

Chapter 3

Types of Training

“The best form of ‘welfare’ for the troops is first class training, for this saves unnecessary casualties.”³

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel

The Marine Corps’ UTM program addresses both individual training and collective training within a unit. Individual training develops the technical proficiency of both the Marine and the leader. Collective training builds on individual skills and provides the basis for unit proficiency in executing combat missions.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

Individual Marine training focuses on mastering the skills that support the unit’s METL. The following methods and programs are used to develop individual skills:

- Sustainment training.
- Train-up training.
- Cross-training.
- Managed on-the-job training (MOJT).
- Individual training evaluation.

Sustainment Training

Sustainment training is the repetitive execution of essential, previously mastered tasks. It maintains skill and task performance at the required level of proficiency. The unit commander determines the level of proficiency necessary to accomplish the unit mission. Sustainment training corrects identified performance weaknesses and reinforces strengths. It maintains the required level of readiness and sustains high performance while correcting areas of low proficiency.

Train-up Training

Leaders should provide opportunities for Marines to train at the higher skill levels of their career field once they become proficient in their MOS tasks. Train-up training prepares Marines to perform tasks at higher levels of responsibility. It provides the unit with a broad base of experienced personnel that can assist in the conduct of training and during periods of personnel turbulence or loss. It also prepares Marines for promotion.

Cross-Training

Cross-training is another important method of Marine training. It is normally performed within a squad, section, or detachment in order to train Marines on other jobs and MOSs within the team. Cross-training allows a small unit to operate, despite personnel shortages, and it broadens a Marine's professional development.

Managed On-the-Job Training

Another effective training technique is MOJT. It may be used to complete a Marine's individual training and to sustain previously mastered skills. It may also be used for train-up or cross-training. In order for MOJT to be effective, the commander and the staff must identify training objectives and aggressively manage the unit's program. The leader conducts the training and evaluates the Marine's performance. MOJT is also used to train personnel for additional duties, such as company training NCO.

Individual Training Evaluation

It is important to evaluate how well the individual Marine can accomplish a task after training. The ITSs for each task are designed to aid in the evaluation process. The performance steps listed for each task can be used as a checklist to determine if training was effective.

COLLECTIVE TRAINING

Teamwork in battle consists of the coordinated, sustained, and successful accomplishment of collective and individual skills and tasks at crew, squad, section, platoon, company, team, squadron and battalion levels. Collective training builds teams that can accomplish the combat mission. Training programs stress collective training because—

- Marines fight best as members of a unit.
- Collective training develops the confidence and teamwork units need for success in combat.
- Collective training is efficient. Marines practice individual skills while developing collective skills under proper supervision.
- Collective training allows leaders to assess a Marine's and a unit's strengths and weaknesses during training exercises.

- Collective training allows leaders to practice leadership skills.
- During collective training, units can train concurrently for MAGTF operations as a combined-arms team in a challenging and realistic environment.

Commanders and leaders are responsible for the collective training of their units. Battalion commanders train company commanders, company commanders train platoon leaders, platoon leaders train squad leaders and crew chiefs, and squad leaders and crew chiefs train individual Marines. The key point is that the leader is a part of the unit and the unit's trainer. The leader trains the unit to perform; but when the unit is tasked or committed, then the leader's primary function is as a member and leader of the unit. The leader or the commander above the leader then assumes the primary role of trainer and evaluator.

Teamwork is essential to success in combat, regardless of the echelon or component involved. Initial squad, crew, or section training helps both leaders and individual Marines understand how their actions relate to those of other team members. Once initial training is completed, commanders have Marines, teams, and staffs practice selected missions and tasks until the tasks become routine. Commanders then challenge their Marines with carefully planned training events. These events should realistically duplicate the stressful, unpredictable, high-pressure environment of actual combat situations. These events can include continuous operations over extended periods of time and the loss of leaders through simulated casualties. Evaluation teams and staffs gather information during these simulated events in order to plan future training.

Techniques for Collective Skills

Leaders and staffs must also train as teams. Some of this training occurs during daily operations, but additional training is usually needed to prepare for combat missions. Effective training techniques include coaching and critiquing by senior leaders, tactical exercises without troops (TEWTs), map exercises (MAPEXs), battle simulations, command field exercises (CFXs), and fire support coordination exercises (FSCXs). TEWTs and MAPEXs train leaders and selected subordinates to consider mission-unique factors and the

best use of terrain and tactics. With a minimum of troop support, CFXs, CPXs, and FSCXs provide commanders and their staffs with opportunities to practice combat missions in realistic settings. Participants perform command, control, and communication functions under stress similar to that of war. A realistic battlefield simulation gives the command group and staff practice in command and control functions, detailed familiarity with battle plans, and a thorough appreciation of the commander's concept of tactical employment.

Preliminary skills and individual tasks must be learned before trainers can concentrate on collective tasks. Training begins with simple tasks conducted under ideal conditions. Once the unit or individuals can perform the tasks under simple conditions, the trainer increases speed, requires greater accuracy, and progressively increases realism until Marines can perform to standard under all situations and conditions described in ITSS manuals and the unit's particular MCCRES volume. Trainers continuously coach and make on-the-spot corrections while individuals practice.

Throughout the time allotted for practice, trainers critique each task to identify what Marines do right or wrong and how to improve their performance. After-action reviews (AARs) are conducted at the end of the training event. If needed, AARs are also conducted during training to correct deficiencies immediately.

Battle Drills

Battle drills are standard methods and techniques used to execute a small unit collective task (e.g., dismounting a vehicle under fire, emplacing a forward arming and refueling point, or operating a crew-served weapon). They are the connecting links between individual and collective tasks. Battle drills are repeated until a unit can instinctively execute its drills to standard.

Battle drills are a set of detailed responses to a specific situation. They are executed by a simple, short command. No supplementary commands are needed, and individual steps and tasks are few. Once Marines are trained to proficiency, drills are executed by instinctive reaction, without reference to any guide or job aid.

Battle drills are similar to football plays. Both must be well rehearsed if the unit is to work effectively as a team. For example, when a quarterback gets to the line of scrimmage and discovers that the defense is stacked against the play that was called in the huddle, he uses a prearranged code to call a new play. Marines must also be so proficient in their drills that they can immediately use or change the drill as the combat situation requires.

Crew and team chiefs, squad leaders, platoon leaders, and company commanders conduct drills. Battle drill training begins simply, often in the motor pool or at some convenient, nearby site. Battle drills follow a specific progression, which is described in figure 3-1.

Since the scope of a drill is limited, it may be trained collectively in the motor pool, in a field, or in a local training area. It may be trained concurrently with higher unit collective training. It may also be practiced during unscheduled training time and as training shortcomings are identified. Appendix C provides a detailed example of an instructor's battle drill exercise lesson guide. Although the example in appendix C is very detailed, commanders must remember that the focus of any battle drill is training and the performance of the task, not the format of the lesson guide or the training aids.

Some drills are too complex to train to standard during one training session. At times, commanders must schedule two or more sessions to achieve proficiency. To build on the information presented and the skills learned during the initial training session, trainers should conduct additional practice sessions as soon after the first session as possible. Since the training was presented previously, a detailed presentation of basic information is not usually needed. A simple demonstration or review of the performance measures may be enough to refresh Marines' memories before practice.

Once individuals and units can perform to standard, leaders increase the level of realism beyond the minimum conditions established by the ITSS manuals and the appropriate MCCRES. Leaders must train individuals to perform under conditions similar to those experienced during combat. Some variable conditions are—

- Enemy capabilities (nuclear, biological, and chemical [NBC]; electronic warfare; smoke; gas).

- Terrain and climate (mountains, deserts, jungles).
- Physical or mental fatigue.
- Situation complexity.
- Day or night operations.

Once the unit has mastered a drill, its performance must be sustained. Sustainment training, performed throughout the year, ensures the maintenance of proficiency required in combat.

Situational Training Exercises

Situational training exercises (STXs) are mission-related, limited- duration exercises designed to train one collective task or a group of related tasks and drills through practice. STXs teach the standard and preferred method for carrying out the task. STXs are more flexible than drills and usually include drills, leader tasks, and individual tasks. STXs may be modified, based on the unit mission, or expanded in scope to meet special mission requirements.

STXs and other similar exercises are usually trained by the company commander, while platoons execute drills. The battalion commander does the same for company exercises. The battalion commander assigns staff members to evaluate and assist with the STX.

A STX may be conducted using the “thin-slice principle”. This principle involves representation of combat support elements by only a portion of their normal quantity of personnel and equipment. For example, an artillery battery may be represented by a single howitzer section and a fire direction center or a helicopter squadron may be represented by two or three helicopters. Regardless of the size, it is essential that all elements work together as they would in

SET UP

The trainer ensures that the equipment required to enhance performance-oriented training is available. The trainer inspects Marines, their equipment, and the appropriate range or facilities orders prior to the start of training.

TALK-THROUGH

The trainer explains the standards and the method of evaluation (if applicable). Each Marine then repeats the details of his/her task(s) so the trainer can correct any errors.

WALK-THROUGH

Walk-through is performance-oriented training, but it is conducted at a pace that allows the trainer to control the training in order to achieve effective training results.

RUN-THROUGH

The trainer conducts the drill until the standard is met. The drill is conducted with all vehicles and equipment, at a faster and faster pace, and under increasingly more realistic con-

Figure 3-1. Drill Progression.

ditions such as smoke, mission-oriented protective posture (MOPP) 4, or darkness. (**Note:** Faulty performance is corrected during the run-through phase of drill training, even if this means stopping the drill and starting over.)

EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

Drill performance is assessed by the leader or commander of the next higher unit. If squad leaders conduct drills, the platoon leader or platoon sergeant observes and carefully evaluates the training. If the platoon leader executes drills, the company commander evaluates. Deficiencies identified during the evaluation should be corrected during remediation training. There is no need to go back and retrain acceptable skills, but the trainer should rather retrain deficiencies only.

DRILLS DURING EXERCISES

During a situational training exercise (STX) or field training exercise (FTX), small units execute their drills under realistic combat conditions. Evaluators and opposing forces (OPFORs) should be briefed as to where a drill is executed and the drill's outcome. For example, if a squad dismounts from its vehicle while it is under fire and any of the dismounting personnel are killed, the weakness in executing this particular drill should be noted.

Figure 3-1. Drill Progression—Continued.

combat. There should be no administrative or constructive aspects to the exercise. Destroyed vehicles are evacuated under conditions that simulate a combat environment. Calls for fire should be computed and shot using either full-service or subcaliber ammunition, if safety requirements allow. Preliminary training for this exercise is progressive in nature. The STX's final objective is to prepare units for large-scale exercises, such as combined-arms drills and FTXs.

Large-Scale Exercises

In collective training exercises, the company commander is the primary trainer and evaluator for company-level tasks. The battalion commander assesses proficiency of several companies by training and evaluating the battalion in drills, STXs, and ultimately as a part of the FTX. Commanders use these exercises to train collective skills in battle staff, survivability, and weapon systems training. Commanders select a particular training exercise, or combination of exercises, based on the unit METL and collective combat tasks and missions. They select the training exercise that best meets the unit's mission objectives. For training exercises at the battalion level, commanders and their staffs must be proficient in command and control. Commanders and their staffs learn to use the available combat power at the right place and time, to maneuver units, to plan and coordinate fire support, and to integrate all applicable systems during large-scale exercises.

LEADER TRAINING

Leader training consists of individual training that equips leaders to perform leadership tasks associated with the unit's operational mission. It prepares a leader to lead a unit, make decisions, and develop tactical and technical proficiency. The unit leader's training program develops the leadership skills of subordinates. The program can also concentrate on preparing NCOs to supervise one or more MOSs at a particular skill level. MOJT is also an effective method for conducting leader development training. A valuable part of MOJT is instruction through the use of role models. Marines can learn much by observing a technically proficient and effective leader.

TEWTs, CPXs, and FTXs are good performance-oriented exercises for training leaders. Other techniques that develop and practice hands-on leadership skills include—

- Conducting unit physical training (PT).
- Performing inspections.
- Training drills.
- Coaching and critiquing on-the-job performance.
- Presenting classroom instructions.
- Conducting objective AARs.
- Pursuing independent study. This can include correspondence courses, Service publications, and professional journals. Civilian and military schools also provide instruction to improve leader performance and potential.

