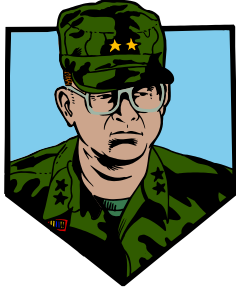


Part-Time-Army-Officer



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The purpose of this newsletter is to help you develop your potential, improve your effectiveness and be the best part-time Army Officer you can be. My goal is to provide helpful training tips, insights, articles, interviews and other practical information. My ultimate goal is to provide value.

What's In This Issue?

- *How to be an Effective Officer and Leader!*
- Suggested Book of the Week
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How to Be an Effective Officer and Leader!

As National Guard and Reserve Officers, we're busy. We prepare slides. We host meetings. We attend meetings. We plan missions. We conduct counseling. We lead training events. Simply put, we're busy!

We've got the motor at the red-line going ten thousand RPMs per minute. Unfortunately, many of us are doing this while having the transmission stuck in neutral. And do you know what happens when you do that? One of two things happens. Either you get nowhere, or you end up blowing your motor!

Personally, I don't want either of those two things to happen to you.

I've found that the above example applies to most officers. They're busy getting nowhere fast. Simply put, they're ineffective. They're not doing their job properly. This happens for a variety of reasons, but we'll cover that in a different article.

For the purpose of this article, I want to teach you how to be effective. So, I'm going to share some advice with you right now. Here it goes!

A Good Officer is an Effective Officer! And an Effective Officer is an Officer who gets the Most Important Things Done First by Establishing Priorities.

That's right. Anyone can be busy. But, that's not what is most important. What's most important is that you are effective. That means that you prioritize your tasks and put the first things first. You decide what's most important and do those tasks yourself.

If possible, you delegate all other tasks. If you don't have anyone to delegate them to, you simply do those tasks AFTER you do the most important tasks. Sometimes that means you don't get something done. That's okay. Most officers I know spend most of their time doing the WRONG tasks. Don't that mistake.

In case you don't know, here's what your major priorities as an Officer should be: (1) organizational development, (2) leader development, and (3) all other tasks that support the first two objectives.

I define organizational development as the process of setting the tone and vision for the organization, as well as setting goals and

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objectives. It includes mission planning and strategic planning for the organization. Simply put, **it is the process of ensuring your unit is capable of performing its wartime mission.**

Officers set the tone for their organization. We are the ones looking 30 or more days out and planning what needs to be done. This is often referred to as “future operations.” We also have the responsibility to establish organizational goals AND to set and enforce standards within the organization. When these things are done right, your unit is like a well lubricated engine. And when you don’t do this, your organization becomes “one of those” units that no one wants to be in.

Remember, your organization (whether a platoon or Corps) is a reflection of you as the leader. **If your unit sucks, you suck as a leader.** That might be hard to swallow, but it’s the truth. In the NFL, the owners don’t fire the players after an awful season. Instead, they fire the coach! Guess what, you are the coach! So do your job well!

Once you’ve streamlined the organizational development for your unit, your next major objective is leader development. As the boss, you have the personal responsibility to develop your subordinates. You also have the responsibility to ensure your subordinates are developing their subordinates and so forth.

Therefore, you need to first lead by example. That means you sit down with your NCO and counsel him. You tell him what you expect of him (IN WRITING). And you provide periodic feedback, minimum once per quarter.

Once you’ve finished this, you tell him that you expect him to do the same with his followers, and so forth. And you tell him (IN

WRITING) what will happen if he does this and what will happen if he doesn’t do this. Next, your job is to periodically check to make sure he is doing his job. If he isn’t, you hold him accountable. If he is, you give him praise, give him an award, and make sure he knows how you feel.

You repeat this same process with your subordinate officers. I’ll tell you one thing. If you do this, your subordinates will RESPECT you. They will follow you. And do you want to know why? Because 99% of all Army leaders DON’T mentor or develop their subordinates properly.

Also, you need to invest additional time leading OPD and NCOPD classes and having one-on-one time with ALL your subordinate leaders (2 levels down). You don’t always have to be the one doing the counseling either. You could just ask question and LISTEN.

Moreover, you can bring in the unit Sergeant Major, the higher-level commander, a retiree or anyone else qualified to develop your subordinates. How you do is much less important than the fact that YOU DO IT!

One effective way to develop your subordinates is to have a “book of the month or book of the quarter program.” Each month, or each quarter, pick a book and have your subordinates read it. At the end of the month or quarter, spend one hour having a group discussion about the book. This is a simple yet effective way to develop subordinate leaders.

I’ve found that most Army Officers neglect their responsibilities when it comes to counseling and developing their subordinates. My advice to you: DON’T BE LIKE MOST OFFICERS! Lead from the front!

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You should spend 90% of your time on the things listed above. Everything else is part of the 10%. By doing this, you will be a very effective leader. Good luck!

Recommended Book of the Week

Small Unit Leadership by Dan Malone

This is the best book I've ever read on Army leadership. I've read it at least ten times. And I learn something every time I re-read it.



About Charles Holmes

I am a part-time Army Officer in the Maryland National Guard. I'm currently a Major (unless they demoted me). I love to write, teach, train and motivate. Unfortunately, I don't always get to do that as much as I'd like to.

I've got just under sixteen years in the Army. As a civilian, I am a work-at-home entrepreneur. I build websites and have authored six published books. I also have a successful eBay business. I am married to the most incredible lady on this planet, Rachel.

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