**Introduction**

Everything in the Army starts with leadership. Without competent leaders the Army cannot be successful in facing the challenges of maintaining world peace and homeland security that we face today with contingency operations around the world. Our military leaders are world role models, to define leadership and provide examples of what a leader is, along with what a leader should know and do, Army leaders today have to be flexible, adaptive and multi-skilled on the home front as well as around the world. As Army leaders represent the United States, they may be called upon to be an ambassador in the morning and a warrior later that evening.

Similar to other Army doctrine, the Army’s leadership and counseling manuals continue to be revised to reflect the current pace at which the Army is transforming. Personal experiences have to be incorporated into these changes and new challenges have to be addressed.

The biggest shortfall the Army continues to face is in the counseling of our Soldiers. Properly Counseling Soldiers has always been a pivotal but neglected role as a leader. Older leaders have a tough time relating to younger Soldiers, and younger leaders fail to understand the importance of counseling.

As a leader, your number one asset and viable resource are your Soldiers. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that their Soldiers are counseled properly. These counseling sessions do not have to be always formal, they can also be informal. Counseling sessions should not only be directed towards reenlistment or attrition, but towards assisting Soldiers in a variety of areas. As leaders we tend to counsel our Soldiers only when they do something bad but forget to counsel them on improvements and achievements. For instance, the counseling could be about a young Soldier purchasing a vehicle that they possibly cannot afford with a high interest rate or assisting a Soldier with a family finding a place to live that is conducive to their family needs. During counseling, leaders will also have the opportunity to talk to Soldiers about their short and long-term goals and help them with their career expectations.

**\*\*\*\*MODULE 2\*\*\*\***

In this Session Long Project, I will propose to develop a 3 hour course for the first sergeant/commanders course that enables 20 new first sergeants (1SG) and 20 new company commanders (CO) the ability to properly conduct a retention counseling session. The course would have to be added into the current 2 week 1SG and CO course. Funding for this course will have to be furnished from the 3rd Infantry Divisions Training and Development account. The course will consist of 8 learning activities:

1. How to Counsel a Soldier
2. Purpose of an Integration Counseling Session
3. Purpose of a Career Development Counselling Session
4. Overview of the Promotion System
5. Military Educational Courses
6. The Importance of Soldier Recognition and Reclassification
7. Minimum Career Development Leader Counseling Requirements
8. Perform a Live Counseling Session

At the end of the course every first sergeant and commander will pair up to conduct a counseling session in front of the class. Each session will require an after action review by your peers.

**Instructional Course:** Conduct a Retention Counseling Session for the First Sergeant/Company Commanders Course.

**Course Outline**

**Introduction:** The importance of Counseling will be discussed.

**Learning Activity 1: How to Counsel a Soldier-** We will look at the art of asking the right question to get honest answers. Using Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 611-1 Sec III, Para 10, we will discuss the 5 questioning techniques W-questions, Probing questions, Yes-No questions, Alternative questions, and Summary questions.

**Learning Activity 2: Purpose of an Integration Counseling Session-** Discusses the importance of Counseling a Soldier when they first arrive to your unit and provides topics that should be discussed.

**Learning Activity 3: Purpose of a Career Development Counseling Session-** Evaluates how the Soldier stands among their peers. Talks about the future goals of the Soldier in the Army along with the ability to be retained in the military.

**Learning Activity 4: Overview of the Promotion System-** Explains how Army promotions work and what a Soldier needs to do to get promoted.

**Learning Activity 5: Military Educational Courses-** Gives Soldiers an outlook on what professional development courses the Army provides to further their career.

**Learning Activity 6: The Importance of Soldier Recognition and Reclassification-** Talks about the importance of recognizing Soldiers when they perform above standards and accessing Soldiers for reclassification to another job that might suit the Army’s needs.

**Learning Activity 7: Minimum Career Development Leader Counseling Requirements-** Discusses the mandatory counseling requirements of a Leader.

**Learning Activity 8: Perform a Live Counseling Session-** Students will conduct a counseling session in front of the class where they will be evaluated and critiqued by their peers.

**Summary-** Will review the lessons learned.

**The Purpose of Instructional Planning**

Instructional Planning allows teachers to “reflect on and integrate information about their students, the subject matter to be taught, the curriculum they are following, their own teaching experience, the resources available for instruction, the classroom environment (Airasian, n/d). Instructional planning allows an instructor to forecast and visualize issues and needs that can come about during the course or lesson (Stonge, J. 2007). Time and money are two key components of instructional planning. Properly forecasting needs and visualizing any issues of a course in itself will save time and money. As a leader, between attending meetings and dealing with operational requirements time is something that cannot be wasted. Instructional planning also provides the opportunity for a teacher to structure their class to create a higher level of dialogue between the teacher and student (Stonge, J. 2007).

**Instructional Plan**

**Student population-** 20 New First Sergeants and 20 New Company Commanders.

**Learning needs assessment-** Provide a foundation to 1SG and CO’s for Counseling Soldiers.

**Learning objectives-** Understand the first 7 learning activities and be able to use what was learned to conduct a counseling session.

**The type of instruction to be designed-** The Army understand that there is a gap in counseling Soldiers and that all Soldiers regardless of rank require some type of counseling. In this course I will use Indirect Instruction using Kolb’s experiential Theories and ELM. I chose ELM because Kolb believes that “knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experiences” (Akella, D. 2010). As a leader you learn from your experiences and you provide your experiences through counseling. I believe your leadership style is directly reflective of your past experiences. For example if you as a young Soldier were never counseled, your beliefs on counseling when you become a leader will be limited.

**Instructional materials needed-** Laptop equipped with Microsoft Office suite, projector with screen, Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet (PAM) 611-1, Army Regulation (AR) 614-200, AR 600-8-19, and AR 601-280.

**Instructional resources needed-** Active Army Career Counselor.

**Performance-based outcomes-** Using what was learned, leaders will have an understanding of how to counsel a Soldier and will be able to conduct a retention counseling session.

**Evaluation strategies to assess student learning-** After every learning activity there will be a check on learning to gage if the information was understood. At the end of the course, students will pair in twos to conduct a Retention Counselling Session in front of the class. After every counseling session, the class will conduct an After Action Review (AAR), where the class will provide the counselors with three positives and three improvements of the counseling session.

**References**

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