the lack

Table 5
Area 5: Getting Information^a

Variable	Reliabilities		Correlation with Subordinates' Ratings	
	Items	Respondents	Study II	Study I
Getting background information from new men	.83	.50	.48**	
Checking reason for failure to perform assigned work	.73	.34	.30*	.43**
Checking performance of men on assigned tasks	.88	.48	.51***	.22
Asking NCOs for information or advice	.08	.01	.36*	.35*
Asking men who are not NCOs for information or advice	.73	.26	.37*	.28
Discussing tasks with NCOs before deciding how they should be done		.47	.52***	.00

^a * indicates $p < .05$; ** indicates $p < .01$; *** indicates $p < .001$.

Table 6
Area 6: NCO Use and Support^a

Variable	Reliabilities		Correlation with Subordinates' Ratings	
	Items	Respondents	Study II	Study I
NCO support	.32	.22	.46**	.27
Use of chain of command	.53	.29	.13	.04
Delegate tasks or responsibilities personally rather than through the chain of command	-.35	.28	.16	.12

^a ** indicates $p < .01$.

of agreement limits what we can say about the correlations beyond noting the significance of the relationship between the first variable and the criterion.

Since a primary reason for this study was to validate the questionnaire as a criterion, we compared the relationships obtained through use of the questionnaire to those obtained earlier using interview and content analysis procedures. The pattern of relationships was quite similar between the two studies. This would seem to indicate that the questionnaire not only proved capable

of measuring the original variables, but also confirmed the results of the first study. This is a quite significant finding, because we collected the data in the second study from a training division, a context very much different from that of the first study. This gave us some degree of confidence that the leader behaviors identified as important were, in fact, general to a variety of different kinds of situations within the military setting. As we shall see later, it probably is reasonable to expect that these behaviors are important in an even wider variety of situations, probably most or all of those characterized by the existence of appointed leaders.

Because of the many faults to which questionnaires are subject, I, of course, would not want to say that the relationships between the questionnaire variables and subordinates' ratings are anything like absolute measures of the importance of the measured leader behaviors. However, we did regard these relationships as indicators of their *relative* importance in influencing leader acceptance by subordinates. By and large, with some exceptions, in developing leadership training we concentrated on variables that had emerged as significant in both studies.

These findings give a very clear picture of the role the platoon leader plays in his unit. First of all, his role is functional, and consists in large part of the general areas of leader behavior of (1) setting platoon goals and standards, (2) motivating performance, (3) NCO use and support, and (4) handling disruptive influences. These are the functional areas around which we built our leadership instruction.

Viewed from an organizational viewpoint, the leader fits into the American Army picture as shown in Figure 1. The solid lines indicate the process by which tasks are assigned and evaluated; the dashed lines indicate information flow. Typically, the company commander identifies certain missions to the platoon leader. Once mission assignments are made, the platoon leader serves to communicate knowledge of the mission to his unit. By serving as a communications link between the larger organization and his own subordinates, he indeed fills an indispensable role. If, by clear and effective communication, he can set platoon goals and standards in such a manner that they are clearly understood and implemented according to expected standards of excellence, he makes possible satisfaction of organizational expectations by his unit. The platoon noncommissioned officers also share this responsibility, in translating the platoon leader's guidance into specific working assignments for their own men. Once platoon goals and standards have been set—and this actually is a continuous process—work begins, and performance of some kind results.

To illustrate this functional role further, we have pinpointed two kinds of performance for illustration. Once tasks are completed, it is quite important for the platoon leader to check, evaluate, and react to the performance of his men. These actions are the key to motivating future performance.

When evaluations are made, the leader's action depends on the nature of the evaluation. If performance is superior, recognition is in order. You will notice the word "Rewards" in Figure 1. This does not necessarily mean a tangible reward, such as a three-day pass. In some of your leadership materials, you have discussed Maslow's (13) theory of motivation, in which only the lowest levels can be considered related to tangible rewards. While individuals differ substantially from one another, most individuals value intangible rewards, such as simple praise, quite highly, because these rewards relate to self-esteem. Thus, praise is a significant motivator. The critical requirement is that the leader evaluate completed tasks, recognize the quality of the work that was done, and inform the men of his evaluation.

If performance, on the other hand, is not satisfactory, the process takes a different route. You will notice the word "Why" in Figure 1 under unsatisfactory performance. This is a key question. Recalling the earlier rationale for studying interactive leadership processes, we made the point that quality of performance is jointly determined by ability to do the job, and motivation. Failures can result from either of these. That is, the individual can fail because he does not have the ability to succeed, as when the assignment is beyond him, or if he has not gotten an adequate understanding of what he was supposed to do. He can also fail because he simply does not try hard enough. The platoon leader's actions would be quite different depending on which is the case. When failures result from a lack of ability, they clearly are not the responsibility of the man who failed. Indeed, if he did his best, the leader could reasonably have asked no more. Consequently, the effective leader would react to ability failure by helping the man to be more capable, as by giving more training or clearer explanations. However, he does not give punishment for ability failures.

Quite a different situation exists, however, when the man simply does not try hard enough. In this case, the leader's action must be guided by his responsibility to ensure that each man in the unit pulls his fair share of the unit's total load. When failures result from lack of motivation, some corrective action must always be taken. Otherwise, the lack of motivation will be contagious within the unit.

One final point will complete discussion of Figure 1. At the bottom right are the words, "Disruptive Influences." Disruptive influences are distractions—such as personal problems—that, as the arrows indicate, will either contribute to a lack of ability or to inadequate motivation, or to both, and thereby lead to unsatisfactory performance. It is the leader's responsibility to prevent these disruptive influences from decreasing the performance capability of his unit.

On the basis of this frame of reference, we developed a program of leadership instruction that requires 16 hours for administration (14). The organization of the first part of the course, which develops for the student the functional concept of leadership just discussed, is shown in Figure 2. That is, in this part of the course, it is hoped

Sixteen-Hour Leadership Instruction Course

Part I: Development

<u>Hour</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Title</u>
1	Conference	Introduction Organizational Context of Leadership
2	Practical Exercises	Setting Platoon Goals and Standards
3	Conference Practical Exercises	Setting Platoon Goals and Standards Motivating Performance
4	Practical Exercises	Motivating Performance
5	Conference Practical Exercises	Motivating Performance NCO Use and Support
6	Practical Exercises	NCO Use and Support
7	Conference	NCO Use and Support
8	Practical Exercises	Handling Disruptive Influences
9	Conference	Handling Disruptive Influences

Part II: Practical Application

10	Practical Exercises	General
11	Practical Exercises	General
12	Practical Exercises	General
13	Practical Exercises	General
14	Practical Exercises	General Student Discussion Topics
15	Practical Exercises	Student Discussion Topics
16		Final Examination

Figure 2

that he will get an idea of how he will fit into a platoon, and of what his role will be. He should learn a good deal about the essentials of appointive leadership. Even in this part of the course, we inserted a good deal of work with practical exercises, tape-recorded skits selected from incidents which actually occurred in TOE units. It is highly likely that students of the course would encounter the same or similar situations in subsequent assignments; practice in these skits would prove to be of great practical value to them. Some of the skits portrayed incidents of effective leader action; others were instances of ineffective leader action.

Students were required to discuss the problem situations presented in the skits, and to arrive not only at a decision as to what the leader should do, but also why. Ideally, solutions would also reflect analysis of the probable events that led the situation to develop as it did.

The second part of the course, as shown in Figure 2, is heavily oriented toward practical exercises. Particularly in the second part of the course, we introduced a second type of practical exercise, discussion topics, related to particularly difficult problems the platoon leader typically must come to grips with at one time or another. As example:

There are occasions when it is extremely difficult to distinguish between a soldier who fails because of a lack of motivation and one who fails because of a lack of ability. In such a situation, how would you go about making a decision? What considerations would be involved?

Another example is drawn from the area of NCO Use and Support. One of the most serious concerns of an inexperienced leader is the kind of working relationship he *can* and *should* develop with his NCOs. Thus, we used the following topic:

Define formality, informality, and familiarity. What are some of the effects of formality and informality? What are some of the considerations involved in being informal with one's subordinates?

This, again, reflects our belief in the importance of the difference between appointive and emergent leadership. A quite important distinction is the extent to which familiarity can be a part of the leader-follower relationship. The emergent leader can exist in a relationship characterized by familiarity. I am not sure that the appointed leader can. However, the appointed leader can operate quite well in a relationship characterized by some degree of informality. Of course, in the instruction, we did not attempt to tell each leader how formal or informal he should be; this was not our concern. However, we did want him to understand *why* he later did whatever he did. That is, whatever degree of informality he should decide best fits himself should be based on understanding of the basic effects of formality and informality.

I will not go a great deal further into description of this leadership program, but I would like to describe some of the thinking that went into it, because I think our approach might have been a little out of the ordinary.

When we were starting to develop the instruction, we had several decisions to make. One dealt with the form of the instruction itself. As you can see, we selected small group discussion methodology for a large part of the total class time. There is ample literature on the effectiveness of small group discussions to justify this kind of decision. I will discuss the rationale shortly. One further bit of evidence was some work that had been done by Carl Lange (15) in an early phase of OFFTRAIN, in which he developed a number of sound movies to stimulate small group discussion in some experimental leadership training that was tried at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. They were films without an ending, which produced for the students a requirement to work out a solution. This had been found to work quite well as a leadership instructional technique.

We decided in the OFFTRAIN course to use tape-recorded skits rather than movies for two reasons. One was that the taped skits were obviously much less expensive to produce. The second was that some work done by Cline and Richards (16) at the University of Colorado on interpersonal perception indicates *indirectly* that the information transmitted by the visual part of sound films may be small.

The remaining question was what to put into the instruction. We felt that at least a part of the course should consist of theoretical material dealing with a study of the platoon leader's functional role within the military organization. This we handled by providing a student text dealing with this subject, and also making a distinction between types of groups, based principally on a distinction as to the source of the group's goals. The leader plays a different role within the group when goals are superimposed on the group than when the group generates its own. Revision planned for the student text will make this distinction easier for the student to grasp; the new material would deal with distinctions between appointed leaders and emergent leaders.

The material for the practical exercises was drawn directly from the interview protocols obtained in the first study. We tried to find frequently appearing situations as the basis for the practical exercises. In the analysis, we had also identified approximately 30 critical types of leader behavior that we wished to treat in these practical exercises, so we also used this as a criterion. We made a chart with the critical variables on one axis, and the practical exercises on the other axis. Each time we dealt with one of the critical variables, we made a check mark on the chart. In this way, we had a graphic running indication as to our coverage of the variables of importance. The objective, on both counts, was to maximize the probability that the content of the practical exercises would generalize to the officer's subsequent troop duty experiences.

There is some reason for believing that a leader may learn from his errors somewhat more rapidly than from his successes; however, errors in actual practice are rather costly. For this reason, we used a good many practical exercises that depicted the platoon leader making errors, in the hope that it would be possible for the student to learn vicariously from the errors of others, and thus be alert to the situations which might otherwise have resulted in his making the same errors. In most of these practical exercises, we also tried to provide the student with a look at a *good* way of handling the same situation.

Although we had intended to subject this course to an experimental validation, to see how much the instruction actually affects real behavior in leadership situations, we had to resort to indirect ways of evaluating the course.

The course was administered three times to the platoon leaders in TOE units, and once to ROTC students before it was recommended for adoption. In each of the tryouts with the TOE platoon leaders, we obtained anonymous evaluations of the course on the last day. Members

of the final group were also contacted four months following administration of the course to obtain repeat evaluations. Because this period had been filled with intensive unit training, it was thought that the men would be in an excellent position to make further judgments as to the value of the course.

Figure 3 shows reactions of students in the first tryout to three selected questions on the evaluation form. The reactions were quite favorable with this group. Figure 4 shows the reactions of the second

Course Evaluation—First Test Run

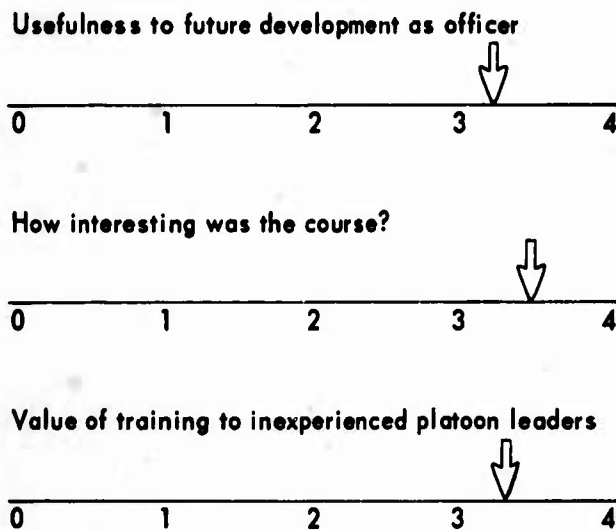


Figure 3

Course Evaluation—Second Test Run

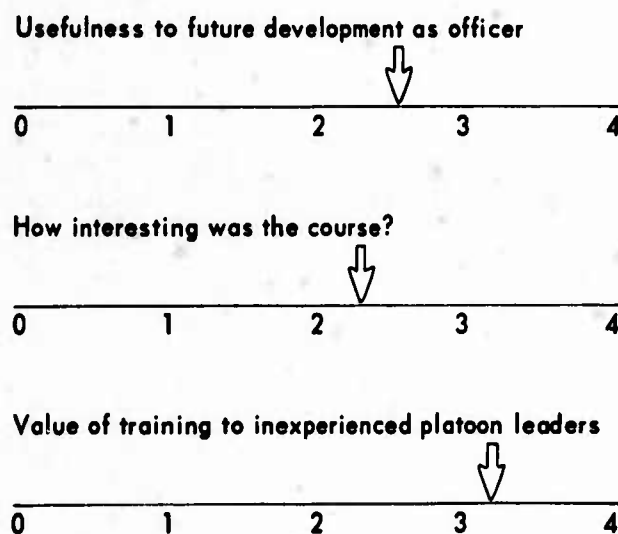


Figure 4

group, whose members were not so favorable. One probable reason was that we were giving one and one-half hour classes, rather than one-hour classes. However, we are certain that this was not the only reason. Figure 5 shows the reactions of the third group. We corrected all the things we thought were wrong with the second administration, and were rewarded by favorable after-course evaluations.

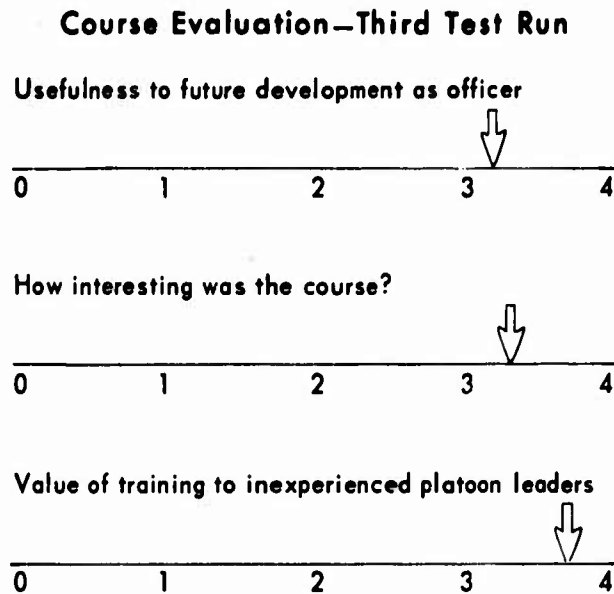


Figure 5

Of course, these end-of-course evaluations are really not worth very much; they merely indicate that the student's ire has not been aroused against the content or the instructor, and probably have very little to do with how much he has benefited from the course. However, the results of the follow-up on the third class seemed to be of more merit. As you may recall, Fleishman, Harris, and Burt (1) had done the same sort of student evaluation of some of their leadership training, except that they were also able to obtain behavior descriptions. They found that foremen who had responded favorably to a human relations training program had in some cases reacted with more anti-human relations orientation than before they received the training. This failure was related to the climate within the environments in which these men worked. In Figure 6 you will see the reactions of the follow-up group in our study to two of the three questions asked at the end of the course. As you can see, their ratings remained quite high. Even more interesting were some of their comments.

Not one comment was negative, and almost all were highly positive. Of course, while this was quite rewarding to us, this is not the most revealing point. The really significant element of these responses dealt with perceived relations between the content of the course and problems the officers had encountered in actual practice:

The skits were extremely helpful in that an ability was gained to remember different situations as they arose and

**Course Evaluation—
Third Test Run Follow-Up Data**

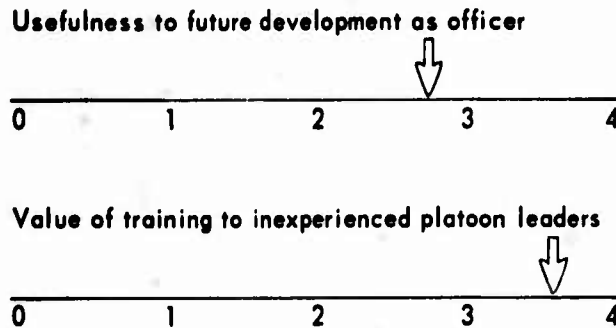


Figure 6

have a general idea of how to cope with them, as to the solution we had back during the summer in class here.

The skits were, for the most part, quite realistic. In fact, many of them were amazingly similar to actual situations which I have encountered. Possibly future development of the program will develop a greater variety and scope of skits.

But perhaps the comment closest to the basic rationale of the course was the following:

Practical experience is the best teacher, and it was certainly gotten during the past many weeks. However, this course provided a foundation to start on without making too many mistakes at the start. Many ideas were gotten from the class and were in some way put to good use all during the training.

This course was recommended for use in the U.S. Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program in winter of 1961, and the recommendation was adopted in the next school year. We have conducted no studies of its success in ROTC, but informal feedback indicates that it is functioning quite well.

DISCUSSION

With description of the OFFTRAIN research and program of instruction as background, I would like now to mention some reflections on leadership training, based in part on our experience in building this course, and also on the experience of others as reflected in the literature.

First of all, when preparing to develop leadership training, I think one must ask the question, "Just exactly what is it that I want this man to be able to do when he finishes what I am going to do to him?" Put another way, "Just what impact is my training treatment going to have on him?"

This requires a good, hard look at leadership and leaders. As I mentioned earlier, the literature until about 1947 reflected quite strongly a trait approach to leadership. Reviews of the literature at that time then mitigated against this kind of approach and resulted in a re-emphasis, with attention being focused on interactional approaches dealing with situation and followers as well.

However, it is reasonable to ask whether this means that the so-called traits no longer are worth considering. With a qualification, my answer is most emphatically "No." However, before it appears that I am advocating a return to the trait approach, let me make the qualification.

In the first place, we need to take a good look at exactly what a trait is. Most psychologists have thought in terms of traits as a relatively enduring characteristic of the individual's personality that determines how he reacts to social and other stimuli, and how others react to him. There is a term for this kind of concept—psychologists use "hypothetical constructs." That is, they are things that do not actually exist in any tangible way, but rather are inferred.

The next question is on what basis they are inferred. The obvious answer is from the individual's behavior. As an example, do you think I have the trait of honesty? I will not embarrass us by asking for an answer to that question, but rather will note that your probable reaction is one of, "I don't know," or, "I guess so," or even, perhaps, "I guess not." The important thing is that you do not know; you have no basis for knowing because you have never seen me *behave* in a situation designed to test my honesty. Thus, leadership characteristics really should be viewed not in terms of traits, because these are guesses, based in many cases on inadequate information. The emphasis should be, instead, on the leader's behavior based on past learning experiences. This is really what is meant by the emphasis in the field on the situational aspects of leadership, and the interactional approach. The characteristics of the leader are obviously important; however, they are important only in relation to the demands the situation places on him.

An analogy may illustrate. One may talk in terms of keys and locks. Some keys may not fit any locks in which they are tried. Most of the time, any given key will be paired with a lock that it can unlock. However, sometimes there is a master key that will fit several different locks. Occasionally, there is the rare and almost magical special key that a lock company can produce that will unlock any lock the company makes. If the leader can be viewed as the group's key to reaching group goals, people within groups can be viewed as keys. Some people would not fit as leaders in any known situation. Others can be leaders in special situations, because they happen to have the particular capabilities demanded in those situations. Still others can be leaders in a wide variety of situations, because they have a wide variety of behavior capabilities, and thus can adapt to a wide variety of situations. Occasionally, one will find an individual whose flexibility and capacity seem without limit.

This analogy seems quite relevant to the present question of how leaders differ from followers, if in fact they do. There is a fair amount of relevant literature. Going back to the Stogdill (3) review, a good number of studies *did* find leaders superior to their followers in many dimensions. However, and very significantly, many of these studies reported that the leaders were not too far different from their groups. This is quite reasonable if one views the particular behaviors needed by the group as behaviors that are rather universally shared, except that some persons are better than others at these behaviors. Thus, in each group, there was a "best" man, who turned out to be the leader. However, there also was a "second best" man, in all probability, who was running the leader a close second.

Some of the work done by Hollander and Webb (17) emphasizes this point. In extensive research done with peer ratings, they became concerned with the question of how friendship influenced peer nominations on leadership. They asked for nominations on three dimensions: leadership, followership, and friendship. The correlation between friendship and leadership was .47, and that between followership and friendship was .55. However, the correlation between leadership and followership was .92. That is, when a member of the groups (naval air cadets) they were studying was told to assume that he had been assigned a difficult mission, and to choose from the group those he would want to have help him, he selected those group members who by and large had been nominated as leaders in the leadership peer rating. The conclusion is that there is an ability dimension involved, and that when a difficult task is imposed, group members look for someone with competence to lead, and leaders look for followers with competence. The result is that good leaders generally are good followers and vice versa. Whether one of the competent group members emerges as leader simply depends on whether there is someone *more* competent in the same group.

Torrance (18) reported a fascinating set of observations on a group of 26 men in survival training who were trapped in a blizzard. Initially, these men had been broken down into groups alphabetically, with leaders assigned on the basis of military rank within the groups. During the entrapment, the structure of the total group changed radically, the artificial subgroups disintegrating, and other subgroups forming so that the more capable men associated and worked with each other, leaving the less capable men to fend for themselves. Seven subgroups emerged, two accounting for 90% of the members' leadership choices, and for 85% of the choices as "best able to take care of self in survival emergency."

This fits layman concepts of leadership quite well. At the lay level, you and I know that we can recognize a so-called "born" leader when we see him. What we may not recognize is the basis for our recognition, and our subsequent judgment. We are actually reacting in terms of observed behavior as it is judged relevant to the situation. It is this that provides a key to understanding of leadership and of leadership training.

Some years ago, John Sivy, Carl Lange, and I (19) did work on the Leaders Reaction Test, a situational test of leadership which resulted

in the development of a checklist of leader behaviors that yielded a score that was quite successful in predicting leadership. However, *behavior* constituted the input data, *not* evaluations by the checkers. The Office of Strategic Services approach was similar in some respects—put the candidate in a situation and watch his behavior. Thus, it is the leader's behavior that leads others to make judgments about him, and that produces whatever impact he has on his subordinates.

It logically follows that one then should concentrate on behavior when constructing a leadership training program, because this is the basis on which the leader will be judged, and the criterion of his success or failure. From the analogy of the locks and keys, one would judge further that one should try to concentrate on behavior appropriate to the situation in which the leader is going to be acting, and, if possible, to include the further goal of giving him as much behavior flexibility as possible.

It is most instructive to examine again the work reported by Fleishman, Harris, and Burt. In their conclusions, they noted that the organizational climate to which foremen trained in human relations returned had a very great deal to do with whether they continued to behave in accordance with their training. To quote directly, "The results indicated again that the foreman is more responsive to the day-to-day climate in which he operates than to any special course of training he may have been given. To a considerable extent, the specific training in human relations is wasted unless the environment in the plant is also strong in human relations." (1, p. 94)

In other words, when the training did not produce a lasting result, it was because the training had produced a response set in the foremen that was not compatible with the demands of the situation. I think the OFFTRAIN course produced its apparently good results primarily because we used the real situation as a basis for the course, and because the training does equip the individual to fit easily into the leadership climate provided by his own superiors within the military organization.

I have talked about analysis of the behavior of the leader as the proper basis for development of instruction for leaders. You will recognize the clear utility of this approach for producing generalizability of the training to real-life situations with which the leader will be confronted. However, it would not be appropriate to emphasize only this. Recall that one of the objectives in our own leadership instruction was to try to increase the flexibility of the leader, to make it possible for him to adapt to the widest variety of situations. In trying to maximize the leader's flexibility, we assumed that if we gave him an understanding of the underlying variables, he would at least have a head start in "thinking through" these situations and that more flexible behavior would result.

Unfortunately, there is not a great deal about context variables in the literature. While some excellent work has been done, particularly by Hemphill (20), I do not think our theoretical formulations of group processes as yet adequately reflect the very powerful impact of context variables on the determination of the relative effectiveness of leader

behaviors, primarily because so much of our well-controlled experimental research on small-group leadership has been done in synthetic groups, where *emergent* leadership is the rule, as opposed to hierarchically structured and organizationally defined groups with *appointed* leaders.

Two extremely important context variables are the source of the leader's authority or power within the group, and the role of the group member and the group itself within the organization structure.

The emergent leader, by definition, ascends to a position of power within his group by successfully competing with other group members for influence. This competition generally continues throughout his tenure as leader, its intensity being determined by his influence relative to that of the next most influential group member or coalition of group members. He can be replaced at any time if the group perceives that he is not fulfilling his role or rejects him as an individual. The appointed leader, in contrast, is placed in a position of power by some authority outside the group, to which the group itself is responsible for achieving certain defined goals. The key to continuation of his power is the extent to which he can promote group goal achievement, thus satisfying the external authority. Theoretically, their different sources of power probably commit the emergent leader and the appointed leader to different types of leader behavior.

This places appropriate emphasis on the second context variable, the role of the group and the group member within the organization. A work group can be distinguished from non-work groups. Generally, the members of this type of group achieve by their group membership goals not directly related to defined goals of the group itself. The group goals are of importance to the organization. Group members belong to the group because the organization satisfies their needs in return for having its own needs satisfied through their efforts—that is, the achievement of organizational objectives.

The influence of initiating structure-type variables in this kind of context should be apparent. Where goals are given by an outside authority, group members need someone to interpret these goals so they can be achieved most efficiently and with the least expenditure of effort. This brings the focus on such leader attributes as ability to organize a job, ability to communicate these goals clearly to subordinates, and so on. It would be predicted that the relative importance of these variables in emergent leader groups would be much less. In fact, given emergent groups in which individual group member rewards are not particularly related to quality of achievement, but only to participation per se, one often finds that acceptance as a leader is not strongly related to the leader's contribution to solution of group problems or tasks.

Another prediction one would make from this line of thinking is that the appointed leader will experience his greatest difficulty when he *first* is required to shift from patterns of behavior that were effective in emergent-leadership situations, to those appropriate for a situation where power is legitimized. The changes in role behavior required for effectiveness, especially when interacting with former peers, may be difficult to make.

I would like to offer some examples from the literature that bear on the proper role of the leader in appointive-leader groups. In a study by Hamblin, Miller, and Wiggins (21) at the Small Groups Research Center at Washington University of St. Louis, it was hypothesized that morale in autocratic structures is directly related to leader competence, and that, under stress, groups with competent leaders may actually have better morale if the groups are *autooratically* structured. This hypothesis was confirmed. Halpin (10), using a form of the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire, related the leadership behavior of airplane commanders to crew performance and morale in training and in combat. In combat, the effective aircraft commanders were those who scored relatively higher on initiating structure and relatively lower on showing consideration. In training, where stress presumably was lower, the effective aircraft commanders scored lower on initiating structure than combat commanders, and higher on showing consideration.

These, of course, are only fragments from the literature on leadership and group effectiveness. However, I think they, in conjunction with the work we have done, indicate that one must be careful when extrapolating from findings based on studies of emergent leadership. These findings simply may not generalize too well to appointive leadership situations such as those we attempted to train for. However, leadership training programs must of necessity be based on solid research findings. This underscores the need for systematic and rigorously controlled research dealing with appointed leaders, in the situations in which they will later be required to lead.

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13. ABSTRACT The development of a 16-hour military leadership training program for junior officers is described. The course was based in part on data from questionnaires used to measure leader behavior variables. Considerations such as leader-follower relationships and interaction, differences between emergent and appointive leaders, the training value of the situational approach and small group discussions, are presented.		

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	Leader Selection						
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	Leadership Traits						

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