BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

Training Management

While the commander is known as the "primary trainer," responsible for the overall readiness of his or her unit, it is the NCO whose day-to-day job consists primarily of training. Indeed, as the trainers of individual Soldiers and small teams, junior NCOs play perhaps the most important role in Soldier training, which the Army asserts is its number one priority with the motto, "Training is what we do, not something we do."

Yet, understanding the integrated process that is the Army training system can be difficult for a newly minted NCO. The Warrior Leader Course's lesson on training management is designed to facilitate this transition from Soldier trainee to Soldier trainer.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Liesl Marelli

Members of the Colorado Army National Guard conduct nine-line medevac and hoist training with the 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, in January at Watkins, Colo. Battle-focused training such as this requires NCOs to know well the Army's training system and planning process.

HOW THE ARMY TRAINS: The Army utilizes a systems approach to training, an analytic method that determines what tasks, conditions and standards units must perform. Overall, training takes place in three domains: institutional schooling, self-study and operational experience. All combine toward one purpose: producing competent, confident, adaptive Soldiers, leaders and units, trained and ready to fight and win the nation's battles.

BATTLE-FOCUSED TRAINING: Seven main principles guide leaders when planning, preparing, executing and assessing battle-focused training. Together, they embody the "top-down/bottom-up" approach, whereby commanders provide training focus, direction and resources, while subordinate leaders provide feedback on unit training proficiency and what the training needs are, then actually execute the training. Battle-focused training is dependent upon understanding the responsibility for and the linkage between collective mission essential tasks that officers are responsible for determining and the supporting individual tasks for which NCOs conduct training.

METL DEVELOPMENT: The mission essential task list catalogs what company-level units and above must train to accomplish their wartime missions. METL tasks are in turn supported by platoon- and squad-level collective tasks as well as individual Soldier tasks. Knowing the METL allows leaders to develop training objectives — tasks, conditions and standards — that support the unit's mission, using available time efficiently.

TRAINING PLANNING: The planning process begins with an assessment of the unit's proficiency in its mission essential tasks. For the junior NCO, leader books and battle rosters will prove indispensable. Based on this assessment, the commander then develops a training strategy that defines the ends, outlines the ways and allocates the means for the training to occur. It does not, however, specify *how* the training should be conducted; this is the purview of the NCO leaders. The final step of the process is the creation of a training plan and training schedules that detail how the training will be executed.

EXECUTING TRAINING: Training execution involves preparation for training, conducting the training and recovery from training. However, the training process is not considered complete until a proper assessment has been conducted to determine the effectiveness of the training.

7 principles: Training the Army way

To meet the challenges inherent in preparing for full-spectrum operations, leaders apply seven principles when planning, preparing, executing and assessing effective training.

LEADERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING

Commanders and senior NCOs train subordinates and organizations on the **tasks most important** to mission success, **motivate** and **encourage** innovation, and ensure that training is **a priority** and done **safely**.

NCOS TRAIN INDIVIDUALS, CREWS & SMALL TEAMS

As training is an NCO's primary duty, **NCOs identify** Soldier, crew and small-team tasks and **help officers identify** collective tasks that support the unit's mission-essential tasks. NCOs then **provide and enforce training** that is standards-based and performance-oriented.

TRAIN AS YOU WILL FIGHT

Training should be **realistic, hands-on** and **mirror the conditions** of the expected operational environment. Likewise, it should be **performance-based** — stressing standards, not process — and geared toward **full-spectrum** and **combined-arms** operations.

TRAIN TO STANDARD

Leaders **know and enforce standards**, the measures of performance by which task accomplishment is evaluated. Ultimately, leaders **train to standard, not to time**. Leaders cannot accept substandard performance in order to complete all tasks on the training schedule.

TRAIN TO SUSTAIN

To ensure units are capable of operating continuously and for extended periods while deployed, training should also focus on **maintaining** and **sustaining functional and reliable equipment and personnel**. Equipment — and Soldiers' skills — deteriorate without regular use.

CONDUCT MULTIECHELON & CONCURRENT TRAINING

Simultaneous training of more than one echelon requires **careful, synchronized planning** but is one of the most efficient ways to train. So too is concurrent training, in which leaders identify ways to **make the best use of available time**.

TRAIN TO DEVELOP AGILE LEADERS & ORGS.

Successful leaders are trained in the **art and science** of battle command, are able to **execute mission command**, have an **expeditionary mindset**, create a "**freedom to learn**" environment, are able to **think** and **adapt**, and are able to give subordinates **useful feedback**.

USING ATN

The WLC lesson on training management was based on FM 7-1, Battle-Focused Training, *which has since been replaced by the* ***Training Management How-To*** *section of the* ***Army Training Network*** *website,* ***https://atn.army.mil****. This site combines the training doctrine found primarily in Chapter 4 of FM 7-0,* Training for Full-Spectrum Operations, *with an updatable online resource that features "the practical how-to of planning, preparing, executing and assessing training."*