



UNDERSTANDING
SACRIFICE

Activity: Leadership Characteristics and Considerations in the Pacific War



Guiding question:

What makes a great leader in war?

DEVELOPED BY WALT DAVIS

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Subject(s): JROTC, Social Studies

Cemetery Connection: Honolulu Memorial, located within the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific

Fallen Hero Connection: Chief Aviation Pilot James W. Bolton



NHD
NATIONAL
HISTORY DAY

Overview

Using **maps, and** primary and secondary source analysis, students will determine leadership strategies taught and used during the Pacific Theater of World War II. Cooperative groups will read and discuss excerpts from the 1942 primary source, *Leadership for American Army Leaders*, to determine preferred leadership techniques during the war. Students will also discuss leadership in the context of a combat scenario involving an amphibious landing at Peleliu. By examining the memoirs of a young officer at Peleliu, Andrew Haldane, they will assess the overall value of tactical leadership at the line officer level.

Historical Context

As in any war, tactical leadership was a critical factor in World War II. Peleliu was crucial in the Palau Islands chain because of its airfield and its strong concentration of Japanese troops. Peleliu was on a geographic flank of the Philippines and the Allies could not allow Japanese forces to interfere with the upcoming invasion of the Philippines. Beginning in

September 1944, the Allies invaded this island in an operation expected to require only a few days. However, because of an extensive network of tunnels on the island's rocky terrain and a willingness to fight to the death, Japanese forces were able to hold key portions of the island for over two months and inflict a 40% casualty rate on the Allied forces.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Describe the role of leadership education in the Pacific Theater of World War II;
- Evaluate the leadership principles taught to officers headed to the Pacific; and
- Participate in a simulation that will require students to apply these principles in action.

“Leadership is the primary factor impacting organizational effectiveness. In wartime, it can save or cost lives. I believe history curricula tend to overlook the impact of tactical leadership at the line officer or noncommissioned officer levels. This lesson is intended to address this gap and teach practical leadership skills that are integral in our JROTC program goals for our cadets.”

— Lt. Col. (Ret.) Walt Davis

Davis teaches Air Force JROTC at Edisto High School in Cordova, SC.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt)

Combined Arms Research Library

cdm16040.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll8/id/3384/rec/5

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt)

Combined Arms Research Library

cdm16040.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll8/id/2733/rec/2

Edward L. Munson, *Leadership for American Army Leaders*, 1942 (excerpt)

U.S. Army

Secondary Sources

Kid Wongsrichanalai, "Dark Places of the Earth, Storming the Pacific," *The Bowdoin Orient*, April 18, 2003

Internet Archive

archive.org/stream/Bowdoin_Orient_v.132_no.1-24_2002-2003#page/n353/mode/1up

Map, *Assault on Peleliu 15-23 September 1944*

U.S. Marine Corps Historical Center

Video, "To lay so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom", 2017 ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

youtu.be/3DJf5yy2lls

Materials

- Leadership Training Packet
- Peleliu Leadership Considerations Sheet
- Leadership Case Study Instructions and Rubric
- Computer with projector and speakers to access *"To lay so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom"* video.

Lesson Preparation

- Activity One:
 - Computer with internet capability and projector to access *"To lay so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom"* video.
- Activity Two:
 - Divide students into groups of two or three students each.
 - Make (or share digitally) one Leadership Training Packet for each group of two or three students.
- Activity Three:
 - Stack desks to create amphibious tractors for each group to work from (if desired).
 - Divide students into groups of five or six students each.
 - Make one copy of the Peleliu Leadership Considerations Sheet for each group.
- Assessment:
 - Make one copy of the "Dark Places of the Earth, Storming the Pacific" article and Leadership Case Study Instructions and Rubric for each student.
- Test all online resources before class.

Procedure

Activity One: Warm-Up (15 minutes)

- Play the short video, *"To lay so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom"* for students.
- Lead a discussion by asking students, *What motivates a soldier to "lay a costly sacrifice" in the face of horrendous physical and emotional risk?*
 - **Teacher Tip:** Motivation for fighting through risk is influenced by leadership. This could include leadership of officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Consider the personal characteristics of leadership that influence people to achieve a task as part of a team.

Activity Two: Primary Sources on World War II Tactical Leadership (30 minutes)

- Explain to students that during World War II there was a large need for both commissioned and non-commissioned officers in the U.S. military.
 - **Teacher Tip:** Officers needed to be taught leadership skills quickly in order to assume their duties on the front lines. Today students will be reading excerpts from Munson's *Leadership for American Army Leaders*, a 1942 book used to teach young officers key principles of leadership. Students will also read excerpts from two *Combat Lessons*, documents created to share lessons learned in combat with officers who did not have this experience. Both were published in 1944.
- Divide students into groups of two or three students each.
- Give each group one Leadership Training Packet.
- Direct students to divide and read their excerpts, share what they have learned, and respond to the Leadership Training Questions as a group.
- Monitor students and respond to questions as a group.
- Allow groups time to respond to the questions on the front of the packet.
- Lead a whole-class discussion using those responses.

Activity Three: Leadership on a Beach Landing - A Combat Scenario (15 minutes)

- Stack desks in a rectangle to simulate approximate size of amphibious tractor. Cardboard boxes could also be used. The approximate dimensions are:
 - length: 26 feet
 - width: 10 feet
 - height: 10 feet

- Divide students into groups of five or six students each.
 - Assign each group to a tractor and have student groups interact from inside the confined space.
 - **Teacher Tip:** A teacher may choose to use photographs, sound, or video from World War II to enhance the scenario and add noise and confusion to the scenario.
- Offer the following scenario to students, *You are a squad leader on an amphibious tractor heading for the reef at beach Orange One at Peleliu. There are explosions, bullets, rockets, fire, smoke, and one of your Marines is vomiting on the tractor floor.*
- Distribute one copy of the Peleliu Leadership Considerations Sheet to each group.
- Ask each group to discuss how they need to be a leader in this situation. Prompt them to rank their priorities at each of the following points in time:
 - *What are your primary considerations at this time?*
 - *What do you need to do before you land on the beach?*
 - *What do you need to do when you land on the beach?*
 - *What do you need to do once you have reached cover at some point off the beach?*
- Allow students to discuss this scenario with their groups and share with the larger class.
- Lead a debrief, asking students to make connections between their theory of leadership and the leadership documented by officers on Peleliu.

Assessment (45 minutes)

- Distribute one copy of the article, “Dark Places of the Earth, Storming the Pacific” to each student. Ask each student to read the article independently.
- Ask students:
 - *What leadership characteristics did Haldane exhibit?*
 - *How important were these characteristics to the U.S. Marines at Peleliu?*
 - *How does Haldane’s experience compare to the Combat Lessons and excerpts from the Munson book we read earlier?*
- Distribute the Leadership Case Study Instructions and Rubric to each student. Ask students to synthesize their learning by responding with an extended paragraph answering the following prompt: *Andrew Haldane was a trained military officer who experienced combat. Based on his training and his experience, write an essay addressing the following points:*
 - *What leadership characteristics did Haldane exhibit?*
 - *How did these traits manifest themselves at Peleliu?*

Use specific examples from the primary and secondary sources to support your response.
- The Leadership Case Study Rubric can be used to score this assessment.

Methods for Extension

- Students with more interest in the role of leadership in World War II may research other leaders in other campaigns across the Pacific.
- Students may come up with their own ideas of a set of desirable or effective leadership traits in a collaborative digital tool like Padlet and/or Thinglink. These traits may include issues like integrity, drive, self-confidence, intelligence, knowledge, and desire.
- Students may research an overview of basic leadership styles (e.g. autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, Mouton Grid) and assess for a particular campaign or leader in the Pacific.
- Students may produce a Google slideshow on their chosen World War II figure that they may share in an oral presentation to the class.
 - Presentations may include who, what, when, where, why of their leader.
 - Presentations may include primary source data like census records, where they are interred, and obituaries.
 - Presentations may include a reflection on how the individual's specific leadership qualities contributed to the war effort.
- The American Battle Monuments Commission maintains U.S. military cemeteries overseas. These cemeteries are permanent memorials to the fallen, but it is important that students know the stories of those who rest here. To learn more about the stories of Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice, visit abmc.gov/education and NHDSilentHeroes.org.
- Teachers can enhance students' interest in World War II and leadership by exploring these related lesson plans:
 - [Confidence and Concerns: Allied Advances into Germany](#)
 - [Making a Difference: Service & Sacrifice at the Battle of Midway](#)
 - [Operation Invasion: Reaching the Japanese Mainland](#)

Adaptations

- Teachers may adapt the project to one-on-one coaching with a student during project time, designed around his/her specific challenges.
- Teachers may assign peer teachers inside cooperative groups with students who need additional help to assist instruction and relate pertinent information.
- Teachers may allow more time outside classroom block to complete activity for students that need additional help.
- Activity Two may be completed without any multimedia to limit distractions for some students with special needs.

Leadership Training Packet

Directions: Divide the readings. Read your selection and share what you have learned with your group. Respond to the following questions as a group.

1. According to the U.S. Army, what are the qualities of a good leader?

2. Why are these traits important?

3. Which do you think is the most important of these characteristics? Why?

4. Did the U.S. Army see one particular way of leadership being the best or did it recognize individual leadership styles?

5. In what type of situation would leadership matter most?

6. What types of challenges would military officers face in the Pacific Theater? Do these documents help address these challenges?

Leadership Training Packet

Edward L. Munson, *Leadership for American Army Leaders, 1942* (excerpt)

U.S. Army

“Too much wise-cracking on the part of the leader will also inevitably result in wise-crack replies from his troops. The American soldier is too used to that kind of talk to resist coming back with it if he thinks he can get away with it. He will have reason to think he can get away with it if he is habitually on the receiving end of such remarks.” (page 15)

“Timidity due to lack of experience is the chief cause of this lack of decision, especially in younger officers. Haste is no remedy for such timidity. A decision must be thought out. A habit of rushing ahead blindly merely to be doing something is stupid - and stupidity in battle almost always leads into needless danger and loss. Only by observation, and plenty of practice and effort, and by some intelligent self-analysis, can a leader develop the self-confidence he needs.” (page 25)

“A man who builds up his own self-confidence -- the courage of his convictions, and faith in his ability to carry out what he thinks needs doing -- is rarely possessed of doubt.” (page 25)

“In final analysis, leaders and the troops they lead must above all things have constant practice in the development of initiative so that when the unexpected happens, as it is always doing in war, they will be used to the idea of having to sum things up and having to act with the utmost speed.” (page 32)

“The value of learning lies in its application to future action; the true purpose of training, then, is to prepare for a rapid and efficient adjustment to any new situation of war. The discipline, citizenship, and vocational training to be gained in military service are unquestionably of high value to the soldier and to the nation - but these things must either be inherent in military training or else by-products of it. For the ultimate goal of military training is to increase the proportion of the known to the unknown in preparing for the situations that will be encountered in battle. Military training itself is an effort to secure desired responses when future military conditions are presented.” (page 74)

“Training thus confers an ability to be more or less mechanical in the execution of acts. It makes the horrors and hardships of war much less noticeable as a result of mental concentration on a fixed purpose. It gives confidence, in that the soldier vaguely recognizes that if his mind becomes confused in combat he has nevertheless so habituated himself to a large variety of experiences that his trained muscles and trained nervous system will still permit him to carry on the task and thus enable his aggressive and defensive powers to continue.” (page 75)

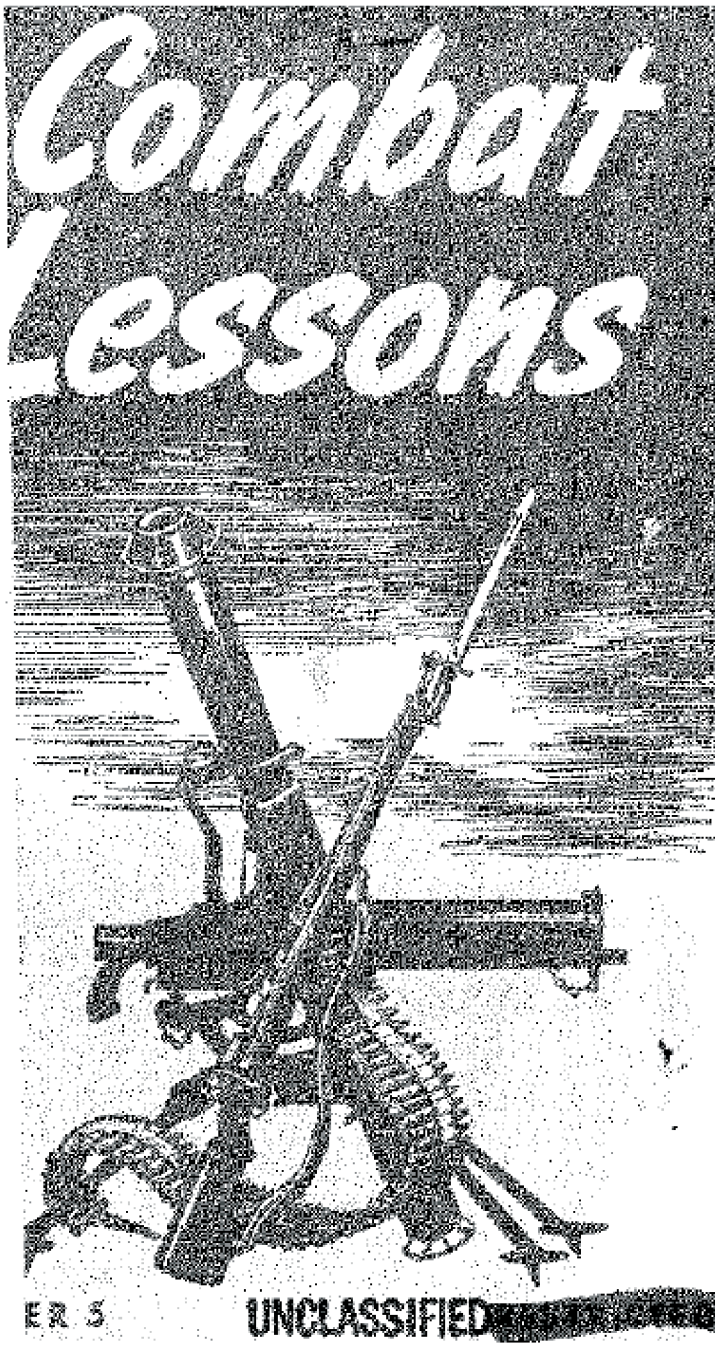
"First of all, an instructor must *know his subject himself*, thoroughly and completely. If he is poorly prepared or partially informed he will fool nobody; he will lose prestige in the eyes of his men - and their attention will unquestionably wander from the subject under discussion to the unpreparedness and lack of knowledge of the instructor himself. Worse, this lack of knowledge will deeply affect his own enthusiasm, and his manner will become self-conscious and diffident rather than interested, alive, and vital, as his manner must be if he hopes to put his training over." (page 77)

"It is perfectly true that in our expanding Army there are thousands of leaders who will realize, as they read the paragraph just preceding, that they have not yet had the time or the training to gain a full knowledge of the many things they must know. Before giving instruction, it is up to such leaders to do everything in their power to acquire all the knowledge they can. This naturally means that they must squeeze in every possible extra hour at night and over week-ends, with the official manuals and other aids, to keep at least one jump ahead of the troops they are instructing." (page 77)

"In final analysis, then, a leader's job is not alone one of housekeeping, of training, of example, of command; it enters just as completely into his men's thinking as into their physical existence. He is their guide, their director, their chief -- their chief in everything from military discipline to, if need be, the final exhortation to the extreme activity, effort, and sacrifice of battle." (page 96)

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt), Cover and acknowledgements

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Contributions from readers are invited either in the form of suitable material or suggestions for future issues. Correspondence should be addressed to the Combat Analysis Section, Operations Division, War Department General Staff, Washington 25, D. C. Requests for extra copies should be made through regular distribution channels.

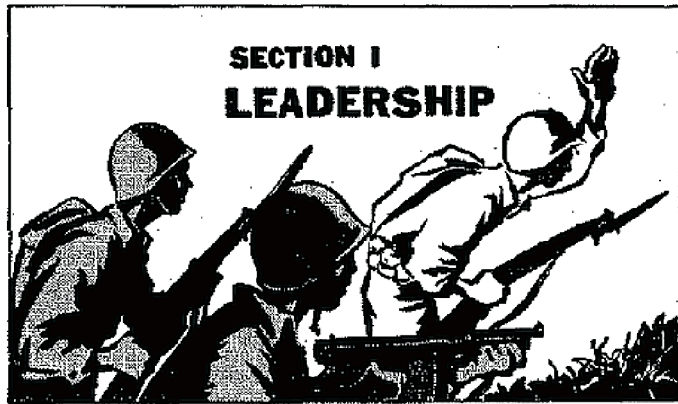
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S (2); F (2).

For explanation of symbols, see FM 21-6.

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt), p.1-2

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Leadership is, and will always be, one of the most important factors in influencing battle. Much has appeared in previous issues on this subject, but reports from the field still show that leadership is a subject on which too much cannot be said.

Leadership is not a quality that pertains to officers alone. In countless cases, the private soldier has jumped forward to take charge of a critical situation when his appointed leaders have become casualties. Take the case of *Private First Class John C. Squires*, an infantry platoon runner in ITALY, who was awarded the Medal of Honor and subsequently promoted to the grade of sergeant for the action described below.

Aggressive Action "On the night of his company's attack on strongly held enemy positions in and around SPACCASASSI CREEK, near PADIGLIONE, ITALY, Private Squires participated in his first offensive action. As platoon runner, he braved intense artillery, mortar, and antitank gunfire in order to investigate the effects of an antitank mine explo-

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sion on the leading platoon. Despite shells which burst close to him, Squires made his way 50 yards forward to the advance element, noted the situation, reconnoitered a new route of advance, and informed his platoon leader of the casualties sustained and the alternate route. Acting without orders, he rounded up stragglers, organized a group of lost men into a squad, and led them forward.

"When the platoon reached SPACCASASSI CREEK and established an outpost, Squires, knowing that almost all of the noncommissioned officers were casualties, placed eight men in position on his own volition, disregarding enemy machine-gun, machine-pistol, and grenade fire which covered the creek draw. When his platoon had been reduced to 14 men, he twice brought up reinforcements. On each trip he went through barbed wire and across an enemy minefield under intense artillery and mortar fire. Three times in the early morning the outpost was counterattacked. Each time Squires ignored withering enemy automatic fire and grenades which struck all around him and fired hundreds of rounds of rifle and BAR ammunition at the enemy, inflicting numerous casualties and materially aiding in repulsing the attacks.

"Following these fights, he moved 50 yards to the south end of the outpost and engaged 21 German soldiers in individual machine-gun duels at point-blank range, forcing all 21 enemy to surrender and capturing 13 Spandau guns. After questioning a German officer prisoner to learn how the Spandau gun functioned, he placed the captured guns in position and instructed other members of his platoon in their operation. The next night, when the Germans attacked the outpost again, he killed three Germans and wounded more with captured 'potato-masher' grenades and fire from his Spandau gun."

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt), p.3-4

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Determined and rational action by any individual may be the spark necessary to kindle in others the flame of resolution which turns defeat into victory.

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Quick Thinking The following incident reported by *Colonel G. B. Devore* from ITALY shows how quick thinking pays dividends: "The executive officer of a tank destroyer company in position south of ROME spotted a group of enemy foot soldiers making their way under cover toward his CP, which was near the front line. He immediately organized 9 of the 11 men at the CP into a patrol to surround the enemy group, which he estimated to be about 12 men. On advancing, he soon realized that in addition to those he had detected there was a large number of Germans in a nearby gulch. Seeing that he was hopelessly outnumbered in men and fire power, he changed his plans and decided to dispose his nine men in positions around the entire group and to have them open fire simultaneously at his command. The initial volley killed two Germans, wounded several others, and created a misleading impression of strength. As a result, 138 well-armed German soldiers and three officers, confused by the flanking fire and fire on their rear, surrendered to nine men armed with only seven M1 rifles and one carbine."

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Confident Tone of Voice *The Commanding Officer of the 1st Marine Division Hospital, in a statement to Lieutenant Colonel Arthur G. King, Medical Corps, during the early days on GUADALCANAL stressed an important feature of effective leadership as follows: "Our officers are particularly*

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careful to give no orders, or to say anything, except in calm, measured, and quiet tones. It takes tremendous self-control, and we not only pride ourselves on it, but also require it. It helps the officer to control his own sense of excitement or panic in times of stress, and it gives the men confidence and keeps them calm." That this was put into effect in his organization and by himself under the most trying circumstances was observed repeatedly by *Colonel King, who stated that the manner in which the officers and men of the hospital functioned under aerial bombardment and shelling by the Jap Navy's heaviest guns proved the value of this training. The effect was observed to be in marked contrast to the psychological effect on listeners of the hysterical "----- it, get your head down," or "Put that fool light out," heard commonly from many younger officers, whose terrific tension was at once transmitted to all listeners by their tone of voice.*

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Moral Support

"Some men become very nervous in combat; I found that if the NCO circulates around and talks to his men, it brings them out of that condition."—*Technical Sergeant Armor, 29th Infantry Division, France.*

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Gallantry *Staff Sergeant Jessie R. Drowley, leader of an infantry squad on BOUGAINVILLE, whose mission during an attack was to remain under cover as a reserve for assaulting echelons, saw three members of the assault company*

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt), p.5-6

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Infantry and Tanks Mop Up on Bougainville.

fall badly wounded. When intense hostile fire prevented aid from reaching the casualties, he fearlessly rushed forward to carry the wounded to cover. After rescuing two men, Sergeant Drowley discovered an enemy pillbox, undetected by assaulting tanks, that was inflicting heavy casualties upon the attacking force and was the chief obstacle to the success of the advance.

Delegating the rescue of the third man to an assistant, he ran across open terrain to one of the tanks. Signaling to the crew, he climbed to the turret, exchanged his weapon for a submachine gun, and voluntarily rode the deck of the tank, directing it toward the pillbox by tracer fire. The tank, constantly under heavy enemy fire, advanced to within 20 feet of the pillbox, where Sergeant Drowley received a severe bullet wound in the chest. Refusing to return for medical treatment he remained on the tank and continued to direct its progress until the enemy position was definitely located by the crew.

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At this point he again was wounded by small-arms fire, losing his left eye and falling to the ground. He remained alongside the tank until the pillbox had been completely demolished and another, directly behind the first, destroyed. Sergeant Drowley, his voluntary mission successfully accomplished, returned alone for medical treatment. For this action he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

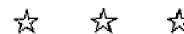


High Standards Pay Off The good leader strives to keep



himself presentable even under the most trying conditions and requires the same of his men. Sometimes it is hard to do, but in the long run it pays

dividends in maintenance of equipment, health of the men, and esprit of the command. Colonel L. S. Griffing, *Field Artillery*, observed of the men of the *Fifth Army* before CASSINO, ITALY: "Personal appearance of the men and officers was superior. Daily shaves, washing of the hands and face, washing of clothes, and care of weapons and equipment were emphasized. Saluting at the front was the best I've seen anywhere. I never saw a dopey-looking combat soldier. This is a lesson to us—'The alert survive'."



A tank battalion commander, *1st Armored Division*, ITALY: "My officers and men were required to shave daily and to take every opportunity to bathe and wash their

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt), p.7-8

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clothes. The officers set the example, and the men readily followed. This habit of personal cleanliness acted as an incentive to the men to keep their equipment clean as well. The sum total was an increased pride in their outfit and, when the chips were down, greater combat efficiency."



Good Leadership Develops Discipline *A Battalion Commander of the 22nd Infantry fighting in FRANCE, giving his views on the necessity for emphasis on discipline during training, stated: "Many casualties were incurred among officers and NCO's in some of my companies, because they literally had to lead the men by the hand to insure accomplishment of their mission. However, the companies whose commanders had required a high standard of discipline suffered fewer casualties and were able to move faster in the attack than those in which discipline was lax."*

While we speak of the importance of leadership in battle we must not forget that it is also important during the training periods prior to combat. It is during these periods that the discipline which must be present on the battlefield is developed. The degree of discipline attained is in direct proportion to the leadership of the commander.



Energy and Drive *An infantry company commander in discussing a night attack of his company in FRANCE stated: "The lieutenant who commanded my left platoon, the sergeant who commanded my right platoon, and I had to expose ourselves continuously to get the new men moving.*

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We had to rush one group of six or eight men to the new location, then run back to move the next group, and so on."

Commanders of small units must keep continuously in mind that in offensive operations the advances of battalions and larger units are nothing but the sum of the coordinated advances of their squads. If the squads do not advance, the platoon, company, and battalion do not advance. Energy and drive in the leadership of small units are therefore essential to success in offensive operations. Small units must be kept moving, halting to fire only long enough to make possible a continuation of their own forward movement. Junior officers and NCO's are the ones who must start the ball and keep it rolling.



LEADERSHIP *Intelligent leadership by men who know their jobs and have the drive and courage*
IN
SMALL UNITS *to carry out missions assigned to them is the key to successful small-unit operations.*

To lead his platoon in the capture of a German pillbox was the mission assigned a technical sergeant in Company E, 109th Infantry. How he brought to his job intelligence, drive, and courage is the story told here.

"Our understrength company was held up on a hill just inside the German border by German mortar and MG fire. A German machine gun on our left flank was covering the draw in front of us. There were also Germans up the road to our front in a pillbox from which they were apparently directing mortar and artillery fire. Our acting company commander ordered my platoon of about 12 men, assisted by a tank, to take and hold this pillbox.

Combat Lessons, Number 5, 1944 (excerpt), p.9-10

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"I looked over the map and the terrain and saw that there was a fire trench directly behind the pillbox. I got my men together after dark and withdrew to where we were to meet the tank. The tank commander and I made our plans together, and I carefully oriented my men.

"We moved out at 1030 the next morning, following the tank down the road. The tank fired at the pillbox every once in a while until we reached the area where the tank had to stop. I told the tank commander, 'Keep firing until we get so close that you have to stop.' I then started one of my squads toward the pillbox, about 350 yards away. They ran into some barbed wire, which they started to cut; but as I figured we couldn't waste time cutting wire, I found a way around it and led the squad forward. We had been receiving only mortar fire, but now we ran into MG fire, which caused some of my men to stop following me. Sergeant Moulding got the man with the BAR and three riflemen to keep moving toward the pillbox. I yelled back to them, 'Keep coming! These Heinies can't hit us.' Another sergeant and three of his men kept coming, but we were down to nine men now.

"About the time I got to the pillbox the tank cut loose again. It threw a little dirt on me, and I prayed it would be his last round. My men were still coming up, one of them carrying 10 lbs. of TNT. While I waited for them I tossed a couple of hand grenades at the back door just to keep the Germans in until I got some help. When they arrived one sergeant and two men covered the fire trench in the rear while our demolition men placed the TNT by the door of the box, but it failed to go off. The rest of our company had advanced to within 200 yards, so I got two more 10-lb. charges from them. The second one also failed to go off. We finally got the third charge

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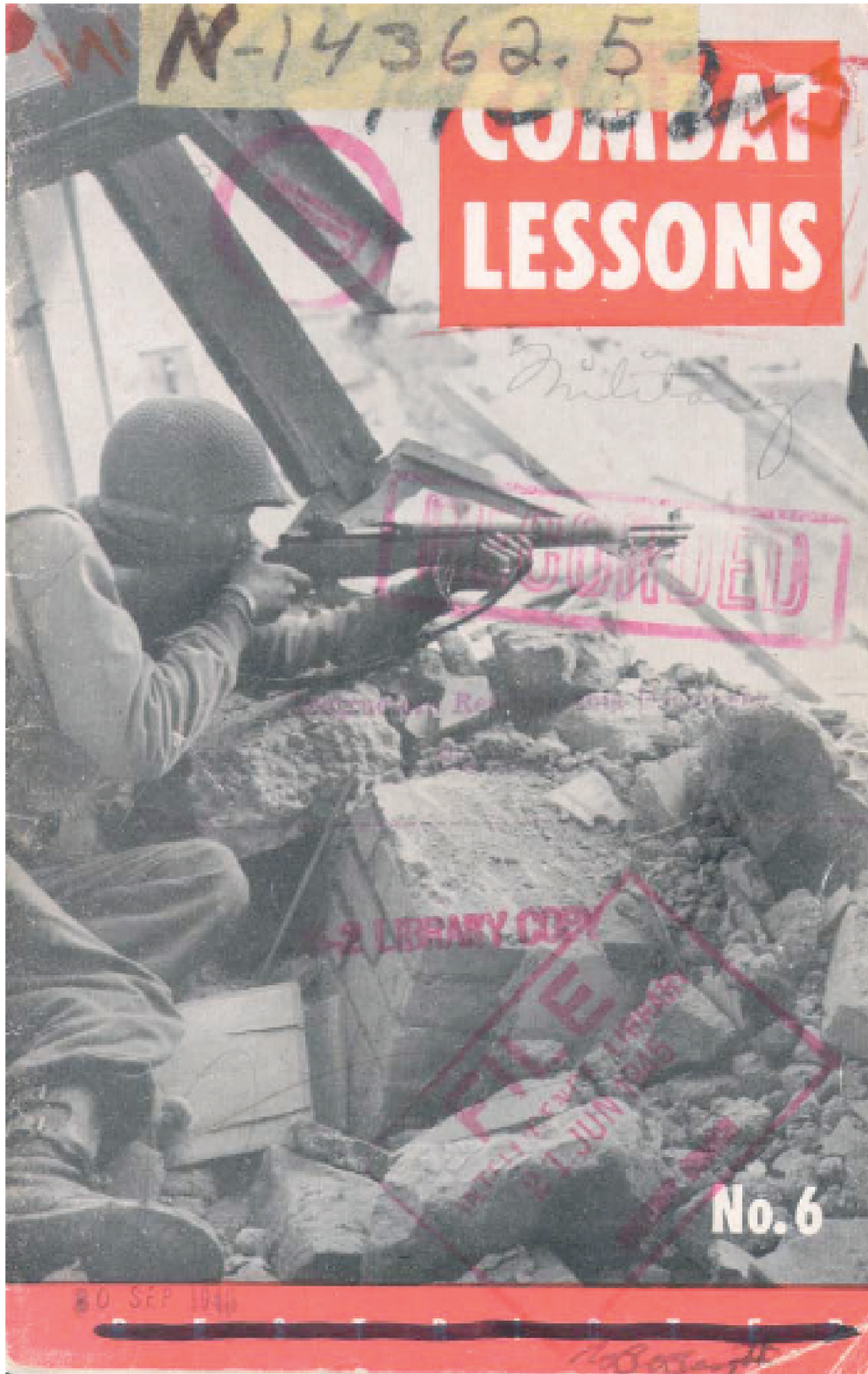
in and at last she blew. It didn't even bother the box, but I guess it jarred the Heinies. I left two men to guard the box in case they came out and with the rest of the men pushed on to the fire trench. It was empty and so was a Heinie sleeping quarters into which we threw a couple of grenades through an open door. About that time I heard a shot from the pillbox and ran back to see what was happening. Twenty-one Germans, including a captain and two lieutenants, were marching out with their hands over their heads. One had tried to make a run for it but got himself a couple of slugs from an M1 rifle. The rest figured it was time to quit.

"After searching the prisoners, I figured we had better take a look inside the pillbox. I took one of the prisoners and made him start moving stuff in case there were any booby traps, but fortunately we found none. I sent the prisoners back with three of my men and set up a defense with the rest who had come up by this time. There were only nine of us, but it was all that could be spared until morning when they sent us some help. We held the position for several days before we withdrew to reorganize."

The sergeant knew his job. He planned his attack after careful reconnaissance and consultation with his tank commander and then arranged for the demolitions he knew he would need. He set an example by leading the attack himself. His initiative in solving the problems which confronted him as the attack progressed, and in reorganizing and setting up the defense of his position, clinched the success of the operation he had so carefully planned.

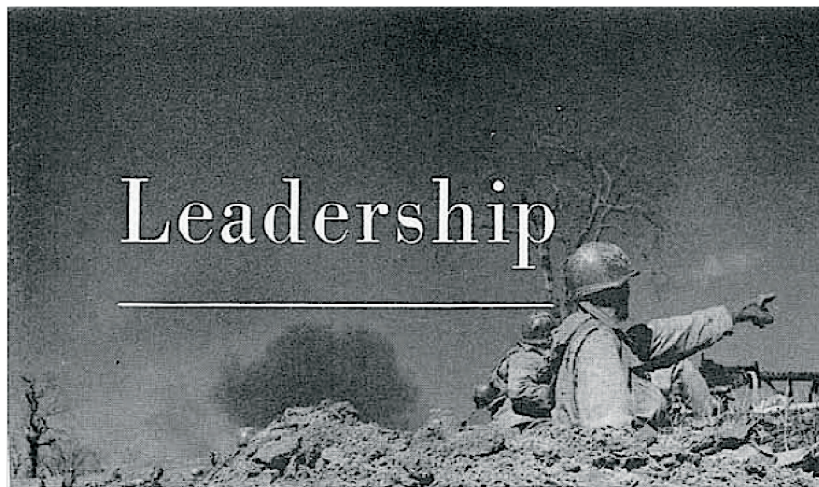
Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), Cover

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Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.1

Combined Arms Research Library



There is no typical military leader. Patterns of traits and behaviors exhibited by successful leaders vary infinitely. However, among men of proven leadership ability, certain characteristics seem to be consistently observable; these characteristics, some of which are reviewed in the paragraphs to follow, are worthy of study and cultivation by every soldier who leads or may be called upon to lead men in combat.

What the GI Wants in His Leaders

The men and officers of an infantry battalion on combat duty with the *Twelfth Army Group* in FRANCE were asked this question: "What qualities, in your opinion, make a man a good leader?" Here are the most frequently mentioned leadership qualities as worded in the men's replies:

"A leader must have a thorough knowledge of his job and must see that his men know that he knows it.

"He must rotate duties and missions without partiality, exercising judgment and fairness in all decisions

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.2

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and never allowing personal feelings to affect the performance of his duties.

“He must think clearly and be able to make quick, sound decisions. He must give orders with an air of confidence even when the going gets rough.

“He should show a cheerful front under even the most trying circumstances and never appear excited.

“He must make the men feel that he is interested in them and doing his best to help them. The men should know that he will stick up for them if need arises.

“The leader should have something called ‘personality.’ If the men do not feel free to come to him, he is not their leader. He should know each man personally and understand the job of each man under him.

“He must earn the confidence and respect of his men by sharing their common lot; they should be able to think of him as one of them.



“Stick up for your men.”

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.3

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“He must comply with his own rules and regulations and should never ask his men to undertake a mission that he would be unable or unwilling to attempt himself.

“He must be in the fight with his men, but even when setting an example of courage should not expose himself foolishly nor allow or expect his men to do so.

“The good leader encourages; he does not nag.

“The leader should keep his men oriented as to their mission and situation.”

Leadership Rises to Emergencies

Says a *Marine Corps officer* after action in the GILBERT Islands: “Leaders of all ranks must be prepared to meet emergencies and sudden changes in situations and to furnish the spark of inspiration when their units have become discouraged. The true leader is the one who takes the men and materials at hand and gets the job done in spite of complications.”

The value of a leader of this emergency-tackling variety is well proved in this story of *Staff Sergeant H. L. Schmidt, Combat Infantryman*, during an action in FRANCE: “When his platoon leader and platoon sergeant had become casualties and the platoon had been disorganized by heavy enemy fire, Sergeant Schmidt took command and reorganized the platoon. Then he advanced alone for 100 yards and with hand grenades knocked out two enemy machine-gun nests. This feat reinspired the members of the platoon, and under Schmidt’s leadership they pushed forward and captured a strongly defended enemy position. The leadership and initiative of this one soldier not only

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.4

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saved his platoon but also opened the way for the entire battalion to advance to its objective.”

C Leadership Exploits Surprise

From the *Battalion Commander, 2nd Battalion, 47th Infantry, FRANCE*, comes a striking example of the value of good planning—in this case based upon the element of surprise: “While going through the Siegfried Line, a platoon was given the mission of



“Surprise saves lives.”

knocking out a bunker situated in a clearing on a steep and heavily wooded hill. The platoon worked its way up the hill slowly and stealthily, moving through the woods in line of squad columns on a 50-yd. front. Scouts were out about 20 yards ahead. To facilitate control, the platoon leader and platoon sergeant acted as center scouts.

“The platoon halted at the edge of the clearing only about 75 yards from the bunker. Though they saw three enemy walking along nearby, the platoon leader

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.5

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and his men held their fire until they were discovered. At that moment, they shot the three Germans and rushed the bunker. Two Germans outside the pillbox surrendered immediately and a couple of grenades thrown into the entrance of the bunker brought about the prompt surrender of the remaining garrison which numbered 22 men. This surprise attack gained the bunker without a single shot from its defenders."

d Leadership Means Quick Planning

An intelligence report mentions this instance of quick planning resulting in "mission accomplished": "Staff Sergeant Robert G. Rhodes, Company B, 315th Infantry, 79th Division, was in charge of the platoon that had just captured a certain hill position on the Seine River, north of Paris. The inevitable counter-attack was expected at any minute and the sergeant lost no time in preparing for it. He placed one squad close to the crest of the elevation; this group was to serve as a base of fire. The other two squads he distributed, one on the right front and one on the left front, both well forward. The two flank squads were given German machine pistols and German machine guns and were given orders not to fire until the enemy had advanced *beyond* their position.

"As expected, a German battalion attacked in strength, advancing steadily toward the center squad, which kept firing away as per plan. The enemy had almost reached the center squad's position when the two flank squads opened up with the German weapons. The Germans were instantly confused, convinced that they were being shot by their own troops. As a result, this one platoon defeated and pushed back a

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.6

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whole enemy battalion—a feat that would have been impossible except for the ready resourcefulness and ingenious planning of the platoon leader.”

e Leadership Is Aggressive

The value of aggressive action even against superior enemy forces is again illustrated by this story of a small group of men from the *502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, FRANCE*, as recounted by *Private First Class William Rubendael*: “At daylight on Christmas morning, one group of 20 men encountered a German company of about 150 men supported by 4 Mark IV tanks. The Americans had 4 light machine guns, 2 bazookas, and their rifles and carbines.

“The Germans were already digging in when discovered. Their tanks soon opened fire on the farmhouse around which the Americans had taken positions and forced our men back about 200 yards to the edge of a patch of woods. At that point the hard-pressed platoon leader decided that his best defense was bold attack. He borrowed several riflemen from a nearby company and then had his machine guns keep the enemy infantry down and their tanks buttoned up while the two bazooka teams and the riflemen moved around to the German company’s flank. This small but aggressive maneuvering force inflicted heavy casualties upon the enemy infantry, knocked out three tanks, and forced the other tank to withdraw to a point where it was destroyed by an adjacent American unit.

“Not content with this accomplishment, the paratroopers moved on to attack a nearby enemy-held farmhouse. The German occupants surrendered,

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.7

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turning over their weapons to some American prisoners they had been holding in the same building.”



Leadership Means Assuming Responsibility

The ability of enlisted men to step forward and take charge in the absence of appointed leaders has in many reported instances saved the lives of comrades, made possible the accomplishment of difficult missions, and prevented the serious disruption of important plans. The following account by the *Chief of Staff, 3d Infantry Division, FRANCE*, describes how one emergency was met through the efforts of an enlisted leader who assumed responsibility for getting the mission accomplished: “One evening, a platoon leader from one company of the 7th Infantry was wounded while returning to his command post with orders for a scheduled night attack. His platoon sergeant, knowing that an attack had been planned and realizing from the platoon leader’s absence that something had gone wrong, proceeded to the company command post, obtained the plan of attack, and took charge of the situation. He led the platoon through a booby-trapped minefield to the assigned objective, directed dispersion of the men in spite of heavy enemy artillery harassment, reconnoitered to within 50 yards of the enemy positions, and organized the area of defense. His platoon had already begun to dig in when first detected by the enemy. The sergeant then organized and directed offensive fire so effectively that the enemy withdrew from buildings in the area. This timely execution of pre-attack plans, in spite of the platoon leader’s absence, enabled the attack on the town to proceed according to plan.”

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.8

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Leaders Must Maintain Control

The value of a leader is measured by his ability to keep his men working as a team. While it must be recognized that some situations can be met only by heroic action on the part of individual leaders, the most important function of a leader is to direct and coordinate the efforts of a group. The following remarks by the *Commanding Officer, 6th Armored Infantry Battalion, ITALY*, serve as an excellent commentary on this problem.

“The average platoon leader and NCO are brought up with the idea that leadership means ‘leadership from the front.’ The fact that casualties of platoon leaders and sergeants are disproportionately high proves that this fallacy is too generally accepted. Actually, the platoon leader’s position is a roving one; it is impossible to stipulate any definite position from which he shall operate. At times, he will be as far forward as the scouts, but his normal position should be wherever he can best control his platoon. Casualties among veteran leaders would be fewer if we properly instructed each platoon leader as to what his job is and what is expected from him.

Make Intelligent Use of Junior Leaders

“The shortage of junior officers makes it necessary to exercise judgment in employment of commissioned officers. Leadership of routine missions should be assigned to sergeants whenever possible. Platoon officers should be used only for missions which actually call for commissioned leadership. This policy insures a reserve of capable leaders for the more urgent assignments and serves to develop NCO leaders.”

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.9

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Leadership Involves Personal Contact

Personal contact between a leader and his men is still an important factor, as is reiterated by a *Battalion Commander, 36th Armored Regiment, FRANCE*: “The presence of high-ranking officers—battalion, regimental, and division commanders—well forward, gives men confidence.”



“Leadership involves personal contact.”

Briefing—A “Must” in Practical Leadership

A *Battalion Commander, 6th Armored Division, FRANCE*, emphasizes briefing: “Unless each man knows not only his own but also his unit’s mission, there can be no intelligent continuity of effort when casualties occur. The individual learns his job during training; confidence in command is developed during maneuvers and combat; but knowledge of the mission can be gained only through careful briefing on the ground. Results obtained by careful briefing were shown during a recent operation in which 800 Germans were captured and 200 killed at a cost to us of 16 casualties.”

Combat Lessons, Number 6, 1944 (excerpt), p.10

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The *Regimental Surgeon, 115th Infantry, FRANCE*, makes this statement: "Battalion and regimental surgeons will manage evacuation problems more intelligently and alertly if they are kept acquainted with the situation. The indulgent doling out of necessary information in response to repeated requests by the surgeon discourages him and causes him to lose incentive and initiative."

COMMENT: In all operations, large or small, not only the medics but all attached units should be kept fully informed as to the mission and situation so that their supporting roles can be efficiently accomplished.

Don't Overdo Example Leadership

The *Divisional and Regimental Staffs of the 2d, 28th, and 83d Infantry Divisions in FRANCE and GERMANY* agree that: "The constant emphasis on 'example' leadership in our training and teaching has resulted in our losing many valuable leaders—from generals to corporals. Experienced leaders are difficult to replace; the loss is seriously affecting the efficiency of some of our units. Emergencies sometimes arise which require leaders to expose themselves and by personal example get an attack moving or calm down men who are about to break. Some leaders, however, carry their job to the point that their presence is almost standard operating procedure; as a result, their subordinates do not move unless the leader is there. Each officer and NCO and enlisted man should be trained to do his job and then be given the chance and responsibility of doing it."

10

end.

Peleliu Leadership Considerations Sheet

You are a squad leader on an amphibious tractor heading for the reef at beach Orange One at Peleliu. There are explosions, bullets, rockets, fire, smoke, and one of your Marines is vomiting on the tractor floor.

- What are your primary considerations at this time?
- What do you need to do before you land on the beach?
- What do you need to do when you land on the beach?
- What do you need to do once you have reached cover off the beach?

Rank the order of possible considerations from most important to least important at each stage of the invasion. Prioritize what needs to be addressed first, second, and so on.

	What are your primary considerations at this time?	What do you need to do before you land on the beach?	What do you need to do when you land on the beach?	What do you need to do once you have reached cover of the beach?
Establish a casualty collection point location.				
Determine the location of mines, obstacles, booby traps, and improvised explosive devices.				
Determine the location of units in contact with the enemy.				
Count how much ammunition you have remaining.				
Figure out the location of threat personnel, vehicles, and weapons.				

Locate other friendly units.				
Determine the location of all squad members.				
Determine the direction of movement for enemy personnel.				
Determine the availability of supporting fires (mortars and artillery).				
Determine one's location relative to other personnel.				
Determine one's location relative to other personnel.				

Leadership Case Study Instructions

Prompt: Andrew Haldane was a trained military officer who experienced combat. Based on his training and his experience, write an extended paragraph addressing the following points:

- What leadership characteristics did Haldane exhibit?
- How did these traits manifest themselves at Peleliu?

Use specific examples from the primary and secondary sources to support your response.

Leadership Case Study Rubric

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Synthesis of Arguments	Paragraph addresses multiple aspects of leadership, showing both strengths and weaknesses.	Paragraph addresses multiple aspects of leadership.	Paragraph addresses only one or two aspects of leadership.	Paragraph fails to address aspects of leadership.
Historical Evidence	Paragraph includes at least four identifiable references to the sources provided.	Paragraph includes at least three identifiable references to the sources provided.	Paragraph includes at least two identifiable references to the sources provided.	Paragraph includes one or no identifiable references to the sources provided.
Accuracy	Paragraph reveals a deep understanding of the leadership characteristics of Captain Haldane. There are no factual errors or major omissions.	Paragraph reveals a strong understanding of the leadership characteristics of Captain Haldane. There are few factual errors and/or major omissions.	Paragraph reveals a general understanding of the leadership characteristics of Captain Haldane. There are some factual errors and/or major omissions.	Paragraph reveals a minimal understanding of the leadership characteristics of Captain Haldane. There are several factual errors and/or major omissions.
Professional Product	Response follows the format of the assignment with a high degree of creativity. Your work is coherent and convincing with no spelling or grammatical mistakes.	Response follows the format of the assignment with some degree of creativity. Your work is coherent and convincing with few spelling or grammatical mistakes.	Response follows the format of the assignment. Work may contain some no spelling or grammatical mistakes.	Response does not fully follow the format of the assignment, and work lacks coherence. There are multiple spelling or grammatical mistakes that impede understanding.