

Leading Our Soldiers Well II



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Foreword by the Chief of Army

The earlier edition of “Leading Our Soldiers Well” was an initiative in 2006 by 1st Guards (11th Mono), then commanded by our Chief of Defence Force (CDF), MG Perry Lim. Based on the ten aspects of leadership written to all Army Leaders by then-COA, LG (Ret) Desmond Kuek in 2004, “Leading Our Soldiers Well” comprises of case studies with the aim to help Company Commanders and Company 2ICs discuss values-based dilemmas in a safe environment, through Community of Practice (CoP) discussions.

In the same aim, this new edition of “Leading our Soldiers Well II” was reviewed by the SAF Centre for Leadership Development (CLD) and it contains a compilation of not only the new case studies to highlight other contemporary issues, but also retained some of the previous ones which are still relevant in today’s context. Each case study seeks to highlight certain contentious issues or ethical dilemmas, with the intention to initiate self-reflection and a healthy debate about the decisions we may have to make in command.

As our Army strives towards achieving the MINDEF/SAF’s mission of enhancing Singapore’s peace and security during peacetime and securing a swift and decisive victory in war, we should always reflect on our Core Values that guide our every decision. In an increasingly volatile and complex environment, our Core Values are the anchors for Army Leaders to make decisions especially where the boundaries between right and wrong can sometimes be ambiguous. It is thus important for us to take time to reflect, discuss and clarify our values with our peers and superiors. This process will help to sharpen our thinking and enable us to see differing perspectives on the same issues. We must continuously think about how we can apply our values-based judgements so that we are better prepared when we have to make difficult decisions when the time comes.

I hope this revised compilation will be useful to those who have taken up the challenge of Company Command to be better leaders.

Wishing you every success in leading our soldiers well!



BG MELVYN ONG
Chief of Army



10 Aspects of Leadership for Army Commanders

1. Believe In What You Do

Lead with passion and conviction. This makes the difference between a mediocre unit and an outstanding one, or an average person and an outstanding individual. Ask yourself what you believe in, what you stand for, and what motivates and fires you up. Then use that passion to infect others around you, so that every opportunity is used to influence more positively and powerfully the lives of those you lead. Believe in what you do and why you do it. Do not simply go through the motions. Believe that you make a difference. When others see that you believe in what you do, they will be more inspired and likely to share in your commitment, dedication and passion.

2. Set Your Goals High

Lead with vision and high standards of excellence. Resist the temptation to look for the easiest way of the minimum that you can get away with. You will not have stretched yourself, and will have nothing to feel proud about at the end of the day. Your soldiers may initially like the idea that you are easy with standards or with discipline, but they will certainly not respect you for it. What they want is a collective vision – a mission or goal that they can take direction from and set their sights on. Simple goals will do, but set them with high standards. You should not be satisfied with the status quo, or with mediocrity. If there is something worth doing, it is worth doing well, and to the best of your ability. You should always be searching and striving for greater excellence – always growing, always reaching for the stars. When you reach for the stars, even if you do not get stars, you certainly will not have mud in your hands. If all our commanders aim that much higher, we will go that much farther as an Army.

3. Know Your Job Well

Lead with professionalism and competence. To be a leader, your soldiers will expect you to be technically and tactically proficient. Know your job, and theirs too, well enough to tell them what to do and how to do it, and be good enough yourself to show them how. Believe in yourself. You have been trained well. You must however continue to learn well, and hone and improve on your skills so that you can be excellent in your field. Be confident that you have what it takes to do your job well, and be willing and quick to learn in areas that you may not yet know so well. "Follow me and do as I do!" is a much more powerful way to inspire your men than "Do as I say!" – but you can only do so with confidence, and you can only lead by example, if you first know your job well.

4. Learn From Others

Lead with humility. Even as you show confidence, you must also be humble, ready and willing to learn from others. At one point or other, you will find yourself inexperienced in the face of more experienced Officers and Specialists. Take the opportunity to learn from them with a humble heart and an earnest mind. Nurture a discipline of thinking and learning. There is nothing to be embarrassed about not knowing, but there is something to be embarrassed about not asking, and there is everything to be embarrassed about not learning. In every situation, there is something to learn if you have the humility to want to learn it. If you show interest, humility and an open mind, those more experienced than you will be more forthcoming with their advice and support. And those below you will be more patient and trusting of your leadership.

5. Make Things Happen

Lead with decision and action. Your soldiers will expect you to make things happen; and not just wait for things to happen or for someone else to take that initiative; or worse, not even know what happened! The first is the mark of a leader, the second a follower, and the third a loser. Make things happen, and make sure these things that happen are the right things to the best of your judgement. Your soldiers equally expect that you make decision and take actions wisely and in a sound and timely manner – because they are affected by the consequences if you do not. Many times, not making a decision is in itself the wrong decision; and no action is in itself the wrong action. Be proactive, take the initiative, and make the right things happen for yourself, your soldiers and your unit.

6. Take Responsibility When You Are Wrong

Lead with courage and integrity. It is easy to stand tall and take credit whenever your unit does well or when there is praise all round. It is not so easy to stand up to take the rap when things do not go so well. Resist the urge to pass the buck to someone else or blame your soldiers. There will indeed be times when things go wrong. Your soldiers will expect that you will have the integrity and courage to take responsibility for your actions, even when and especially when you are the one who is wrong. Everybody makes mistakes, especially when you are doing something for the first time. Refrain from pushing the blame down to your subordinates and soldiers. Quietly accept responsibility and learn from the mistake. Your maturity and integrity will earn you greater respect than your wrongdoing had gained you criticism.

7. Keep Going Even When The Going Gets Tough

Lead with determination. It is not enough to set a goal or have an action plan if you cannot last the distance. In a navigation exercise, to get to your objective, you first need to set the direction with your compass. Then you must pace out the distance until you get there, regardless whether there is a thorn bush, hill or river in your way. Over, under or around – nothing stands in your way. To overcome and accomplish your goal will require physical fitness and mental toughness. Your soldiers will expect you to have the stamina, discipline and determination to go on – because they will give up if you do. As a leader, you must keep going even when, and especially when, the going gets tough.

8. Care For Your Soldiers

Lead with your heart. Even as you push for high standards through tough training, your soldiers will expect you to know them well. Understand their strengths and weaknesses, recognise when they put in the extra effort, and look out for their well-being. Well-being is not the same as welfare – which is no doubt important – but welfare does not always lead to well-being in the longer term. Tough and realistic training is important, and this must be balanced with care for your soldiers. Your soldiers want to know that you care, because they are entrusting their lives in your hands. Your care must be genuine and selfless, because they will see through you if you are insincere. No extent of experience in command, no amount of discussion on core values, or lessons on leadership and management can ever be good enough to make you a good leader if you do not feel passionately for the people who work for you, and about the people for whom you work. As a leader, you have a basic responsibility to care for the people you lead – even if it is for one training day. Take the time and trouble to find out what concerns your soldiers, and what their motivations and passions might be. Show them that you care.

9. Keep Your Communication Lines Open

Lead through mutual trust and understanding. You must not assume that your soldiers do not or will not understand what is happening. Keep them informed about the reasons for actions and decisions. Communicate. The morale in a unit is low when the soldiers have no clue what is going on, lower still if they have reason to believe that their commander is not telling them what or why, and lowest when they know their commander will not listen. Only if you keep your lines open, can you build trust and confidence. Tell your soldiers why whenever you have the time to explain, so that they will trust you and not need to question why when you clearly do not have the time to explain, when in the heat of battle or crisis. Keep those lines of communication open so that you know what is going on in their hearts and in their minds, and so that they know what is going on in yours.

10. Build A Strong Team

Lead through teamwork. One of your key priorities as a leader must be to get the people in your command to work together. When you can build a strong team, people will find ways to work together and want to do more, rather than fight with each other over whom should do less. Your soldiers want you to make them work together as a team – to build them up and forge them together. They want you to help them gain confidence in you, and also in themselves and the other soldiers around them. This sense of cohesion and bonding, esprit de corps and spirit of not wanting to let the team down is a basic need for all soldiers, and is the kind of team spirit that will help win over any difficulty or adversity.

Leading soldiers well does not come automatically, and certainly not just because you wear the rank. But a leader in our Army is what you are, and a good leader is what we expect you to be. Be confident that you have what it takes to be a good leader of men. Without confidence in yourself, you may fumble and stumble when you should not. Without confidence in yourself, you cannot expect your soldiers to have confidence in you, or to believe in you as their leader. But self-confidence and dignity must not be confused with arrogance and self-pride. To be a leader, you must also have the humility to know when to follow the advice and learn from the example of others who have walked the road before you. It will be your leadership example, dedication and humility that will determine whether your men follow you grudgingly; or willingly with confidence, respect and trust. Ultimately it is your passion for people, professionalism and excellence that will inspire and motivate others to follow, and keep you always striving to do better and reach higher as a leader – for that mission or goal in your life.

Strong and effective leadership everywhere in our Army is of fundamental and utmost importance. Your leadership role and example will be crucial in our efforts to deal with the expanding spectrum of operations, move ahead in our transformation initiatives, create NS experiences that our servicemen will cherish, and strengthen the values and institutions that mark our professionalism as an Army. It begins with your commitment and passion in leading our soldiers well.

MG DESMOND KUEK

Chief of Army

March 2004

Conducting The Community of Practice

1. Composition of Discussion Groups

The leadership case studies revolve around the challenges and difficulties faced by our Company Commanders in everyday operations, training and administrative events. As such it is recommended that the CoP or Commanders' Training be conducted for Company Commanders as well as Company 2ICs. In addition, the appointment of a facilitator (Bde Comd, Bde Staff, CO, Bn 2IC, Bn S3) in each group is necessary to facilitate discussion and expression of a myriad of opinions and views. To enable everyone in the group to contribute, it is recommended that the group size be between 6-8 commanders.

2. Recommended Time Allocation

The leadership case studies are arranged to discuss COA's 10 Aspects of Leadership and Leadership by Example, with Empathy through Engagement (L3E). In order to give appropriate and sufficient time to each topic, it is recommended that 2 half-day sessions be catered, with each half-day session covering 3 to 4 aspects of leadership. The aspects 1, 2 and 10 will be covered in AIOC's CEP.

3. Conducting of the CoP/Commanders' Training

The proposed schedule for the conduct of CoP/ Commanders' Training is as follows:

Pre-CoP/ Commanders' Training

- a. Sending pre-read materials (COA's note and Case Studies) to Company Commanders/2ICs 3 days prior to conduct of CoP.

Day of CoP/ Commanders' Training

- a. Introduction: Purpose of the training and groupings for discussion (10 mins).
- b. Discussion & Facilitation Part 1: 2 to 3 aspects of leadership (30 mins of discussion for each case study).
- c. Break: Consolidation of points (15 mins).
- d. Discussion & Facilitation Part 2: 2 to 3 aspects of leadership (30 mins for each case study).
- e. Plenary Session: Consolidation of points and presentation to share the different perspectives of the respective groups (45 mins).

Post-CoP/ Commanders' Training

- a. Completing the "Statement of Commitment": a tool, which can be used by the Bde Comd/ CO to follow-up on the Company Commanders/2ICs' progress as a leader.

10 Aspects of Leadership - Case Studies

Case Study 1A

“Believe In What You Do”

CPT Jonathan just finished his CTC and is about to assume command as a 2nd year OC in Alpha Coy 10 SIR. CPT Johnathan’s previous appointment was as a Staff Officer, and it has been close to 8 years since his last ground tour as a Platoon Commander. To prepare himself for his OC tour, CPT Johnathan spent large amounts of time thinking about his leadership and command philosophy, and how he would like to run his company. By the time he was posted to 10 SIR as a company 2IC, he already had a clear idea on how he wanted his company to be like.

After a few days of observing the company, CPT Johnathan realized that the company was nothing like he expected. He expected to see extremely disciplined soldiers – those in neatly folded Smart 4 with shiny kiwi-ed boots, who sing loudly and proudly when marching from place to place. Instead, he saw soldiers walking around in slippers, constantly at the smoking corner, and always spending their admin time either at the canteen or in their bunks sleeping. Apparently, the leadership style of the first year OC, CPT Shawn, is “work hard outfield, rest well during admin time”. CPT Johnathan did not agree with CPT Shawn’s method, and started to think of ways to implement changes to achieve his desired outcome. He shared these plans with his fellow OC, CPT Paul.

“Johnathan, I know you want to be the best OC possible, but you must be careful not to be too idealistic. Why are you asking your whole company of 100+ men to change to suit you, instead of you adapting to suit them?” CPT Paul said. CPT Johnathan thought about what CPT Paul said, but decided to stay true to his beliefs instead of simply adapting to the current state of the company. He did not want to end up leading soldiers that did not suit his leadership philosophy.

Few weeks later, CPT Shawn posted out of 10 SIR, leaving CPT Johnathan to take over as OC. CPT Johnathan gathered all his commanders and shared with them his plans for the company. There was some discontentment among the commanders, but CPT Johnathan brushed them off. After all, he is the OC of the company, and staying true to his leadership philosophy was important to him. With the help of his CSM, he started enforcing standards in terms of regimentation and discipline, by reducing the number of off days, making sure every soldier is always properly attired, ensuring the company marches and sings loudly everyday etc. He even set a fixed number of smoke breaks each day, instead of the previous system when the men could smoke anytime they want during their admin time. Gradually, the company began to appear more disciplined and started becoming increasingly like his ideal state. The change was so prominent that even his CO and RSM noticed the sudden change of discipline his company and complimented him. As he sat in his office and looked

at his company, CPT Johnathan felt good about himself. He was proud that his plan came through and the company improved for the better. "Looks like everything worked out fine after all! Thank goodness I didn't listen to Paul."

A few weeks later, CPT Johnathan's CSM came up to him privately and said "OC Sir, I understand your good intentions for the company, but the men just cannot take it. The change is too drastic for them. I've been hearing a lot of them saying things like "Our first year OC better" or like "This OC screwed up". With all due respect, if you carry on this way of managing the company, sooner or later the men will just rebel and not want to carry on".

Discussion Points

1. "Believe in what you do". What happens if what you strongly believe in does not seem to be working out, like in the case of CPT Johnathan? Should you go back against your belief? When is it the time to concede? How should you go about doing it?
2. Soldiers will always compare their second year commanders with their first year commanders. Should second year commanders seek to implement their own leadership philosophy or should they adapt to the current culture?
3. As an OC, what can you do to help your second-year PCs if they face this problem?

Case Study 1B

“Believe In What You Do”

CPT Adrian has just completed his orders to Alpha Coy of 12 SIR. 12 SIR is undergoing their ATEC battalion proficiency test in Shoalwater Bay. CPT Adrian left his own company back in Singapore under his Coy 21C. As OC of the best company of 13 SIR in the first year, CPT Adrian was specifically tasked by his Bde Comd, COL Benjamin, to lead Alpha Coy of 12 SIR in this exercise, after the actual OC was grounded by a bad case of piles. CPT Adrian’s regular Platoon Commander, LTA Chang, is also standing in for an injured Platoon Commander in Alpha Coy.

LTA Chang looks at the plan and asks his OC, “Sir, did you tell CO that we assaulted this same objective in our battalion exercise here two months ago?” “Yes I did”, replies CPT Adrian. “And did you tell CO that our company attacked from the north successfully and that the vegetation of the eastern slope is simply too dense?” LTA Chang asks. “Yes I did,” come the reply. “Then why does CO still want us to attack from the east?” LTA Chang asked again.

“Well, CO felt that the eastern approach would be completely unexpected by the enemy and our chances of success would be much higher. I told him that we knew a well-concealed approach from the north and are more confident with it. But he said he had made a decision and the plan was no longer open for discussion. There was no time. So I left it at that.” CPT Adrian said, while trying to remain as composed as ever.

LTA Chang walks away for a moment and then comes back, “Well sir, I don’t believe that CO’s plan is going to work. We are just going up there to be stuck in the bushes. I don’t see how I can lead the platoon for this mission with conviction.”

To this, CPT Adrian says, “Look Chang, a decision has been made. It doesn’t matter whether you actually believe in it or not. We just have to carry out the decision in front of the men as if it were our own. No more of this nonsense. Just do it.”

Discussion Point

1. Have you faced a situation in which you have no choice but to execute an order that you personally did not believe in, like OC CPT Adrian? If so, what was your response? With the benefit of hindsight, what was the right and professional response?



Case Study 1C

“Believe In What You Do”

CPT Desmond, S4 of 10 SIR, is at his desk buried under loads of paperwork as usual. Every day, as he is slogging away, he murmurs to himself, “Aiyah, why did I choose this life for myself ah? And of all things to sign, I sign Army some more. Why didn’t I pick up the Air Force brochure instead?”

In comes 2LT Elton. 2LT Elton signed on as a regular Officer one year ago. He is currently doing his vacation attachment programme in the S4 branch. His job is to chase the companies to submit their USMS suggestions, key the returns into the IDEAL II system, and to actually do four WITS projects that the S4 branch has been assigned to do. 2LT Elton tells CPT Desmond, “Sir, all the companies have finally submitted their USMS suggestions. But as I was keying in the suggestions, I find that most, if not all, of the suggestions are really banal and mostly repetitive. Should we still award money? Then again, I can understand why the companies have to resort to this. We are simply asking for too many suggestions. I personally don’t believe...”

“Young man,” interjects CPT Desmond, always trying to sound a lot older than he really is and pretending that he actually understands the word ‘banal’. “Banal you say? Personally don’t believe you say?” Before 2LT Elton could respond, CPT Desmond says, “Young man, I also know that IDEAL II is far from ideal. But remember T3. Things take time! We have given our feedback to brigade that the USMS and WITS numbers are simply impossible. I trust that they and the powers that be are doing something about it. Meanwhile, we just do, okay?” 2LT Elton nods his head.

“Now that you have gotten me started, let me ask you something. When you signed up a year ago, did the people at the recruitment centre point a gun to your head?” 2LT Elton shook his head. “Well, did they tell you that the day you signed on that the dotted line is the day you cast your personal beliefs aside and started believing in what the organisation believes in?”

Before 2LT Elton could respond, CPT Desmond continued, “Well if they did not, then I’m telling you now. You have to grow up, son. It is not always about what you believe in. Sometimes you have no choice. You mean you think I really enjoy going through the motions with the things that I have tasked you to do? Do you see all the files on my table? If I don’t go through the motions for some of these things, how will I be able to get to the more important things?”

Discussion Points

1. "Do not simply go through the motions". Have you ever faced a situation in which you personally felt justified in going through the motions, like the S4? If so, why did you feel that way? Could you have looked at the situation more positively and acted in a more professional manner?
2. Share your own experiences of being in situations where believing in what you do becomes difficult in view of the circumstances.

Case Study 10

“Believe In What You Do”

7 SIR 11th mono has completed its first year of training. In the last two months, the battalion saw a changeover of three Company Commanders. Only OC C remained, as he had joined the battalion a bit later in the first year. The three new Company Commanders were trained in foreign academies in three different countries. They have taken up their new assignments with great enthusiasm and gusto, each believing that he can make a difference. With such well-trained and highly motivated commanders, what can possibly go wrong in this battalion ...or go right.

OC A - CPT Thomas Tan

CPT Tan is an avid sportsman who has always been very much into team games. He strongly believes in team spirit and wants to strengthen the teamwork in his company. The first thing he did when he assumed command was to introduce the company motto “One for All and All for One”. In his first speech to the company, he deliberately started and ended by saying, “there is no “I” in the word team”.

It did not take long for CPT Tan to change the way training and administration was done in the company. The company must now do everything together. Everyone must run together, eat together at the cookhouse, and book out together as a company. CPT Tan makes sure that everyone in his company wears the same attire for runs, PTs and administration at the Coy line. All his Officers and Specialists are to exercise their leadership but, at the same time, blend in with their men. If you complete your run faster, you turn around, run back to the slower ones and finish the run again together. If more than half of the company needs to do remedial training, the whole company stays back to do remedial training as one.

Gradually, the soldiers start to wise up and begin to calibrate their performance. The faster runners begin a run a little slower so that they will not be too far in front. The good soldiers seem to put in less effort because they feel that how well they do is not going to make a difference anyway...

OC B - CPT Caesar Jong

CPT Jong sees what CPT Tan is doing with great amusement. Although they have known each other for many years, they do not get along. CPT Jong thinks CPT Tan is just a “boy scout”, and calls him “Mr Three Musketeers”. CPT Jong does not think that a company should be run that way. He strongly believes that we must differentiate the strong from the weak soldiers, the good from the not-so-good, and the not-so-good from the bad. There

must be a system of incentives and disincentives. Otherwise, the company will just turn into a “communist’s horde”.

With this belief, CPT Jong goes about implementing a grading system in his company. He gets his Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants to grade the soldiers’ weekly performance, based on his criteria he has developed. Grade A soldiers are the best performers. With respect to the normal 5 days workweek, the incentive is that they get to book out immediately after lunch on Friday and book in on Monday morning. Grade B soldiers also get to book out after lunch on Friday, but they book in together with the main body on Sunday night. Grade C soldiers are the main body, they will book out on Friday evening and book in on Sunday night. Grade D soldiers stay back on Saturday to undergo remedial training.

The reaction to the grading system has been mixed. The fitter soldiers like it because, as physical fitness features strongly in the criteria, they get to book out early and book in later. The weaker soldiers hate it and feel that they are being victimised by the system. The average soldiers gradually feel disadvantaged as they see the good performers getting those incentives, but not them. One day, CPT Jong overhears one of his soldiers say, “Aiyah, sian lah. Why can’t we be like Alpha Company? One for all, all for one book in on Monday morning?”...

Discussion Point

1. “Believe in what you do”. What happens if what you strongly believe in does not seem to be working out, like in the case of Alpha Coy and Bravo Coy? Should you go back against your belief? When is it the time to concede? How should you go about doing it?

Case Study 1E

“Believe In What You Do”

OC SP – CPT Julius Boey

CPT Boey had joined the Army because he loved the military culture and disciplined way of life. He grew up watching war movies and reading everything he could find in the local bookstores related to the military. For his twelfth birthday, he pestered his dad to buy him the book “The SAF – Daring Men and Modern Machines”, which sits proudly on his shelf till this day. Before assuming command Sp Coy, CPT Boey had spent eight weeks attending a combat reconnaissance course overseas. To him, the course and spending time in that foreign army was such a breath of fresh air. The trainees would go outfield for two to three weeks at a stretch where they would just focus on nothing but training. On days where there are no outfield training, CPT Boey would go to the gym at 5am in the morning only to find it already filled with people working out. He also found his foreign counterparts to be well-read and conversant with military matters and developments in other forces.

CPT Boey started his company on 5am morning runs, followed by 5BXs on the morning after assuming command. Every morning, without fail, Sp Coy would be running around the camp while the others were still soundly asleep. No one is exempted from 5BX. CPT Boey would bring his company for outfield training and make them stay outfield for at least a week in order to maximise the training resources. He tells his soldiers that they need to spend time in the field so that they would learn how to take care of themselves in the field. CPT Boey bought military books and subscribed to professional magazines with his own money, and compelled his Officers and regular Specialists to read them and write book reviews.

CPT Boey is cleaning his rifle in his office after coming back from a 10-day outfield training with his company. The rifle is particularly dirty, as it had rained non-stop for the last five days. He hears a knock on his door. In comes his trusty CSM, SSG Xavier Tan. “What’s up?” CPT Boey asks. SSG Xavier looks very tired. He clears his throat and says, “Sir, all the men are back and accounted for. Well, all of them look pretty exhausted. We will have a problem fielding our contingent for the CO Parade tomorrow. At least half of the company are suffering from bad abrasion around the groin area.

CPT Boey thanks his CSM for the status report. He remembers that SSG Xavier had approached him to discuss a personal matter before the field training, but they did not manage to do so as they were rushing for time. CPT Boey asks, "Xavier, you wanted to talk to me the other day?" Xavier shifted uneasily in his seat, "Yes, I wanted to tell you that I am facing some problems with the 5BX. I had made alternative arrangements to settle the transport for my wife and kids in the morning since the 5BX regime started. However, those arrangements are not working out."

Discussion Point

1. "Believe in what you do and why you do it". What if the things that you strongly believe in cannot square up with real and practical difficulties, like in the case of Sp Coy? Should you accept compromises? If so, how much should you compromise on your own beliefs?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



“My Parking Lot” is a space for you to write down your thoughts and reflections on the points that were discussed. It is also helpful for you to note down alternative and interesting perspectives which others have shared. This will greatly enrich your learning experience as you learn from others and internalise your own learning. While there are many points in a discussion, it is important for you to be focused. Hence, to organise your note-taking, it is recommended that you take down the 3 most important takeaways and 2 alternative perspectives from each case study discussion.

Case Study 1

“Believe In What You Do”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 2

“Set Your Goals High”

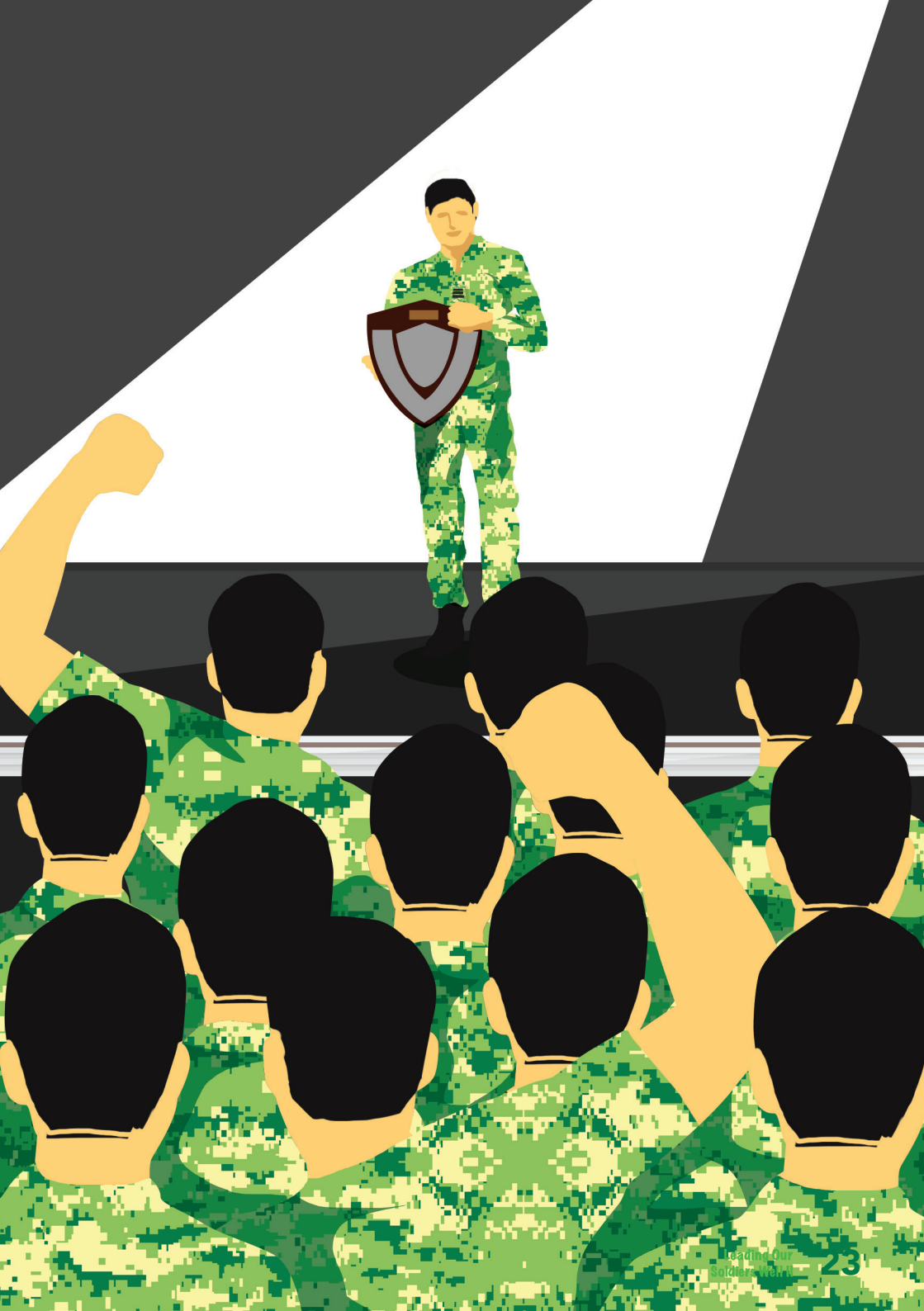
It is the eve of the annual 7 Div skill-at-arms competition. Every year, all the active companies in the division will come together to pit their skills, wits, fitness and strength of character against one another. The winning company gets to bring home the Div Comd’s challenge shield and earn their bragging rights for the year. What started out as a friendly Division cohesion event gradually became a fiercely contested no-holds-barred event whereby pride and honour is at stake, the winner takes all, and reputations made or broken in that one single day.

CPT Francis is in the mess with his company. As the PMC, he booked the entire mess for his company’s cohesion night, with the aim of rousing them up for the great event tomorrow. Towards the end of the evening, CPT Francis mounts the stage to address his company. Clutching the challenge shield tightly to his chest, he tells his company, “Gentlemen, Bravo Company 12 SIR is by far the best company in the division, if not the Army. Tomorrow is our day of reckoning. It is the reason why we have all sweated blood in the last three weeks. We are going to let the division borrow this shield for three hours, and then we are going to take it back where it belongs. Gentlemen, remember our company motto – we must strive to succeed. If not, we will have nothing to feel proud about at the end of the day... we will be champions once again tomorrow. We are going to win, win, win!” CPT Francis holds the shield aloft, clearly satisfied with himself that he has managed to drive his company into a state of frenzy.

Intoxicated with self-belief, CPT Francis goes to the karaoke set and starts to sing his favourite number “Ai Pnia Jia A Ynia” [translation: must strive to succeed]. At a corner of the mess, one soldier asks his buddy, “Hey, doesn’t OC know any other song?”

Back in Support Coy 10 SIR, CPT Gerald and his company are enjoying their pizza and karaoke night on their company square under the clear moonlight. The CSM and his Platoon Sergeants have put in some effort to organise this simple event for the men to relax, chill-out and recover from all the stress of the preparations during the week. Support Coy is not just participating in the skill-at-arms competition. It has also been roped in to provide the hands and legs to organise the event.

It is time for the OC to address the company. The CSM gathers the men to attention and hands the floor over to CPT Gerald. CPT Gerald has been the OC since the mono-intake started six months ago. To the men and commanders in the company, CPT Gerald has been a good leader. He has been tough, firm and uncompromising with standards during training. But back in the coy line, he is known to be fair, approachable and, to those who



know him better, a man with a heart of gold. In his free time, CPT Gerald an avid Liverpool FC fan, enjoys playing and watching soccer. He peppers his talks to the soldiers with soccer analogies because he feels he can better connect with them that way.

“Gentlemen... First of all, great job yesterday and today in getting the stuff ready for tomorrow. It has been really tough balancing our support of the event and training for the event itself. But I am sure we will still do well tomorrow because of the effort we have put in over the last three weeks. Our skills and fitness levels are looking good. Our team spirit is second to none. We are a young company compared to the others. We are still developing. Hence, we may not be champions this year. And tomorrow, our aim is to give it our best shot so as to qualify for Champions League. If we do so, it would be a great achievement on our part, CPT Gerald says, his words clearly resonating with his men.

“As you know, we are not strong in the first three segments of the competition. But we must keep our heads up and finish the race strong. Remember the spirit of Istanbul¹. Remember our long tradition. In this company, we will always be growing, always reaching for the stars. And tonight and tomorrow, as you can all see above you, the stars are aligned in our favour. Good night gentlemen and rest well. You’ll never walk alone.”

Discussion Points

1. “Set your goals high”. If your company has a very good chance at winning, would you have adopted the same approach as CPT Francis to rally your company? Why or why not?
2. Are you more comfortable with the approach of CPT Gerald? Set against the espoused principle of setting high goals, isn’t such an approach a “cop-out”? Do you prefer not to commit yourself openly to setting your goals high?
3. Would you modify your approach with regard to setting goals based on the circumstances? Or is there only one approach for you?
4. One of the problems of setting high goals is managing the morale of the soldiers if you do not meet these goals. How would you lift up the morale of the soldiers and manage disappointment after not being able to meet the goals you set for your soldiers?
5. Another problem of setting high goals is motivating soldiers to carry on trying their best even after these goals are not achievable. For example, motivating soldiers to continue trying their best for ATEC Stage 2 after a poor ATEC Stage 1 result, where they are no longer able to achieve REDCON 1. How would you motivate your soldiers to carry on pushing? Would you adjust your goals according to the circumstance? How would you communicate these new goals to your soldiers without appearing too fickle minded?

¹ In 2005, Liverpool FC overcame a 3-0 deficit to beat AC Milan in the Champions League final held in Istanbul.

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 2

“Set Your Goals High”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 3A

“Know Your Job Well”

Boss “Know It All”

CPT Ho has always been interested in all things military. His CCAs in school was NCC (Land). He has not missed an Army, Navy or Air Force Open House since he was born. He decided even before he could walk that he would join the Army one day.

CPT Ho adopts a very professional attitude towards his work. He believes that a leader must lead with professionalism and competence. He feels he must know everything better than his subordinates in order to lead them. CPT Ho started out as Rifle PC for a year, followed by another year as Scout PC. He would spend his free time in his company and the battalion central pool stores to learn about logistics. When his company went on long weekends, he would spend time in S1 Br and S4 Br to learn about manpower and financial matters. CPT Ho was later posted to SIW. During his time in SIW, he took it upon himself to learn about every Infantry weapon system in the SAF inventory.

CPT Ho has now taken over Charlie Coy 13 SIR. Because of his knowledge, he is intimately involved in all aspects of training and administration in his company. He knows every bolt and nut there is to find. He also supervises the CQMS and armskoteman in the management of the stores and weapons. He is the only OC in the battalion who actually counts each and every weapon and spare part in the armskote before signing the weekly arms certificate.

CPT Ho is the fastest in the 2.4km run and SOC in Charlie Coy. He strongly believes that this is the only way to lead by example. His favourite leadership phrase is “follow me and do as I do!” He is omnipresent and quick to intervene in the actions of his subordinates to prevent them from making mistakes. CPT Ho is always able to tell his subordinates what and how to do things. The people in Charlie Coy stand in awe of their OC because he knows everything and does everything the best.

Boss “Buay Paiseh”

CPT Ivan has just taken over Support Coy 13 SIR. He is in the fourth year of regular service, having spent his first year as a Rifle PC and the subsequent two years as a Staff Officer in the General Staff. Because of his short stint on the ground, CPT Ivan is not knowledgeable in the technical aspects of the military equipment in his company. At this point in his command, he is also not familiar with the logistics and administrative matters in the company and battalion.

CPT Ivan leaves it to his CSM to take charge of the logistics and administration. As a principle, he does not think the OC should be checking on or counting stores. He rarely steps into his company storerooms. When he does, it is to find out about the well-being of his CQMS and storemen and to chat with them. However, CPT Ivan makes it a point to give his CSM and logisticians full support and the necessary resources to do their job well. As the company prepares for LRI, his only involvement so far is buying “makan” for his people as they work overtime and being around in the coy line as they work over the weekend.

Unlike CPT Ho, CPT Ivan does not count the weapons in his armskote as he signs the weekly arms certificate. He feels his time is better spent elsewhere than to count weapons. He feels that his job is to put in place a system to account for the weapons, rather than to count the weapons himself.

If CPT Ivan appears lackadaisical or unprofessional, he is in fact passionate about leadership and command. He knows enough about tactics, and he can apply the principles well on the ground. While he does not know the bolts and nuts in a weapon, he knows enough to employ all weapon systems effectively. He knows all his soldiers very well. The first thing he did upon assuming command was to conduct a company inspection to check on their living conditions. He then left it to his CSM to follow up on the barrack damages. As CPT Ivan has not done an instructional tour and is inexperienced in conducting training, he discusses with his Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants on the “what” and “how” to train in order to ensure that the training is relevant, realistic and safe. CPT Ivan applies the “Mission, Demand and Support” philosophy in the way he runs his company.

CPT Ivan strongly believes in the need to empower his WOSpecs. He feels his WOSpecs should take charge of their niche areas of competencies. He has no qualms about his Specialists knowing more about the technical aspects of weapon systems than he or his Officers. He always tells his soldiers that they should aim to be a better soldier and aim to run faster than their OC, and that he would be most happy if they succeed in doing so. His view on leadership by example is “not to ask your soldiers to do things that you are not willing to do”, as opposed to “not able to do”.

Discussion Points

1. Who do you prefer to work for and why? What kind of boss do you want to be?
2. Highlight the points in the case study that you strongly agree with and strongly disagree with.
3. How well do you need to know the job of your subordinates? Do you need to know it “well enough to tell them what to do and how to do, and be good enough yourself to show them how”?
4. Does the phrase “follow me and do as I do” apply all the time in leading our soldiers well?

Case Study 3B

“Know Your Job Well”

The intake for 15 SIR will come in just a few weeks' time. 15 SIR's first year Specialist commanders just posted in to 15 SIR a few days ago, and are currently having their UIP. As the Officers are busy planning and preparing for 15 SIR's enlistment day, CO, LTC Jason, thought to himself: “Since the WOSpecs are not that involved with the planning for enlistment day, maybe I should empower them and put them in charge of UIP!” Hence, he tasked RSM to take charge of UIP, with RSM being the Supervising, and CSMs the Conducting and Safety Officers. The WOSpecs took charge of every single aspect of the UIP, from preparing the AI to indenting ration and equipment to conducting training. The CSMs were so busy that they barely had time to interact with the new Specialists.

Even though the OCs are not directly involved with the UIP, they do find time to follow the Specialists outfield to observe their training. During one particular field training, OC A, CPT Kelvin, spotted some of the Bravo Specialists making mistakes in their field craft. He turned to CPT Leon, and asked “Eh bro, your Specialists doing the wrong thing leh. Why aren't you correcting them?”. CPT Leon looked at his Specialists, and realized that they were indeed doing their field craft wrongly. But CPT Leon decided not to do anything, as he had already discussed with his CSM previously, stating each other's roles and responsibilities clearly. Field craft, along with other field trainings, were his CSM's responsibilities, and hence he did not want to override his CSM.

“I know they were doing something wrong, but I had an arrangement with my CSM already. All the field training and stuff, he does. All the planning, AOP and Officer stuff, I do” I don't want to interfere with his things! I'll just let him know once I see him and I'm sure he'll sort them out”. CPT Leon said.

“But all the CSMs are too busy with the conducting and safety for this UIP! How are they going to have time to spot these things? Regardless of your arrangement, they are still your company right? You should do something!”

CPT Leon started to get a little frustrated at CPT Kelvin's constant nagging, and said “Aiyo Kelvin! I am the OC, he is my CSM. I am an Officer and I know what are my job and my responsibilities, and these things are my CSM's job, not mine. I don't want to interfere with his job and overrule him. I'm sure he'll sort them out soon, have more faith in my CSM can?”



Discussion Points

1. Which OC do you agree with more, CPT Kelvin or CPT Leon? What would you do if you were CPT Leon?
2. "Know your job well". What exactly is the job of an OC to you? What is the job of your CSM? Are there any overlaps?
3. What is your understanding of "Empowering the WOSpecs" and "Officer-WOSpec partnership"? Is the above scenario a good example of "Empowering the WOSpecs" and "Officer-WOSpec partnership"?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 3

“Know Your Job Well”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 4

“Learn From Others”

CPT Faizal

CPT Faizal is OC Alpha in 14 SIR. He is slowly coming to grips with his command appointment after six months on the job. Prior to being Company Commander, he spent his first year in service as a Platoon Commander in a first year battalion. Thereafter, he was posted to the General Staff where he worked as a Staff Officer for three years.

CPT Faizal's foundation in minor tactics was poor to begin with. He was completely detached from the developments on the ground during his three years in General Staff. He also knew very little about running a company of soldiers and being responsible for a company worth of stores and equipment. He only performed BDO duties twice when he was Platoon Commander. His unit, like most Infantry and Guards units in the Army, had a Pioneer PC whose job was to get into trouble and do BDO duties for the rest of the lieutenants. Hence, CPT Faizal, when he was Platoon Commander, did not get much opportunity to snoop around the stores, guard room and ops room on those quiet weekends to get a more complete Officer education.

Nevertheless, CPT Faizal has led a charmed life since he was born. His army life has been equally smooth-sailing. While CPT Faizal has yet to show great interest in the bolts and nuts of leading an Infantry company, his great passion lies in reading and learning from the great military commanders and military thinkers of the past. He has always been fascinated about the way great military leaders develop an aura, a sense of invincibility and a sense of destiny about themselves. While he is conscious of his own shortcomings as a Company Commander, he is very careful about projecting and maintaining an image of a confident, “gungho” and decisive leader in front of others. He learns by discreetly observing the way other people do things from afar. He learns quickly as he is no doubt a very intelligent person. Where he has weaknesses and clinks in his seemingly impeccable facade, he makes a deliberate effort to hide them. (He reported sick during the Battalion Swimming Carnival.) When the opportunity arises for him to showcase his strengths, he does it to the hilt.

CPT Faizal puts down his book “The Mask of Command” and lies back in his chair. He is still feeling good about the positive feedback from the DPD CRMQ survey that was conducted last month. “Well, the men and commanders are confident of going to war with me,” he thinks to himself. “Being an OC is really not that difficult after all. Six months down and only another six more to go...”



CPT Mark

CPT Mark is OC Bravo in 14 SIR. He and CPT Faizal are in the same officer cohort. Like CPT Faizal, CPT Mark spent three years in General Staff before his company command. However, that is where the similarities end. For a start, CPT Mark cuts a very different figure from CPT Faizal. Unlike CPT Faizal, he is bespectacled, very fair in complexion, average in height and looks, and has become somewhat round at the edges after three years of a punishing desk job. If not for his uniform, you would never have guessed that CPT Mark is an Army Officer.

CPT Mark is a jovial, sincere and humble person by nature. Whenever comparisons are made between him and OC Alpha, he would laugh it off by saying, "Well, I read somewhere that most soldiers don't like their Officers to be good-looking anyway." CPT Mark is very much aware of his shortcomings and knowledge gap. He has shown himself to be a keen learner and good listener, always taking the opportunity to learn with a humble heart and an earnest mind. He is willing to learn from his more experienced subordinates. He asked his trusted CSM to teach him the technical handling of the SAR21 and revise him on all the weapons and equipment in the company estab. He sought advice from Chief Clerk and RQMS on what to look out for in preparing for the LRI and PAT audits. As he was building up his fitness in the first two months of his command, he went against the advice of his peers to train secretly, where and when none of his subordinates would see. CPT Mark did his runs and SOC training together with his soldiers. As such, soldiers saw in the first two months an OC who was rather short on physical fitness.

CPT Mark looks at the results of the DPD CRMQ survey on his company. The results clearly show that his commanders and men have very little confidence in going to war with him, although they rated him above average in his care for them. Meanwhile, rumours are spreading that a few soldiers saw CSM putting OC Bravo through a battery of technical handling tests and even non-stop drills on the parade square on a particular Saturday afternoon (the latter which is absolutely untrue). The Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants are talking among themselves, a few of them saying that they are losing patience and trust in their OC's ability to lead the company.

CPT Mark thinks about what his CO had said when they talked about the CRMQ survey. "Mark, I know you to be a humble and sincere person, and most willing to learn. However, you also need to be mindful of the way you come across to your company. As commanders, we must always project an air of confidence, whether or not we are actually confident of the situation at hand. Every soldier wants to have an OC whom he can be proud of. Nobody wants to be led by a loser. Your soldiers actually want to be proud of you. Remember that. And you will have to work extra hard at it."

Discussion Points

1. Is there a real need to maintain an aura about your command, like in the case of CPT Faizal? If so, how would you balance this aura of command with the advice to “lead with humility” and “be humble, ready and willing to learn from others”?
2. Whose approach towards learning would you adopt? CPT Faizal's approach or CPT Mark's approach?
3. As a leader and commander, do you see a need to hide your weaknesses and showcase your strengths? Would you take an SOC or IPPT test with your company when you are not at your best physical condition?
4. What would you do if you were CPT Mark after hearing such advice from your CO? Would you change your approach?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 4

“Learn From Others”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 5

“Make Things Happen”

“This is Do-or-Die! I want all of us to fight as aggressively as we have ever fought. Remember, treat ATEC like war and treat this mission as though your lives depend on it!” These words continued to echo in the head of 3SG Kumar hours after his OC, CPT Ashraf, had briefed Bravo Coy at the assembly area.

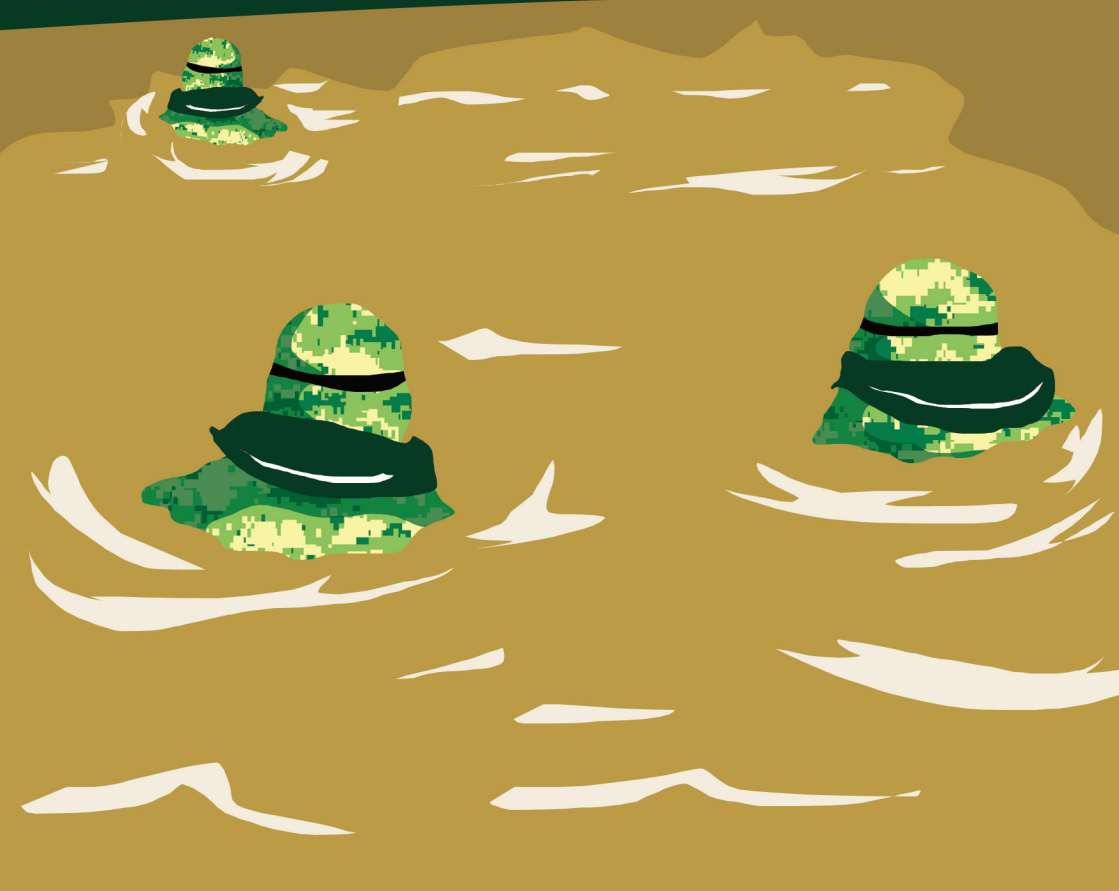
As a recce commander, he was assigned the mission to establish an observation post at .82 knoll to observe the movement of the enemy and provide an early warning to the main force. CPT Ashraf has personally informed him that he held the key to accomplishing the company’s mission, and that if he was not in position by 2100hrs, then the battle was already lost. However things were not looking good for 3SG Kumar. Due to inclement weather, the vegetation has transformed into a swamp, drastically slowing down his movement. With only 30 minutes left, he was still a good distance away from the objective.

However, as 3SG Kumar scrutinized his map again, he realized that there was a shortcut to the objective. The only issue was that he would need to cross a river along the way. Out of desperation, 3SG boldly conducted an unsupervised combat swim across the river and successfully reaches the OP in time. As a result, he was able to positively influence the battle and the company achieved stellar results during the evaluation.

After the mission, CPT Ashraf was summoned to his CO office where LTC Alex admonished him for the dangerous and irresponsible behaviour of his recce commander. CPT Ashraf tries to defend his commander but LTC Alex cuts him off, “Ashraf, don’t you know there are rules to follow in war as well? If I can’t even trust your soldiers to follow simple instructions in an exercise, how can I trust them not to rape, pillage and plunder in war? I want you to initiate a formal charge against the soldier and refer the charge to me.”

Discussion Points

1. What would you do if you were in OC B position? How would you manage disciplining a soldier who risked his life to accomplish the mission you tasked him with?
2. Do you feel that LTC Alex was being unreasonable? Can contravening the TSR ever be justified?
3. Should we reward or punish soldiers who dare to take the initiative, at the expense of safety?



“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 5

“Make Things Happen”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 6A

“Take Responsibility When You Are Wrong”

It was the last day and the last component of the “Best Company Competition” was waiting to be played out. The CO, LTC Darren, had organized this competition in the hope of raising his Battalion’s standards in the upcoming Best Signal Unit Competition. The last station was no other than the IPPT.

Alpha and Bravo Coys were already neck to neck in scores. OC Alpha, CPT Alfred, was confident of his Company’s fitness. After all, he had trained them pretty hard consistently. OC Bravo, CPT Ben, was just as certain of his men’s standards – his Company comprised of many past national athletes. However, he chose a more ‘chill’ approach to the entire matter, and decided to give his Company a nights-off the day before the IPPT test. He trusted his Company to return early enough to rest for the night.

It was already midnight. Alpha Coy was fast asleep. However, Bravo Coy still had men streaming into the Coy line. Reveille was at 0530hrs the next morning. “Hurry up, you snails! You’ve got to rest for the big day tomorrow! You should have known better to return earlier!” grumbled CPT Ben.

Morning came and the IPPT conduct started. “Did everyone have seven hours of uninterrupted rest?” asked the Conducting Officer, “Those who did not are not permitted to participate.” Not a soul raised his hand. The IPPT proceeded as planned.

True to their past, Bravo Coy’s national sprinters and swimmers shone their colours right through and the Coy achieved a whopping 90% Gold/ Silver rate, versus the 85% of Alpha Coy. CPT Ben gleamed with joy as his Coy had broken even and won. Despite the celebrations, one of his men, LCP Lee, looked rather solemn. “What’s the matter, son?” asked CPT Ben. “Sir, I don’t mean to pour cold water on this – but didn’t we have less than seven hours of rest last night?” He replied, “Oh well. No safety accidents occurred right? You guys still performed well right? Give yourself a pat on your back! You have done the Coy proud. Just make sure you guys come back earlier when I give you a nights-off next time.”



Discussion Points

1. Would the Coy have respected CPT Ben more for what has happened (i.e. they won), or if he owned up to the safety oversight?
2. What hinders Commanders most from speaking the ugly truth?
3. How would you have felt if you were LCP Lee and heard such a response from your OC?

Case Study 6B

“Take Responsibility When You Are Wrong”

Boss “Blame Me”

10 SIR has just returned from their 3-week overseas training. When planning for the overseas package, the Bn CO, LTC James, decided to leave all the CSMs and Platoon Sergeants behind in the barracks. They were to prepare their respective companies for the Commercial Stock Take to be held a week after the battalion returned from overseas. The goal of the battalion was to have zero malpractice and zero discrepancy in the management of stores.

The logisticians from Bde HQ have conducted a preliminary check to ascertain the state of preparation of the battalion for the Commercial Stock Take. After reading the findings, LTC James discovers that Bravo Coy has many deficiencies as well as surpluses in its inventory. LTC James calls his OC Bravo and CSM Bravo to come over to his office for an explanation.

Ten minutes later, OC Bravo, CPT Rajinder, appears in the CO Office. LTC James asks, “Where is your CSM?” CPT Rajinder answers, “Sir, I told him to stay at the company line. There is no need for him to see you. I am aware of the state of the stores in my company. If you want to blame anybody, blame me. I am ultimately responsible.”

Boss “This Is Your Baby”

12 SIR is undergoing its battalion proficiency test conducted by Bde HQ. The battalion has moved out of the barracks last evening to concentrate in the Lentor area. The next morning, the Bn CO, LTC Aaron, decides to inspect the respective company sectors to check that everything is in order.

Upon reaching Charlie Coy sector, LTC Aaron discovers that the shellscrapes are poorly sited and poorly dug. The soldiers are milling around instead of being at their proper places. LTC Aaron sees his OC Charlie, CPT Terence. CPT Terence walks up to greet his Bn CO. CPT Terence has just joined the exercise this morning, as he had to attend a project meeting yesterday, which was deemed to be more important than the battalion exercise.

LTC Aaron tells CPT Terence, “Terence, I am glad you can join us. I am very unhappy with the standard of the shellscrapes in this platoon’s sector. Can you do something about it before I do something about it?” CPT Terence nods his head and calls his PC7 and PS7 over. While the Bn CO is still around, CPT Terence proceeds to question his PC about the poor positioning of the shellscrapes. CPT Terence also tells his PS to sort out the poor standards of the shellscrapes as well as the poor discipline of the soldiers.



Discussion Points

1. Are you the “blame me” boss or the “this is your baby” boss?
2. Was CPT Rajinder right in taking the blame for his CSM’s failures?
3. Was CPT Terence wrong in attributing his CO’s observations in the Platoon 7 sector to his PC7 and PS7?
4. What is “command responsibility”? Does “command responsibility” mean “being responsible for everything under your command”?
5. How would you reconcile your notion of “command responsibility” with the need to inculcate a sense of “professional responsibility” and “individual responsibility” in your subordinates?
6. “Refrain from pushing the blame down to your subordinates and soldiers”. But what if they are the ones who did wrong?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 6

“Take Responsibility When You Are Wrong”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 7A

“Keep Going Even When The Going Gets Tough”

“NAVIGATOR” CPT Isaac

CPT Isaac looks up from his map to see where his men are. The men in his NAVEX detail are sitting in a circle looked contented and rather pleased with the place they have arrived at. It has been a long and blistering day of walking, climbing and bashing through the vegetation. The weather has been particularly hot and humid, even by Temburong standards. This ridgeline certainly looks like a perfect place to harbour for the night. The Platoon Sergeant in the detail, 1SG Loke, wastes no time in getting things organised, while the other commander, 3SG Johan, takes out his can opener and consolidates the canned food from the men. All of them are looking forward to resting their tired limbs and cooking up a feast to fill their empty growling stomachs. And everyone seems to have staked a claim on their pair of trees to which they would tie their hammocks, except CPT Isaac.

“May I know what is going on?” CPT Isaac asks. CPT Isaac is OC Alpha in 18 SIR. Prior to assuming command, he was an Instructor in OCS and had taken a few batches of Officer Cadets to train in Temburong. As such, he has been very confident of leading his detail and doing well in this NAVEX. In OCS, CPT Isaac was called “The Bulldozer” by his fellow instructors because of his very determined and hard-headed approach towards everything. When he first read COA’s note and came to the section where COA wrote “regardless whether there is a thorn bush, hill or river in your way, over under or around – nothing stands in your way”, he felt an instant bodily reaction, a culmination of all the things he has stood for in all these long years.

Unfortunately for CPT Isaac, things are not going according to his script. In the first two days of the NAVEX, the detail had only found two of the required six checkpoints. They have not done particularly well today either. Not surprisingly, CPT Isaac is furious with his own effort. With less than two days to go, he decides he has to lead his detail with even greater determination. He is determined to get out of this jungle with his reputation firmly intact.

CPT Isaac looks at his watch. It is just past 1600 hrs. Last light for today is not till 1730 hrs. If they could push on, there is an even chance that they would make it to the next checkpoint at the next ridgeline before last light. But the detail needs to move fast and move now!

“Come on you guys, pack up and move on,” CPT Isaac orders his detail. His runner, PTE Zach and signaller, LCP Xavier, look at their OC in astonishment. “Come on guys, we have one more checkpoint to go before we stop for the night. It is not too far away. If we can hit the next checkpoint today, we can go back to camp tomorrow afternoon. I know we are all

CHECK POINT
DELTA



tired, but let's not break our momentum. We must keep going when the going gets tough. Come on guys, if I don't give up, you shouldn't give up."

1SG Loke tries his very best to dissuade his OC. "Sir, we cannot make it lah. It will start to get dark soon. We are all tired, plus we have found such a wonderful place to rest for the night. What if we cannot reach the next checkpoint? Let the men rest and recharge themselves. We can start very early tomorrow. I'm sure it will be better than if we were to press on now." 1SG Loke's words are obviously falling on deaf ears, for the "bulldozer" has made up his mind.

The detail begrudgingly packs up and moves on... after a while, rain starts to pour. They are now surrounded by thick vegetation and stuck in what looks like a ravine. CPT Isaac looks at his men and they are all drenched and it is getting dark. Their sad faces say it all...

Discussion Points

1. What would you have done if you were CPT Isaac? Would you push the detail to carry on? Where would you draw the line between being determined and being stubborn?
2. "Your soldiers will expect you to have the stamina, discipline and determination to go on – because they will give up if you do." Does this mean that as long as you do not give up, your soldiers will always follow you?
3. How far would you go when you are faced with difficulties? Would you always press on, regardless of the circumstances? Is it necessarily a sign of weakness when you choose to do otherwise?
4. What other factors do you need to consider when leading your soldiers with determination?
5. Share your own experiences of being faced with a similar situation as CPT Isaac. What did you learn from your experience?

Case Study 7B

“Keep Going Even When The Going Gets Tough”

Charlie Coy 10 SIR is preparing for its company proficiency test. As the new batch of Officers has just taken over their platoons, CPT Ray is naturally concerned about whether or not they would be up to the mark. CPT Ray has always set high standards for himself and his subordinate leaders. Before he had signed on, CPT Ray was a winner of the silver bayonet in SCS who went on to become the sword of honour in his OCS cohort. He later topped his CTC as well as AIOC. CPT Ray is proud of his achievements and is very determined to do well for his OC tour. This proficiency test will be the first test of his command and leadership of his company.

It is a hot and humid afternoon. Charlie Coy is preparing for the attack mission. As he has not slept for the past two nights during the defence mission, CPT Ray is in a slight daze. He had fought off the “Z” monster by walking around the platoon defence sectors, personally ensuring that everyone was awake and alert during stand-to. Charlie Coy has done very well so far, and the Bn CO, LTC Martin, looks pleased with their performance. “Well done Ray! Let’s see what your company is capable of in the attack mission. Both Alpha and Bravo did not do that well in the attack mission. But I’m sure your company will not disappoint me.” CPT Ray is ecstatic by his Bn CO’s remarks. Screw up the next mission he will not.

Twenty minutes before moving out, CPT Ray feels feverish. The tensions, sleep deprivation and hot weather are all taking a toll on him. The company medic tells him that he is running a high fever and calls the battalion Medical Officer over. CPT (Dr) Heng checks OC Charlie’s condition and advises him not to continue with the exercise. He promptly goes back to his medical post to check on those who have reported sick.

CPT Ray tells himself that he could not possibly heed the doctor’s advice. All his Platoon Commanders are new and inexperienced. And how could he rely on his untried and untested Coy 2IC, LTA Alvin, to lead his company on such an important mission? “Alvin is not ready. Better not trust his overseas Officer Cadet training. His banzai tactics would surely trip us up,” CPT Ray contemplates. CPT Ray feels he has no choice but to carry on, fever or no fever. Disregarding the doctor’s advice, CPT Ray leads his company to capture Objective Jane.

CPT Ray opens his eyes. His head is still spinning. After a while, he realises that he is in fact lying in the sick bay. His Bn CO, LTC Martin is staring down at him. “Ray, your company did very well in the attack mission! Alvin was damn solid man! He led your company brilliantly and took the enemy by the balls. By the way, why didn’t you tell me you were sick? Don’t tell me you thought the company cannot do without you. I have said many times that nobody in

this battalion, maybe except me, is indispensable. Ray, you could have died out there if we had not found you. Don't try to be such a hero next time. You must know when to chiong and when not to chiong..."

Discussion Points

1. "As a leader, you must keep going even when the going is tough." Under what circumstances would you not apply this statement? Would you have done the same as CPT Ray?
2. "Your soldiers will expect you to have the stamina, discipline and determination to go on – because they will give up if you do." Do you think CPT Ray should have rested, especially when his company could do equally well without him?
3. How far would you go when you are faced with difficulties? Would you always press on, regardless of the circumstances? Is it necessarily a sign of weakness when you choose to do otherwise?
4. What other factors do you need to consider when leading your soldiers with determination? Do you personally subscribe to the notion that "nobody is indispensable"?
5. Share your own experiences of being in a similar situation as CPT Ray. What did you learn from your experience?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



“My Parking Lot” is a space for you to write down your thoughts and reflections on the points that were discussed. It is also helpful for you to note down alternative and interesting perspectives which others have shared. This will greatly enrich your learning experience as you learn from others and internalise your own learning. While there are many points in a discussion, it is important for you to be focused. Hence, to organise your note-taking, it is recommended that you take down the 3 most important takeaways and 2 alternative perspectives from each case study discussion.

Case Study 7

“Keep Going Even When The Going Gets Tough”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 8A

“Care For Your Soldiers”

CO 11 SIR, LTC Lawrence, opens his little black book and turns to look at CPT Chris, his new OC SP. “Chris, the route march today is very important for your company. Your company performed very poorly in the last route march, and unfortunately, I was there to witness everything. Your company simply came to a standstill. All it took was for a few soldiers to decide that they wanted to fall out, and then a whole bunch of soldiers started to feel they also could not walk anymore. You were not there and it was a terribly pathetic sight. You should know we don’t call ourselves 11 SIR for nothing. We should be the best on our bus number 11.”

“Chris, I do not want any of your soldiers to fall out in this route march. Yes, we will still have Safety OUV coverage. But believe me, once we allow any soldier, and all it takes is just one soldier, to hop onto the rover, you will have a lot of problems on your hands. Tell your soldiers that their CO does not want to see any one of them on the rover. There are only two reasons why a soldier would be on the rover. Either he is dead or he is dying!” LTC Lawrence raises his booming voice. LTC Lawrence has the tendency of being overly dramatic. He talks in a way to achieve certain effects, but, most of the time, he does not actually mean what he says. However, it takes a while for people to understand that.

“Now let me show you the list of soldiers who are likely to fall out. I have observed them for a while. Don’t ever let these soldiers get up the rover. They can actually complete the route march. It is just that they are mentally weak and have been too used to stopping midway during marches.” LTC Lawrence allows CPT Chris a peek into his black book. LTC Lawrence has indeed been making serious observations and taking down copious notes on his soldiers.

CPT Chris is eager to impress his Bn CO. As OC SP, he often hears about how “garang” the rifle companies are, compared to his company. This is the chance to prove them wrong. The 16km route march is the first in the series of route marches for his company, in the build-up towards the ATEC battalion proficiency test. CPT Chris understands why it is so important to ensure that no one falls out.

Support Coy begins the route march at the Bahtera Carpark in Lim Chu Kang at noon. The company is to walk southwards and end the march at Area A. CPT Chris figures that this is probably the best way to train his soldier so that they will be fit and acclimatised to the hot weather come ATEC. With the blacklisted guys at the back of his mind, he asks his CSM, 3WO Eddy, to watch over them as they march in the middle of the company order of move.

The weather is scorching hot and the sun shining relentlessly. As expected, PTE Chang, the topmost name on the blacklist, begins to complain to his CSM that he is feeling giddy, having chest pains and is breathless. Concerned that PTE Chang may be suffering from physical exhaustion, SSG Eddy calls his OC. CPT Chris quickly arrives at the scene. PTE Chang does look rather pale. He tells his OC that he had suffered from food poisoning a few days ago and he is now feeling very weak.

CPT Chris is in a dilemma. He does not know what to do. He has to make a decision fast as the whole company is being held up. At this point in time, he remembered what COA wrote: "Tough and realistic training is important and this must be balanced with care for your soldiers. Your soldiers want to know that you care, because they are entrusting their lives in your hands."

With the recent spate of safety incidents, CPT Chris decides not to take any chances even though he would have to answer to his Bn CO later. He radios the safety rover forward and instructs SSG Eddy to evacuate PTE Chang to the medical centre. However, true to what LTC Lawrence had said, one by one, the other weak soldiers decide that they also have had enough and fall out of the march.

Back in camp, CPT Chris goes to the medical centre. He sees LTC Lawrence with the MO, as expected. LTC Lawrence turns around, "Chris, what did I tell you? Once you let one soldier hop onto that land rover, just one soldier, the rest of them will just follow, just as the sun will rise in the east. None of your soldiers here are unwell, including that chao keng PTE Chang. You have just allowed Chang to take advantage of you. As for the rest, MO tells me they just needed a short rest and they could have carried on. Why didn't you listen to me? How are you going to train soldiers if you can't take the heat when they tell you they can't take the heat?"

Discussion Points

1. How would you have responded to PTE Chang's request to drop out of the march? Do you think the Bn CO was being unreasonable?
2. How could you exercise good judgement if you were in CPT Chris's situation? Is it always better to err on the side of caution?
3. How would you manage a company such as Support Coy 11 SIR? What would you do differently in the next route march if you were CPT Chris?

Case Study 8B

“Care For Your Soldiers”

Alpha company 11 SIR is about to move out for its final evaluation. OC Alpha, CPT Han has constantly reminded his company that this would be the most critical exercise and he needs ‘all hands on deck’. However hours before the NMT, PTE Gurdip approaches CPT Han to request for emergency leave on the grounds of ‘personal reasons’.

PTE Gurdip has gained the reputation of being the ‘Chao Keng Champion’ of the company, having successfully avoided many previous exercises by somehow falling ill moments before moving out. His behaviour has inspired many other copycats and is adversely affecting the morale of the company. As a result CPT Han and his CSM have decided not to let him off so easily the next time.

However something seems odd this time. PTE Gurdip’s bunkmate, CPL Kumaran, has mentioned that PTE Gurdip seemed deeply troubled the last week and was often seen talking in a hushed voice late into the night. CPL Kumaran has also overheard the words ‘child’ and ‘not ready yet’ and he suspects that PTE Gurdip might have accidentally gotten his girlfriend pregnant.

Due to the sensitive nature of the issue at hand, CPT Han does not wish to probe further into PTE Gurdip’s personal life. He is now faced with the difficult choice of releasing PTE Gurdip, or standing firm and releasing him only after the exercise so that his Company’s morale and performance will not be affected.

Discussion Points

1. Should you lead with your heart or with your head? What would you do if you were in CPT Han’s position?
2. As a commander, how would you balance between the needs of individuals versus the needs of the company?
3. Share your own experience of being caught in a similar dilemma.

Case Study 8C

“Care For Your Soldiers”

CPT Freddie

Charlie Coy 15 SIR is at the basketball court in Lakiun Camp preparing for their Ex BUAYA. Ex BUAYA is a 3-day company mission exercise in Temburong. The company would need to execute a heli-insertion, climb the dreaded Mount Biang, cross Sungei Batu Apoi, walk long distances with their combat loads, and execute a company attack after two days' of movement. The exercise is to be the culmination of all the training activities in the Lancer training frame. This gruelling exercise is also a proficiency test for all the rifle companies in 15 SIR.

“Freddie!” CPT(DR) Gabriel, the Bn Medical Officer, calls out to OC Charlie, CPT Freddie, at the basketball court. “I understand you are short of medics for this exercise, after your two medics injured themselves playing soccer.” The two medics, CPL Lim and CPL Chew, had a clash of heads during a vigorous soccer game at the basketball court last night. They are now lying in the sickbay with their heads stitched up and heavily bandaged. “Well, you can't go on this exercise with just your two remaining medics. Let me solve your problem for you. I will attach one of my BCS medics, LCP Ho, to your company for this exercise.”

“Okay, please get your medic to report to my CSM immediately,” CPT Freddie says, and immediately goes back to discuss with his Coy 2IC on how they would conduct the wargaming later. CPT Freddie is looking forward to this exercise. Since the start of the year, his company has been following a deliberate and progressive training regime to prepare and condition all the soldiers for this overseas training. CPT Freddie has exercised in Lancer before and is aware of the need for his soldiers to be well-prepared both physically and mentally for this exercise.

[Six hours later] The company is way behind schedule. They only managed to reach the top of the Mount Biang ridgeline at 1400hrs, when the plan was to hit the top at 1100hrs. The whole company was slowed down by that one attached medic. LCP Ho complained of being dizzy and breathless. He stopped, sat down and refused to move on more than ten occasions on the way up. Each time, LCP Ho had to be hauled up by the CSM and pushed on. Three soldiers took turns to carry up his personal and medical equipment.

“Get up, soldier!” CPT Freddie shouts, while pushing LCP Ho along the ridgeline. CPT Freddie is very frustrated and his anger is at the point of boiling over any time. “Suay man. All this training and preparation for an important exercise, only to be screwed up by one medic. One medic who is not even my soldier! Bloody Ho!” CPT Freddie keeps thinking to



himself.

“Get up soldier! You are slowing down the whole company. My soldiers are carrying all your stuff. What else do you want? You want them to carry you as well?” CPT Freddie continues to push the medic along. LCP Ho is now only in his clean fatigue. CPT Freddie has been grabbing the medic by his uniform and pushing him along the ridgeline for the last two hours. “Stop pretending. I don’t care how tired you are. You better move!”

[The next afternoon] Charlie Coy has completed crossing the Sungei Batu Apoi. Although the company managed to cross the river in under 30 minutes, they are already late by half a day because of LCP Ho. CPT Freddie meets his Bn CO, LTC Darren on the far bank. “Freddie, I understand you were facing a lot of problems during the movement because of the medic. We have looked at him. He is just tired, as he has not been well-conditioned for this exercise. He will not join you for the next part of your movement. I have asked the RQ to bring him back to camp.”

CPT Freddie lets out an air of relief as well as pent-up anger. “Good riddance,” CPT Freddie says under his breath.

Discussion Points

1. What would you do if you were CPT Freddie faced with the attached medic on the Mount Biang ridgeline? Would you continue to push him along in order to fulfil your mission?
2. “As a leader, you have a basic responsibility to care for the people you lead – even if it is for one training day”. Does this statement fully apply to the above situation?
3. While we can understand why CPT Freddie would feel that LCP Ho is “not even my soldier”, how should CPT Freddie have managed the situation more professionally?
4. What would you do if you were CPT Freddie in the above situation, except that it is not a training exercise but an operation where there is no administrative safety coverage? Would you leave LCP Ho behind?
5. Share your own experiences whereby you were faced with a similar situation. What did you learn from it?

Case Study 80

“Care For Your Soldiers”

CPT Eugene

The weather is tremendously hot and dry. Charlie Coy 14 SIR has just captured their objective in an independent effort after a long walk and a fierce battle. 14 SIR is undergoing its ATEC battalion proficiency test. The battalion minus is still fighting on the adjacent objective in the main effort.

Charlie Coy is deployed in their re-organisation posture on the objective. Objective SUSAN 2C is almost devoid of overhead vegetation and the whole company is exposed to the scorching sun. Most of the soldiers have run out of water. Although they have captured the objective and the fighting has ended, the soldiers are clearly suffering due to the heat and direct sun. The OC, CPT Eugene, sees his two Platoon Sergeants at two separate locations on the objective attending to soldiers who have succumbed to physical exhaustion.

“Sir, the whole company is baking out here,” 2LT Justin, the Coy 2IC, tells CPT Eugene. “There is only a spot of cover where the GPMG team and 84mm team are. We don’t know how long we are going to be here. But the GPMG and 84mm can cover the whole axis. I don’t think the rest of the company needs to be here. I think we should move the rest down to the foot of the hill where they can take shelter.”

CPT Eugene looks at his company on the objective. While the whole company should rightfully re-organise and remain on the objective to defend it, what his Coy 2IC has said does make some sense. CPT Eugene walks over to check out the field of fire of the GPMG team and 84mm RR team. They can indeed cover and dominate a large stretch of the axis. CPT Eugene thinks to himself, “Would I do what Justin has suggested if this were a real operation?”

The heat is getting unbearable. CPT Eugene makes a decision to pull his company to the foot of the hill where there is some shade. He leaves the GPMG team and 84mm RR team to cover the axis. He also leaves a few groups of commanders and soldiers on the objective to provide all-round observation. The rest of the company would rush up the objective to take up positions if they detect signs of a counter attack. CPT Eugene believes this is a viable approach, although it deviates from the way they are taught to conduct reorganisation.

[After 30 minutes] “Eugene! What are you doing?” LTC Michael screams at his OC after finding the bulk of Charlie Coy resting in the shade at the foot of the objective. LTC Michael pulls his OC aside and resumes his tirade. “What is the meaning of this? Why is your

company down here when it should be up there? You are not only creating a very bad impression for the ATEC evaluators, you are not keeping to your mission!”

Before CPT Eugene could say anything, LTC Michael says, “Eugene, I know you are always thinking about the welfare of your soldiers. But this is not the place nor time to exercise welfare!”

Discussion Points

1. Would you have done the same if you were CPT Eugene in the above situation?
2. CPT Eugene obviously has the well-being of his soldiers at heart. Is CPT Eugene guilty of applying the value of “care for your soldiers” wrongly in the above situation?
3. Are there specific situations in operations that you would have to put aside your considerations of the well-being of your soldiers for the mission?
4. “Well-being is not the same as welfare – which is no doubt important – but welfare does not always lead to well-being in the longer term”. How is “well-being” different from “welfare”? What do you think is the meaning of this statement?
5. Do you have any personal examples that can help us better understand the statement in discussion point 4?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 8

“Care For Your Soldiers”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 9

“Keep Your Communication Lines Open”

Communicate – Too Much To Be Bad?

CPT Mohan assumed command of 77 SIB brigade recce company two weeks ago. After spending time with his Specialists, he got a sense that the morale of the company has been pretty low. One of the Specialists told him that the problem was due to the lack of communication. The previous OC liked to keep things to himself and would only talk to his Officers, CSM and Platoon Sergeants. The recce troopers had no clue what was going on most of the time. The junior commanders and troopers felt that the OC and the Officers were deliberately not telling them what or why. They found the previous OC to be unapproachable.

CPT Mohan is nursing a broken heart from his recent break-up with his girlfriend of three weeks. He lies in his bed thinking, “Mohan, you have had many relationships that didn’t work out. Every time your girlfriend breaks up with you, she says it is because you do not communicate. There is no passion in the relationship if there is no communication. You must do something about this.” At this moment, CPT Mohan jolts out of his bed, as if struck by a bolt of lightning. “Mohan, you must learn from this and not let your failure to communicate affect your command. Your command is much too important to break up. Remember what COA wrote. Keep your communication lines open! You must communicate to your troopers. Communicate, communicate, communicate...” One of the ways, CPT Mohan devised to improve communication was to set up a letterbox outside his office.

[Two months later]

CPT Mohan opens the letterbox. The OC letterbox is full as usual, mostly with letters from the troopers complaining about things they are not satisfied with. CPT Mohan would bring the letters home and read them over the weekend. He would gather all his commanders first thing on Monday morning to clarify about the complaints and ask them to follow up on those issues. He observes that his troopers are looking like a much happier bunch. They find him approachable and would not hesitate to approach him directly to resolve issues for them.

Apart from the weekly OC Talk to the company, CPT Mohan would talk to the whole company before every training activity, briefing them down to the details so that every trooper would know what to expect. He would also talk to the company after every training activity, which takes up the most part of every AAR. CPT Mohan is happy with the way things are going. His troopers respond to him very well. He feels that he has succeeded in making the connection with his troopers. CPT Mohan is, however, getting a bit



perturbed with the behaviour of his commanders of late, both the Officers and Specialists. They seem to be detached and disengaged from the company. This is happening despite his effort at communication.

CPT Mohan sees his CSM at the mess. MSG Allan, the BRC CSM, is alone but clearly in a good mood for conversation after a few beers. CPT Mohan sits down with MSG Allan. After another round of beer, CPT Mohan asks, "Allan, you know I am getting a bit frustrated that our commanders are not showing much interest in what they are doing, especially in interacting with their own troopers. You know, I spend so much effort trying to communicate to the company. I thought my commanders would be inspired by my example. But I hardly see them talk to their men about the training."

After downing another beer, MSG Allan turns to his OC. "Sir, since I have the benefit of having one too many, I will be straight with you. With all due respect sir, the reason why our commanders do not talk to the troopers is because you talk too much. After you are done with the talking, they have nothing left to say. Apart from having nothing to say, whatever you tell the troopers, our commanders are also hearing the news for the first time. Also, your letterbox is allowing the troopers to bypass them."

MSG Allan continues, "Forgive me for bringing up the past. But in the past, the OC communicated through the chain of command. I can't even remember when was the last time he spoke to the entire company. That was his style. He told me before that he did this not because he thought it was not important for the troopers to hear from him, but because he felt it was more important for them to hear from their junior commanders. He said that this was particularly important for our company in view of the nature of BRC operations..."

Discussion Points

1. "Keep your communication lines open". As an OC, how would you keep your communication lines open to the soldiers and yet maintain the chain of command?
2. Do you agree with MSG Allan that there is such a thing as an OC talking too much? Is there a need for the OC to restrict what he should say when addressing the entire company?
3. Whose approach would you adopt as an OC? Is it CPT Mohan's approach or the previous OC's approach?
4. Is there a middle ground for CPT Mohan? What would such a balanced communication approach be like?
5. "The morale in a unit is low when the soldiers have no clue what is going on, lower still if they have reason to believe their commander is not telling them what or why..." Are there other situations in our training and operations that it would be better not to tell the soldiers too much? How would you manage such a situation?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



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Case Study 9

“Keep Your Communication Lines Open”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

Case Study 10A

“Build A Strong Team”

OC Alpha 16 SIR – CPT David

CPT David looks at the south-facing wall of Alpha Coy building with great pride and satisfaction. On it are the freshly painted words of his company motto, “One for All and All for One”. CPT David strongly believes in the importance of teamwork. One of his key priorities as OC Alpha is to get the people under his command to work together. It took him a whole month of talking to his Bn CO, LTC Koh, and convincing him to have the company motto painted on the wall. CPT David remembers the words of COA: “When you can build a strong team, people will find ways to work together and want to do more, rather than fight with each other over whom should do less”.

Alpha Coy under the previous OC used to have frequent inter-section and inter-platoon games. Such games broke the monotony of the daily training activities and injected a sense of competition and fighting spirit in the company. However, CPT David finds that the commanders in his company have formed their own cliques within their platoons. They hardly interact with commanders from the other platoons in the company. Distinct lines are drawn, and one could easily sense the fierce inter-platoon rivalry in Alpha Coy. CPT David also observes that his soldiers identify more with their own platoons than with the company.

CPT David wants to do something about this unhealthy situation. He decides that he would discontinue the best platoon competition in the second year. The previous OC had carried on this competition from the last mono-intake, in which the platoons are assessed based on the same categories as in the Best Unit Competition. Platoon 3 had won the competition in the first year by the narrowest of margins. While this created a very happy Platoon 3, it left a bitter taste among the rest. CPT David decides that he would tell his CSM to remove all the charts showing the IPPT, SOC and ATP scores of the commanders and men by platoon.

The next Company Games Day is in two days. CPT David gathers his Platoon Commanders, CSM and Platoon Sergeant. “Gentlemen, I have decided to change the format of the games day. Instead of having the platoons to compete with one another, I want to mix everybody in the company randomly into three teams. The three teams will then compete with one another for the challenge trophy. I think this will allow our commanders and men to get to know the people outside their respective platoons much better. And this will lead to better teamwork within the company than we have now.

As CPT David says this, groans can be heard all around. After a while, PC3, 2LT Wong, protests, “If like that sir, then what is the point of having the games day?”

Discussion Points

1. Would you adopt the same approach as CPT David in order to develop teamwork in your company command team?
2. Would you agree that there is a tension between building a sense of cohesion and bonding at the platoon level and doing so at the company level? If so, how would you balance such a tension?
3. “Your soldiers want you to make them work together as a team – to build them up and forge them together”. How would you go about making your soldiers work together as a team? What methods would you use?

Case Study 10B

“Build A Strong Team”

OC Bravo 13 SIR – CPT Jeffrey

The ATEC battalion proficiency test for 13 SIR is five weeks away. The battalion is undergoing an intense period of physical training and field exercises to prepare for ATEC. Bravo Coy has just returned from a 4-day company mission exercise. OC Bravo, CPT Jeffrey, is resting at his usual stone table, as the Bn CO, LTC Ernest, comes over to talk to him.

“Jeffrey, your company generally did all right for the exercise. If not for your platoon 6 failing to do the job in the last two missions, the company would have done even better. I think your Dave really cannot make it.” LTC Ernest is referring to PC6, 2LT Dave. 2LT Dave has been in charge of his platoon for about six months now. While he is very well-liked by his peers and has done a decent job administering his platoon and managing his soldiers, he is a weak Platoon Commander in the field. He is very weak in navigation, despite extra coaching from his OC. He has very poor sense of direction, which affects his leadership of platoon 6 on the objectives. His OC and fellow Platoon Commanders have been covering up for his deficiencies so far. Nevertheless, CPT Jeffrey would never think of getting Dave to lead at point, lead an independent effort, or lead the break-in battle. It was Dave’s screw-ups that caused Bravo Coy to do badly in the last two missions.

“Well Jeffrey, haven’t we had this conversation many times before?” LTC Ernest continues to say. “Isn’t it about time you remove Dave from the platoon and put the new Officer in charge? By the way, I have seen your new Officer in action and found him to be a very solid young man. He’s an excellent Platoon Commander material. I’m sure he will be a much more effective PC than Dave. I suppose you are as convinced as me by now that Dave cannot do the job. So what are you waiting for? Are you waiting for me to make this decision for you?”

“No sir, it is not that,” CPT Jeffrey tries his best to explain. “You know, Dave has been with me for six months. All my Officers and I have become very close over the course of our time together. Dave may not be effective in leading his platoon, but he works very well with all my other Officers. I know the other Officers would be very unhappy if I were to remove Dave. Although I know the new Officer would do a much better job and may possibly strengthen my team, I also feel it is my professional responsibility to train Dave up. I can’t possibly jettison him right now. Besides, he is a regular. If I do so, it would probably destroy his self-confidence and even affect his career.”

Discussion Points

1. What would you do if you were the OC? Would you continue to cover up for 2LT Dave's deficiencies or jettison him for a better Platoon Commander?
2. If you are unable or unwilling to remove a very weak link in your team, how would you go about building a strong team?
3. Would you similarly feel a professional responsibility to develop 2LT Dave as a Platoon Commander? Supposing LTC Ernest made a decision to remove 2LT Dave from his platoon command, but keep 2LT Dave in Bravo Coy. How should CPT Jeffery manage 2LT Dave?
4. Share your own experiences whereby you were caught in a dilemma when trying to build a strong team. How did you resolve the dilemma?

Case Study 1 OC

“Build A Strong Team”

CPT Simon has just taken over command of Charlie Coy, 11 SIR. After a few days of observing his company, he realized that his company was not that cohesive as a company, but instead were close as individual platoons. This was especially the case for the commanders, who were close to their own platoons and amongst themselves, but did not mix much with other platoons. CPT Simon was someone who believed that the level of cohesion should primarily be at the company level, not the platoon. During his PC days, CPT Simon made a deliberate effort to mix around with soldiers of other platoons to know them better. “Jialat sia! How am I going to get them to bond together as a company?” CPT Simon thought to himself.

A few days later, CPT Simon thought of a radical idea. He decided to rotate his PSEs among the platoons every 3 months. By the end of his OC tour, every PS would have taken each platoon at least once, and would know every single member of the company. He also wanted to his commanders to hear a second opinion of their platoon, such as which platoon is good/bad in which areas. The reason for choosing to rotate the PS, and not the PC, is because the PS has to deal with a lot more ground work, which usually involves manpower from the whole company. Moreover, during outfield exercises, When CPT Simon first mooted this plan to his commanders, there was a lot of discontentment, especially among the PSEs. But CPT Simon believed in his idea and went through with it despite the discontent from some of his commanders.

After the first rotation, CPT Simon gathered his command team together to ask for their feedback about this rotation policy. He expected to hear complaints and negative feedback, but instead he heard things like “wah bro your platoon runner solid sia” and “eh bro can you wake up your idea your MG team so cui cannot do anything one”. Just by hearing their feedback, CPT Simon managed to know more about the soldiers in his company. He also observed that soldiers were interacting more with other platoons. “Looks like everything turned out well after all!” said as CPT Simon smiled to himself in his office.

“OC Sir? Can I speak to you for a moment?” said LTA Victor, as he knocked on CPT Simon’s door. “Sure Victor! How can I help you?” replied CPT Simon. “OC Sir, I understand why you are doing this rotation policy, but it is making our lives as PCs very difficult. I spoke to the other PCs and we all feel that by constantly rotating our PS around, it makes it very difficult for us to build platoon integrity. I know company integrity is important, and that’s why you are doing this, but isn’t platoon integrity important too?”

OC

PS ROTATION FORECAST

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Discussion Points

1. "One of your key priorities as a leader must be to get the people in your command to work together". CPT Simon's method got his company to work together better as a team, but ended up undermining those under him. What do you think of CPT Simon's method? Would you try something similar with your company?
2. At which level do you feel cohesion should be focused at – company or platoon? Why?
3. By focusing the level of cohesion at the company, it undermines commanders under him, as in the case of LTA Victor. How would you respond to LTA Victor if you were CPT Simon? By focusing the level of cohesion at the platoon, it causes the company to function as 3 platoons rather than a single company. How would you unite the whole company when their loyalties lie more with their PC instead of you?
4. If your CO decides that Bn integrity is more important than company integrity, would you feel undermined? How would you manage this situation?

“My Parking Lot”

Notes For Reflection



“My Parking Lot” is a space for you to write down your thoughts and reflections on the points that were discussed. It is also helpful for you to note down alternative and interesting perspectives which others have shared. This will greatly enrich your learning experience as you learn from others and internalise your own learning. While there are many points in a discussion, it is important for you to be focused. Hence, to organise your note-taking, it is recommended that you take down the 3 most important takeaways and 2 alternative perspectives from each case study discussion.

Case Study 10

“Build A Strong Team”

Takeaway 1

Takeaway 2

Takeaway 3

Alternative perspective 1

Alternative perspective 2

A Statement of Commitment

- First Steps To Leading Your Soldiers

- a. The first step to successful command is your commitment to lead your soldiers well. The statement of commitment is a tool, which the Company Commander/ 2IC can use to commit in writing his leadership values. Company Commander/ 2IC only needs to fill in 1 statement of leadership commitment for each aspect of leadership, according to the 10 Aspects articulated at the beginning of this book.
- b. An example of a statement of commitment can be: "I am committed to be passionate in leading my company to understand the purpose of NS and to create a positive Army experience for my soldiers." As a follow-up, the Bde Comd and/ or CO can then ask the Company Commander/ 2IC what are the actions and how he managed to fulfil his leadership commitment.
- c. Copies of the statement of commitment should be kept by both the Company Commander/ 2IC for purpose of follow-up after the CoP/ Commanders' Training.

1. Believe In What You Do

2. Set Your Goals High

3. Know Your Job Well

4. Learn From Others

5. Make Things Happen

6. Take Responsibility When You Are Wrong

7. Keep Going Even When The Going Gets Tough

8. Care For Your Soldiers

9. Keep Your Communication Lines Open

10. Build A Strong Team

Case Studies At A Glance

Believe In What You Do

Case Study 1A

CPT Johnathan just took over CPT Shawn as OC of Alpha Coy, 10 SIR, only to realize that his leadership philosophy is totally different from CPT Shawn. He proceeds to implement his own leadership philosophy, but soon discovers that his men do not like his way of leading the company and constantly compare him with the previous OC. As a second year commander, should you implement your plans and ideas for the company or do you adapt to the current state of the company?

Case Study 1B

CPT Adrian has been ordered to execute a plan that he does not think will work. What would you do if you have to do something that you do not believe in?

Case Study 1C

CPT Desmond is overwhelmed with work and has many deadlines to meet. He prioritises his work and deals with the less important issues in a perfunctory manner, so he can focus on the more critical issues at hand. Do you sometimes feel compelled to have to "go through the motions" for some of the things you have to do?

Case Study 1D

The OCs in 7 SIR are facing dilemmas in believing what they do and doing what they believe in. CPT Thomas Tan and CPT Caesar Jong have adopted mirror opposite approaches to build up their companies. However both approaches lead to negative outcomes. What would you do if what you believe in does not seem to be working out?

Case Study 1E

CPT Julius Boey is a very fit and professional Officer. He tries to run his company based on his ideals of a military unit. But his subordinates are unable to cope with his regime. What if what you believe in cannot quite square up with practical difficulties?



Set Your Goals High

Case Study 2

It is the eve of the annual 7 Div skill-at-arms competition. CPT Francis rouses his company to retain the challenge shield that they had won last year. He tells his company in no uncertain terms that they have to win again. CPT Gerald tells his company that they will show up to compete and to give it their best shot. Would you adopt the same approach as CPT Francis to invigorate your company? Or would you rather calibrate your goals with the view of managing fallout from possible failure?



Know Your Job Well

Case Study 3A

CPT Ho is a very knowledgeable Officer. He is intimately involved in every aspect of training and administration in his company. He supervises his subordinates very closely and is quick to intervene whenever things are not going according to his way. CPT Ivan does not run his company as tightly as CPT Ho. He leaves it to his subordinates to settle most of the admin matters and does not supervise them closely. He has his own vies about what he needs to do as an OC. He focuses on being competent and on contributing in those areas. Which OC would you want to be? In knowing your job well, do you also need to know what is not your job?

Case Study 3B

The WOSpec Corps of 15 SIR is totally in charge of planning the Specialists' UIP. During one of the outfield trainings, CPT Leon spotted some mistakes by his Specialists but chose not to correct them as he did not want to interfere with his CSM's job and undermine him. They had previously agreed on individual roles and responsibilities and outfield training is his CSM's responsibilities. Is this a good example of Officer-WOSpec partnership? What exactly is the job of an OC and how can his CSM complement him and vice versa?



Learn From Others

Case Study 4

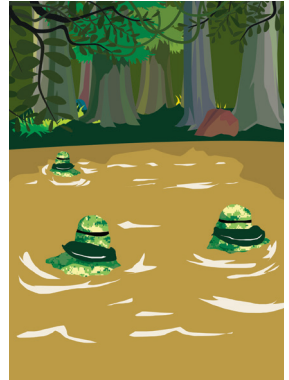
CPT Faizal is an inexperienced Officer. He is aware of his shortcomings and adopts a discreet approach to learn. He is very conscious of maintaining his image of a gungho and confident leader. He gets positive feedback in his CRMQ survey. CPT Mark is a sincere and humble person. He is also aware of his shortcomings as an OC, but he takes an open and earnest approach to learn from others and to overcome his weaknesses. He runs SOC with his men when still not up to shape. His soldiers get to see his weaknesses and give him poor reviews in the CRMQ survey. How would you learn from others, especially your subordinates? As a leader, do you need to establish an aura about yourself? Do you need to showcase your strengths and hide your weaknesses?



Make Things Happen

Case Study 5

CPT Ashraf is being punished by LTC Alex for the safety breach by his recce commander during an ATEC assessment, where he performed an unsupervised river crossing due to unforeseen circumstances. That being said, 3SG Kumar's move actually helped the company in the mission, leading the company to achieve stellar results. Would you reward or punish soldiers who prioritise Mission over Man? Can contravening the TSR ever be justified?



Take Responsibility When You Are Wrong

Case Study 6A

CPT Alfred and CPT Ben are fighting neck-to-neck for their Battalion's Best Company Competition. CPT Ben eventually wins at the last assessment criterion – not without breaking a small safety rule, a fault which no one outside the company knew about. Upon being questioned by one of his men about the legitimacy of his win, CPT Ben is quick to shrug off the mistake since no mishaps occurred as a result of the safety oversight, and dismisses his man. Which consequence is more severe – revealing or concealing the truth? Are there instances when the truth of the mistake has to be hidden?



Case Study 6B

10 SIR has just returned from Lancer training. The unit had left their CSMs and other support personnel back in camp to prepare for LRI while the unit was overseas. LTC James comes back to find the poor state of logistics readiness in Bravo Coy. He summons CPT Rajinder and his CSM to his office. However, only CPT Rajinder shows up. CPT Rajinder tells his CO that he does not see the need for his CSM to come over, as he feels he is ultimately responsible for the situation, even though he was with the company in Lancer.



12 SIR has established its concentration area in Lantor. LTC Aaron goes to inspect the company sectors and is appalled by the poor state of preparation in Charlie Coy sector. The shellscrapes are poorly sited and poorly dug. He sees CPT Terence and tells him about his unhappiness. CPT Terence has just joined the company for the exercise, as he had to attend a meeting the previous evening. After talking to his CO, CPT Terence turns to his PC7 and PS7 and questions them about the situation, while the CO is still around. What is “command responsibility”? Does “command responsibility” mean being responsible for everything under your command?

Keep Going Even When The Going Gets Tough

Case Study 7A

CPT Isaac is leading his detail on a navigation exercise in Lancer. The detail has just reached a nice ridgeline after a long and hot day of walking. It is just past 1600 hrs. Everyone in the detail assumes that they will harbour here for the night, except CPT Isaac. CPT Isaac is frustrated with himself, as his detail has not been successful in finding their checkpoints. He decides to press on and gets his detail to start moving. After a while, the detail becomes stuck in a ravine. It starts to get dark. Where would you draw the line between being determined and being stubborn?



Case Study 7B

CPT Ray is preparing for its company proficiency test. CPT Ray feels feverish at the start of the final mission. The sleep deprivation and hot weather has taken a toll on him. The MO advises CPT Ray to rest and sit out for the mission.

CPT Ray goes against doctor's orders and carries on with the mission, as he feels his subordinate leaders are too inexperienced to carry on without him. CPT Ray collapses during the mission. Would you always press on, regardless of the circumstances? Is it necessarily a sign of weakness if you choose to do otherwise?

Care For Your Soldiers

Case Study 8A

LTC Lawrence tells CPT Chris that his company had performed badly in the last route march, as the previous OC had freely allowed the weak soldiers to fall out. He tells CPT Chris to stand firm and not to allow any soldier to fall out in the upcoming route march. During the march, one soldier shows signs of physical exhaustion and tells CPT Chris that he cannot carry on. On seeing his condition, CPT Chris lets the soldier hop onto the safety vehicle. Slowly but surely, more soldiers start to drop out. Back in camp, the MO assesses that the soldiers who had dropped out were just tired and could have carried on after a short rest. How would you exercise good judgement if you were the OC in such a situation?



Case Study 8B

11 SIR is readying itself for the final evaluation in ATEC. One of the infantry troopers who earned the notorious label of 'Chao Keng Champion' seems to have gotten himself in trouble again – more severely this time, with an unexpected pregnancy. CPT Han now has to decide whether or not to release him for his girlfriend's sake, or to retain him for the unit's sake. What would you do if you were in the same situation? Would you use your heart or your head? How would you account to the other soldiers in the company?

Case Study 8C

CPT Freddie is short of combat medics for their 3-day company mission exercise in Lancer. The company has been training hard to do well in this important exercise. The battalion MO attaches a BCS medic to the company. The attached medic gives the company a lot of problems during the mission, as he is unfit and not conditioned. CPT Freddie pushes him along and forces him to continue moving to keep up with the company.

After crossing the river, LTC Darren decides that the attached medic will not join the company for the next phase of the mission. CPT Freddie is happy to see the back of this medic. What would you do if you were in the same situation? Did CPT Freddie fail to “care for the people you lead – even if it is for one training day”?

Case Study 8D

Charlie Coy (14 SIR) has just captured its objective in an independent effort in the ATEC battalion proficiency test. The weather is very hot. The men are dehydrated and are suffering from the heat and direct sun on the open objective. CPT Eugene sees no reason for his whole company to stay on the objective, as he could continue to control the axis with a few support weapons. He brings the rest of the company under the shade at the foot of the objective. LTC Michael learns of this and chides CPT Eugene for abandoning his mission. He tells CPT Eugene that this is neither the time nor place to exercise welfare. What would you do if you were in the same situation? Is this a case of wrong application of care for soldiers?

Keep Your Communication Lines Open

Case Study 9

CPT Mohan resolves to keep his troopers well-informed and to explain to them the reasons behind his actions and decisions. He makes it a point to talk to the entire company whenever there is time to do so. He also implements an OC letterbox to solicit direct feedback from his troopers. CPT Mohan is hoping that his effort at communication would pay off. However, while his troopers respond positively to him, his commanders seem to be getting more disengaged and disinterested. CPT Mohan asks his CSM why. The CSM tells him that he has been talking too much to the company. As a result, the subordinate commanders have nothing left to say. The CSM feels CPT Mohan should balance his approach by communicating through the chain of command. How would you keep your communication lines open to your soldiers and yet maintain the chain of command?



Build A Strong Team

Case Study 10A

CPT David wants to increase the level of cohesion in his company. He finds that his commanders have formed their own cliques within their platoons. His soldiers identify more with their own platoons than with the company. CPT David wants all his commanders and soldiers to identify with Alpha company first and foremost. He decides to change the format of the upcoming Company Games Day. Instead of having the platoons compete with one another, they will form composite teams comprising a mix of people from the different platoons. The subordinate leaders are unhappy with this arrangement. How would you balance the need to build a sense of cohesion and bonding at the platoon level and the need to do so at the company level?



Case Study 10B

The ATEC battalion proficiency test for 13 SIR is five weeks away. LTC Ernest tells CPT Jeffrey that 2LT Dave is not up to the mark. He hints to CPT Jeffrey that he should replace 2LT Dave with the new Officer who seems to be more capable and effective as a Platoon Commander. CPT Jeffrey faces a dilemma. He is aware of the weakness of 2LT Dave and is also convinced that the new Officer would do better. However, CPT Jeffrey is unwilling to replace 2LT Dave. CPT Jeffrey has formed a close relationship with all his Officers over the last few months. Moreover, he feels a responsibility to develop 2LT Dave and give him the experience of leading soldiers in ATEC. What would you do if you were in a similar situation? Would you always remove a weak link in order to build a strong team?

Case Study 10C

CPT Simon just took over command and realizes that his company is not united as a company, but rather as 3 platoons. He then rotates his PSEs across different companies in a bid to increase company cohesion. By doing so, his coy did become closer and more united. However, his PCs came up to him and told him that they are feeling undermined. Which level of cohesion is the more important – platoon or company? How would you deal with commanders who feel undermined (those under your command) and how would you deal if you were being undermined (if CO decides Bn integrity is more important than company integrity)?

Epilogue

Going forward, in order to be effective in leading, SAF Leaders must be better prepared to face new generation of soldiers who are different from the past. Our leaders have to be better trained in the areas of communication, engagement and management to reinforce Commitment to Defence and National Service. A continuous effort in developing our leaders is therefore essential in ensuring that our leaders are effective in leading their soldiers to accomplish the mission, inspire commitment and improve the organisation.

Our leaders are often caught in situation where there is tension between values and it could incapacitate their decision making ability. The only way to overcome the paralyzing effects is to continuously seek clarity in our personal and organisational values which we are anchored on. The case studies in this book focus on the 10 aspects of leadership which are aligned with the SAF Leadership Framework. These case studies present the moral complexities and dilemmas for our leaders to debate and discuss in preparing them to hold unit command.

I hope that this book will inspire our future Company Commanders to contemplate what command truly entails and to seek greater clarity on the values and beliefs that underpin our service in the SAF. The following pages provide an elaboration of the **Leadership Competency Model (LCM)** and **Leadership by Example, with Empathy, through Engagement (L3E Framework)** – knowledge that would serve as guides in leading our soldiers effectively.

Wishing you a successful journey in leading our soldiers well!



COL FRED TAN
Head, Centre for Leadership Development (CLD)
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The SAF Leadership Competency Model (LCM)

The SAF LCM shown below consists of five competency domains – four of which are core “core competencies” that directly affect leadership performance on the job, and the fifth competency being the “personal meta-competency” for a leader’s adaptability and growth. The five competencies are further sub-classified into the 14 skills.

COMPETENCIES	“CORE COMPETENCIES” (FOR LEADER PERFORMANCE)				“META-COMPETENCY” (FOR GROWTH/ ADAPTABILITY)
SKILLS	Conceptual Thinking	Social	Mission	Development	Self
	Critical Thinking	Communicating To Influence	Planning	Developing People	Self-Awareness
	Creative Thinking	Interpersonal Effectiveness	Decision Making	Developing Teams	Self-Management
	Ethical Reasoning		Execution	Improving Organisation	Personal Mastery

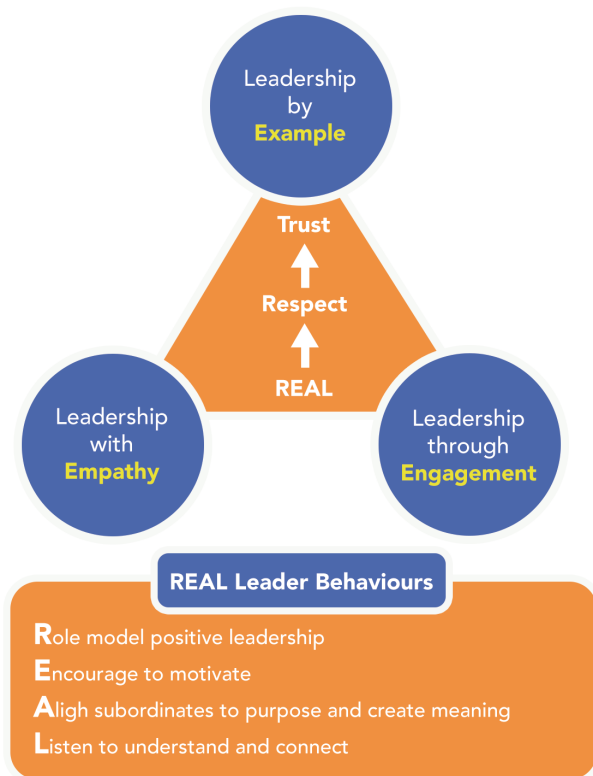
Behavioural Descriptors of the 14 LCM Skills

The Individual Development Process (IDP) seeks to provide SAF with a systematic approach to developing people by guiding the continuous learning and development of their subordinates. The desired and ideal image of the SAF Leader is one who has been developed in all the 5 competencies and 14 skills of the LCM. Hence the behavioural descriptors of the 5 competencies and 14 skills are used as a benchmark and reference for the development of the SAF Leader (Refer to the SAF Leadership Competency Development Handbook, August 2010 or Guide to Individual Development Process in the SAF for details of the descriptors).

Leadership by Example, with Empathy, through Engagement (L3E)

With the changing demographics of soldiers serving in the Army, Last Mile Leaders¹ need to not only lead by personal example, but to also connect and engage their soldiers more effectively. The L3E Framework extends from the SAF 24/7 Leadership Framework and Leadership Competency Model (LCM), with emphasis on the Social Competency. It serves to support Last Mile Leaders to demonstrate REAL Leader behaviours to effectively influence their subordinates, gain their respect, and build trust at the direct level of leadership to achieve mission success.

¹ Last Mile Leaders are defined as Trainers, Platoon Commanders, Platoon Sergeants, and Section Commanders, who have direct interface with the soldiers on the ground.



“Train your soldiers well and train them hard so that they can better contribute to the defence of Singapore. Maximise their strengths, unlock their potential and motivate them to give their best during National Service. Talk to them to understand their challenges... Be genuine in your actions and words to earn the respect and trust of your men.”

MG Perry Lim, Chief of Defence Force

By **Example**

Demonstrate Character, Competence and Commitment through:

- Embodiment of the SAF Core Values, Code of Conduct and the various Creeds.
- Operational, tactical, technical and leadership competencies.
- Commitment to the SAF, Mission, and Men.

With **Empathy**

Understand the needs, and share the feelings of others while:

- Remaining anchored on the SAF Core Values and guided by the SAF Mission and Vision.
- Demonstrating tough empathy that requires Leaders to be firm, direct, and make values-based decisions to achieve mission success with effective attendance to subordinates' needs (not wants).

Through **Engagement**

Actively connect with subordinates to achieve full commitment of their “head, heart and hands” by:

- Creating meaning in their work and seeking alignment with the Organisation's and Unit's goals.
- Explaining the rationale behind decisions.
- Providing guidance and support when necessary.

REAL Leader Behaviours

Role Model Positive Leadership

- Be self-aware.
- Demonstrate commitment to organisation.
- Make values-based decisions.
- Demonstrate competence.
- Be authentic.
- Take charge.
- Commit to developing subordinates to their full potential.

Encourage to Motivate

- Encourage subordinates to motivate them to achieve high standards of excellence and competence.
- Show appreciation by acknowledging all efforts and contributions.
- Let subordinates feel valued and respected.

Align Subordinates to Purpose and Create Meaning

- Align subordinates' values with that of the organisation's.
- Explain how each subordinate work contributes to realising the organisation's purpose.
- Draw links of subordinates' work to the organisation's purpose.

Listen to Understand and Connect

- Active listening without judging.
- Listen to understand needs and issues.
- Discern needs from wants (Tough empathy)
- Use positive body language to show interest.

L3E Self-Awareness Checklist

Tick in the boxes, how frequently you...

	Seldom (1)	Sometimes (2)	Often (3)
Role Model Positive Leadership			
Show genuine care for your subordinates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seek opportunities to develop subordinates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicate respectfully with clear intent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercise patience even when under stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have meaningful conversations beyond work matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage to Motivate			
Offer words of encouragement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acknowledge and thank subordinates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empower and not micro-manage subordinates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refrain from imposing your views on others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refrain from "pulling rank" with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Align Subordinates to Purpose and Create Meaning			
Explain the rationale of decision made	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explain how subordinates contribute to the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State clearly the intent of the tasks that you allocate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listen to Understand and Connect			
Seek to understand subordinates' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listen attentively to what others say	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suspend judgement and listen without interrupting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain awareness of your body language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take note of the non-verbal cues of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clarify your own assumptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Add up your scores! (Seldom=1, Sometimes=2, Often=3) If your score is...

19-31

Possibly **little** awareness and demonstration of L3E.
What do I commit to do more?

32-44

Possibly **moderate** awareness and demonstration of L3E.
What do I commit to do better?

45-57

Possibly **high** awareness and demonstration of L3E
What can I do to encourage others to demonstrate L3E?

Reviewers' Reflections

Through the interviews, the team gained many invaluable first hand leadership insights from the interactions with the various Senior Commanders. The Officers involved in the review of the book also penned down their reflections.

Reflections by LTA Yeo Yi Wen Adrian

"...Personally, I benefitted greatly from these interviews. Their knowledge and personal experiences that they shared with us were extremely beneficial to our development as future commanders. Honestly, I gained more in terms of my personal growth and development compared to the review of the book. ...In my opinion, all OCs should have at least seen this book during their CTC. If not, COs should use this book when they are forming their Bn command team. ...Personally I feel strongly that there is a need to recognise that 1st year Commanders and 2nd year Commanders face different challenges, and that there is no single method to be a Commander. ...I sincerely hope that this book will be published and that it will be issued to all OCs. I have also gained much from this project and I hope that I will remember the lessons and insights that I have learnt from the various interviews."

Reflections by LTA Koh Shi Xuan

"Through the process of sourcing for case studies, my team had the unique opportunity to interact and consult many current and former COs on their insights on leadership. The nuggets of wisdom distilled from these conversations were definitely the highlight of my learning this VA. ...One thing that became clear after speaking with the Senior Commanders was the importance of a command philosophy. It encompasses a set of personal beliefs and values that guide the daily decisions that you make as a Commander. The case studies written in this book clearly demonstrated the moral complexities and dilemmas that we will be confronted with when we assume command. The command philosophy should also be well communicated and understood by your command group as well as your soldiers. ... an ill-informed soldier will be a disengaged soldier, and it did not matter how fanciful or flowery your philosophy might sound; ultimately it amounts to nothing if it does not resonate with the men. ...I hope that the publication of 'Leading our Soldiers Well II' will inspire future Company Commanders as much as it has inspired me; to contemplate what command truly entails, and to seek greater clarity on the values and beliefs that underpin our every action."

Reflections by LTA Jonathan Loh

“A secondary objective – and a more meaningful one personally – was to glean leadership lessons from our interactions with COA and the various other interviewees (i.e. the COs). ... COA shared how he had a major role in shaping the culture and values of the Army. ... To quote COA during his interview, “As a young Officer, we were all eagerly waiting to hear what plans [LG(NS) Desmond Kuek] had for the Army. As a young Officer, you think about your hardware... But at the time, strangely enough, he chose to talk about the Army culture and experience... So I didn’t understand this until much later as a more senior Officer... You have the money, of all things, and you have enough clever people to determine what capabilities we need, and we have enough clever people to network things together and bring everything together into a fighting system... Often times if you can get the culture right, things will fall in place naturally. If you get the culture wrong, you can have the most advanced equipment – you can almost be sure that that’s all you have.” This grounded the rationale for the book review well. It is important that our Officers think through several of the many leadership dilemmas discussed in the book, putting their values to the test, to ensure that the Army provides a positive NS experience, beyond grenades and guns. ...”

Notes

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Acknowledgement

The SAF Centre for Leadership Development (CLD) would like to thank the following people who made this review a reality: Commanders from the 1st Guards 11th mono for setting the foundation with the original "Leading Our Soldiers Well"; and LTA Adrian Yeo, LTA Koh Shi Xuan and LTA Jonathan Loh in the reviewing and updating the content of this book as part of their vacation attachment project in 2014. Many thanks also to the Chief of Defence Force (CDF), MG Perry Lim for his valuable insights, as well as the Battalion Commanders who have offered their time to share their command experiences.

Reviewed and updated by

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