

PRACTICE EXERCISE LESSON FOUR

Performance, personal, and disciplinary counseling are the most common types of counseling done by leaders in the Army. Keep in mind that when you are counseling it may be necessary to change either the type of counseling and/or the approach to counseling. Often one type of counseling can lead to another. As an example, you may be counseling a soldier for substandard job performance and find that he or she has a personal problem. At this point you must reassess both the type of counseling and the approach. Read the following situation and answer the questions at the end.

PLATOON OBSERVATION POST

You are the platoon sergeant of 2d Platoon, Company A. Company A is an infantry company assigned to a light division. Your platoon has spent the past 3 weeks preparing for the annual Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) exercise. You are comfortable with what you are responsible for and your platoon training plan has shifted to the "sustainment" phase.

After reviewing the ARTEP task list you recognize that you have never observed your squads establish their observation posts (OPs). The following day you decide to observe and accompany SSG Davis, your 3d-squad leader, as he establishes an OP. SSG Davis has been in the platoon for 2 years. He is one of your better squad leaders. He is married, lives in government quarters, and has two daughters, ages 8 and 12. He has always been a consistently good performer and you feel that you can get a good idea of how well your squads conduct the establishment of an OP by observing SSG Davis.

The next day you observe the following:

SSG Davis begins by conducting a map analysis of the assigned squad area. He looks for likely avenues of approach and decides where he wants to locate the OP. He briefs his team leaders, designates who will be responsible for manning the OP and gives the team leaders time to assemble and brief their teams.

SSG Davis then leads the small patrol to the OP location. When he arrives he establishes security, checks his map to ensure they are at the correct location and then gives final instructions to the OP team.

Everything seems to have gone well but you decide to check the ARTEP manual just to make sure. When you look at the performance measures for establishing an OP, you quickly realize that SSG Davis has located his OP outside the range of the platoon's weapons. His OP cannot be covered by fires from the platoon. Additionally, the OP is on the right hand side of a hilltop. He can observe one avenue of approach but he cannot observe an avenue of approach immediately to his left. Finally, he directs that a 3-man team occupy the OP rather than a 2-man team.

You conduct an after action review with the entire squad but decide that additionally you will counsel SSG Davis separately at a later time. You return to the platoon command post and begin to prepare for the counseling session.

Answer the following questions:

1. What did you observe and record?

2. What elements of performance met or exceeded the standard?

3. What elements of performance failed to meet the standard?

4. What type of counseling should be employed?

5. What counseling approach would you recommend? Why?

6. What are the desired outcomes of the counseling session?

7. How will you give feedback?
