

MICROMANAGEMENT OF COMPANY PERSONNEL

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Good job!

Define the Problem

The Combat Skills department is responsible for the training of all newly assigned enlisted personnel. The training is surrounded by four main combat skills, Land Navigation, Combatives, Basic Trauma Management, and Weapons training. The commander had specifically stated that during the course of this training, if waterborne operations were to be used during training that he must be aware of such training and he would personally approve all waterborne operations. The current class was conducting a team building exercise when one of the Combat Skills instructors instructed the lead students in column formation to enter a road rut that was filled with approximately two feet of water. Before the platoon sergeant or myself could stop the engagement of the water obstacle half the class had entered the rut that contained the water. The end result of this event resulted in a soldier going to the hospital for a mild case of frostbite. Of course, anytime a soldier is admitted to the hospital the command must be informed as part of the commanders CCIR. I knew if the commander found out that an instructor initiated the entry of the students into the water filled rut that he would have wanted the platoon sergeant replaced. I told the platoon sergeant and the instructors that I would handle this incident and would inform the commander that a student had initiated the entry into the water and it was the platoon sergeant and instructors that halted the rest of the students from entering the water. I made an ethical decision not to tell the commander what really happened due to the fact that the platoon sergeant was an outstanding NCO and the commander never saw what he or his instructors did on a daily basis.

Know the Relevant Rules

1. The commander had informally counseled the Combat Skills department NCOIC on waterborne operations. He made it clear that he must approve all water operations no matter what

the water source may be. He instructed me to ensure that the NCOIC counseled all the Combat Skills instructors on this policy.

2. The commander had a perception that the Combat Skills NCOIC did what he wanted and had no regard for the safety of the students. This was far from the truth, but this perception resulted in the commander wanting daily reports on the days training events and when the reports from the NCOIC were vague the commander felt as though he was being kept out of the loop on training.

3. The commanders perception of the NCOIC still led to further issues mainly in the areas of trust. The commander did not believe the NCOIC was making the right decisions on a daily basis, which drove a wedge further in the trust that both individuals had for each other. The Combat Skills department worked in a decentralized environment and it was a very rare occasion when the commander would observe training. This lack of observation on his part resulted in the commander not knowing what transpired on a daily basis in this department. The only time the commander got directly involved with training was when there was some type of incident. These were usually training incidents which resulted in injuries. These incidents resulted in his perception that the department disregarded authority, which again was far from the truth.

4. The instructor that put the students in the water had not been counseled by the NCOIC on the commander's policy of waterborne operations due to the fact that he had been on leave. The NCOIC and the instructors of the Combat Skills department are multi-tasked on a daily basis. The instructor that put the students in the water had been working training area use with another unit earlier in the day and the NCOIC had not had a chance to counsel him on his first day back at work prior to being involved with the class.

5. I had numerous times approached the commander about his issues with the Combat Skills NCOIC explaining to him that he was making good sound decision on a daily basis. I had personally observed this on countless occasions and it was evident on class critiques and AARs. But, the commander truly only trusted one or two people in the company which lead to his micromanagement leadership style not only with the Combat Skills department but with all the departments throughout the company.

Develop and Evaluate Courses of Action

COA Number One

Continually cover for the Combat Skills department accidents/incidents until the commander changes command.

COA Number Two

Ensure all instructors are aware of the commander's waterborne operation policy during their integration counseling upon assignment to the department and enforce this policy. If an incident happens it's up to the NCOIC and instructor to present the facts and explain the details of the incident.

COA Number Three

Eliminate all training that could potentially involve waterborne operation where students could potentially get wet and cause an accident or incident.

COA Number Four

Encourage the commander to observe training unannounced, make it a priority to observe at least one high-risk event per class. This will instill in him that the instructors and the NCOIC are making sound responsible decisions on a daily basis.

Choose the COA that best represents the Army Values

COA number four best represents the Army values. This COA will do several things. One it will allow the commander to not only observe the training of the students it will allow him to observe the decision making process of his instructors. Two, it will instill a confidence of trust between the commander and the NCOIC. Loyalty is a strong Army value that is often hard to attain. In the dilemma above I chose not to tell the commander what really happened due to the fact that I knew what the NCOIC and instructors did on a daily basis. Although my loyalty should be equal to all members of the company especially to the commander in this case my loyalty was to the NCOIC and his instructors simply because the commander did not know what transpired on a daily basis in one of his departments.