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STUDY PROJECT

THE RECRUITING BATTALION COMMANDER'S HANDBOOK

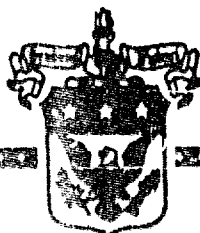
BY

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

THE RECRUITING BATTALION COMMANDER'S HANDBOOK
AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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release; distribution is unlimited.**

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
6 April 1990

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this individual study project is to provide recruiting battalion commanders a handbook which contains ideas to facilitate success in recruiting organizations. Data was obtained through literary research on high performing organizations, a review of current recruiting literature, and the personal interview of USAREC staff members, and former recruiting battalion commanders. Areas critical to recruiting success such as personnel management, sales training, caring, production management, awards, integrity, DEP management, high school programs, and the unique aspects of command in recruiting will be reviewed. This study project is intended to be a synthesis of command experience and research, and at times may differ slightly from current USAREC regulations and recruiting doctrine.



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INTRODUCTION

"The Recruiting Battalion Commander's Handbook" is dedicated to USAREC's most precious resource: The Field Recruiter. The selfless service and sacrifice of the field recruiter has made possible today's high quality Army.

This handbook was written to provide information for both newly-selected and currently serving USAREC battalion commanders. The material provided represents a cross-section of ideas from past and present commanders, the USAREC staff, and current literature on high performing organizations. Chapter I (RECRUITING PERSPECTIVES) provides a historical perspective of modern recruiting and discusses recruiting challenges of the 1990's. Chapter II (THE FIRST 30 DAYS) presents ideas to facilitate a new commander's transition into battalion command. Chapter III (PERSONNEL AND TRAINING) and Chapter IV (IMPERATIVES FOR RECRUITING SUCCESS) highlight important command considerations after the first 30 days of command. The views expressed in this handbook represent actual experience, and at times may differ slightly from current USAREC regulations and doctrine.

Hopefully, this handbook will assist all recruiting commanders in the leadership of our most precious resource: The Field Recruiter.

THE RECRUITING BATTALION COMMANDER'S HANDBOOK

CHAPTER I

RECRUITING PERSPECTIVES

The recruiting of quality young men and women is absolutely vital to the strength of the United States Army. As modern technology has developed more sophisticated equipment and weapons, the need for bright, educated soldiers has dramatically increased. The United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) faces the tough challenge of maintaining our Army's present level of quality young men and women in a very competitive market. Army recruiters now compete daily with civilian industry, junior colleges and universities, and other military services to enlist bright, young Americans into our Army of the 1990's.

Historically, recruiting for the U.S. Army has always been a tough, competitive business. It has never been easy! Fortunately for the U.S. Army, many "warriors" do in fact serve in the ranks of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command. Long arduous hours, often under stress, are typical of the effort required to recruit quality soldiers. The selfless service and sacrifice of these "recruiting warriors", and their families, have made possible today's high quality Army. Prior to discussing a new battalion commander's first 30 days of command, it is important to review the historical background of modern recruiting and to understand the challenges of recruiting in the 1990's.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In 1970, the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Force (headed by former Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates) was formed.¹ The objective of the "Gates Commission" was to develop a comprehensive plan for eliminating conscription, and to meet future manpower requirements through an all-volunteer force.² A desire to end the inequities of the draft and the unpopularity of the Vietnam war led to the joint decision by President Nixon and the Congress to proceed with the All Volunteer Force.³ The authority to draft for the military service expired in June 1973 and the all-volunteer Army was born. Although, historically the United States had relied upon volunteers to staff a small peacetime military, President Nixon's decision to end the draft marked the first time in our nation's history that the United States would attempt to maintain a large standing Army (783,000 in 1974) without conscription.⁴

Army recruiting during the period 1973 to 1980 can be characterized by early success followed by dismal failure. Prior to 1975, the first officer in the recruiting chain of command was the District Recruiting Commander, a lieutenant colonel (now called Recruiting Battalion Commander). In 1975, branch qualified captains were assigned to USAREC as Area Commanders (later called company commanders) to improve the leadership and productivity of the recruiting force. Initially strong Congressional support of an all recruited

force, which included a 61.2% pay raise for first term soldiers, adequate recruiting resources, and continuation of the Vietnam era G.I. Bill to attract high quality recruits,⁵ provided a strong foundation for early recruiting success. Later, recruiting resources and military pay were considered excessive and became targets for Congressional cost cutting. The loss of the G.I. Bill in 1976 severely limited the recruiting force's ability to attract and enlist the college bound segment of the youth market. Valiant effort by Army recruiters could not overcome this tremendous loss of incentives. The U.S. Army missed its volumetric recruiting mission by 1000 soldiers in FY 77, 3000 soldiers in FY 78, and by 27,000 soldiers in FY 79. In addition to missing its volumetric recruiting mission during the cited years, the quality of Army enlistees dropped significantly. Mental Category IV accessions (the lowest mental category acceptable for enlistment) increased from 18% of enlisted accessions in 1974 to 52% of all Army accessions in 1980.⁶ In 1980, only 54% of new Army recruits were high school graduates.⁷ The situation was obviously drastic, and Congress was slow to respond with enlisted pay increases and recruiting incentives. Lacking the proper incentives, Army field recruiters worked under immense pressure to solve manpower shortages and improve the quality of new recruits.

Immense pressure to meet recruiting objectives, without adequate supervision of the recruiting force, led to a period

of serious recruiting improprieties. USAREC summarized this dark period in its history as follows:

"In 1977, recruiters were caught making reservations for basic training (BT) and advanced individual training (AIT) school seats for applicants who did not exist. Referred to as Phantom Reservations or Ghosts, the publicity received was not favorable. The most devastating, however, was the Special (Connelly) Investigation of 1979. This investigation identified numerous improper recruiting practices and became a nationwide scandal. As a result of this investigation, 412 recruiters and officers were relieved, reclassified, or reassigned. To ensure that a similar scandal would not occur, the Enlistment Standard Directorate was established at HQ USAREC. Its purpose was to ensure uncompromised integrity existed in the recruiting process while simultaneously maintaining the quality of soldiers entering the Regular Army (RA) and USAR." 8

Missed recruiting objectives, low quality enlistees, and serious integrity problems within the recruiting force during the late 1970's mandated corrective action.

Army recruiting improved dramatically, starting in late 1980, through strong leadership within the Recruiting Command and a recognition by Congress that additional incentives were required. After the expiration of the G.I. Bill in 1976, the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) clearly was not effective in attracting smart young Americans interested in a college education. The introduction by Congress of the VEAP "kicker" in 1979, and support for the Army College Fund in 1982, provided the field recruiter a superb incentive to attract the college bound market. Military pay was also improved by Congress through an 11.1%⁹ pay increase in 1981 and a 14.3% pay raise in 1982. In

addition to Congressional economic incentives, the assignment of mission (objective) to recruiters by education/test category, command emphasis on recruiting quality soldiers, and the "will to win" of the field recruiter, helped to dramatically reverse the negative recruiting trends of the late 1970's. The remarkable turnaround in Army recruiting from FY 1980 to FY 1984 is depicted by the following accession data:

ACTIVE ARMY ACCESSIONS*

	FY 80	FY 84	FY 85-FY 89 AVE.
High School Diploma Grads	54%	91%	91.2%
Test Category I-IIIA	26%	63%	64.4%
Test Category IV	52%	10%	5.6%

*Compiled from DCSPER Briefing Data dated 30 OCT 89

The continuation of high quality Army accessions (FY85-FY89) is a tribute to the professionalism of our NCO recruiters, solid leadership in USAREC, and Congressional support of recruiting incentives which included rough pay comparability, enlistment bonuses, and the Army College Fund.

CHALLENGES OF THE 1990'S

What challenges will Army recruiting face during the decade of the 1990's? Talks on the reduction of conventional forces (CFE), the "reduced" Soviet threat in Europe, and

political pressure to reduce defense spending in the United States will eventually lead to a significant reduction of the Army's present strength of 764,000 active-duty soldiers. Speculation by senior Army leaders has placed the size of our future Army somewhere between 500,000 and 630,000 active-duty soldiers. As the Army reduces in size, USAREC's annual accession mission and budget will undergo a corresponding decrease. Under the smaller/leaner Army scenario, USAREC must remain efficient in its use of resources and manpower. A reduction in the number of NCO recruiters assigned to USAREC and a corresponding reduction in USAREC's force structure (recruiting stations, companies, and battalions) are likely as the Army decreases in size and budget. USAREC can not afford to maintain recruiters or recruiting stations in areas which do not consistently produce quality enlistments.

"Recruit Quality with INTEGRITY" will be the USAREC charter during the 1990's. The quality content of our Army must be maintained or increased as the current force becomes more compact. High quality personnel are imperative if our smaller Army is to remain a credible deterrent against our potential adversaries. From a recruiting perspective, a 500,000 to 630,000 man Army will mean a smaller recruiting force, smaller volumetric recruiting objectives, and continued emphasis on recruiting quality soldiers. Smaller volumetric recruiting objectives will help offset the

difficulty of recruiting High School Diploma Graduates with test scores of Category I-III A. Army recruiting in the 1990's will continue to be a tough competitive business.

This "Battalion Commander's Handbook" is intended to be a synthesis of command experience and ideas to facilitate recruiting and battalion command in the 1990's. In the next chapter, the critical first 30 days of battalion command will be discussed.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST 30 DAYS

The first 30 days of battalion command are critical in establishing the proper command environment or "tone" for your entire command. Recruiting is a fast paced business, and it is imperative that a new commander take charge early to avoid a serious dip in his battalion's recruiting production. LTC George Featherston and LTC Floyd Edwards, in The First 60 Days, also advocate the need for a new commander to "get off to a strong start" and establish the proper "tone".¹⁰ Unlike a TOE or TDA battalion, which has periods of reduced activity between major events (ARTEPS, NTC rotations, nuclear inspections, and training cycles, etc.), a recruiting battalion's monthly production mission leaves little time for inactivity or transition of a new battalion commander. The luxury of "observing" the organization for 30-45 days simply does not exist in a recruiting battalion. A new battalion commander must quickly take charge of his "sales organization" to avoid a sharp decline in recruiting production.

PREPARATION FOR COMMAND

The activity level or pace in a recruiting organization is much faster than its TOE/TDA counterpart. Proper preparation, prior to the assumption of command, is critical to success for a new commander. The following thoughts should be helpful in your preparation:

- * Take leave and spend as much time as possible with your family at your old duty station or enroute to the recruiting battalion. Little time will exist for leave during your first six months of command.
- * Physical fitness and weight control are vital to maintaining the proper public image of the U.S. Army. Prepare yourself physically prior to your arrival. After you assume command, a program of physical activity will help reduce the stress and pressure associated with recruiting.
- * Educate your wife and family on what to expect in a recruiting assignment. Battalion commanders travel frequently, and they may be away from home 3-4 days per week. An understanding family will certainly help your morale.
- * Square away as many personal matters as possible prior to your arrival. Geographical separation from military facilities and a lack of time may make it difficult to accomplish routine things such as medical examinations, dental work, and powers of attorney. If your old duty station provides family dental care, a complete family examination (with necessary dental work) may save your family considerable expense. Although Delta Dental Plan does provide basic family coverage, many expensive dental procedures are not covered.

- * Ask your new battalion to provide you with a "get smart" packet consisting of current battalion policy letters, battalion demographic and market information, and the current battalion SOP.
- * Schedule your attendance to the Recruiting Commanders Course at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana prior to your assumption of command. This two week course will give you an excellent introduction to recruiting and the fundamentals of sales. It will not make you an instant expert on recruiting. You should focus on mastering the "foreign language" of recruiting (acronyms), learning the Production Management System (PMS), understanding station/company level production management, and learning the closed loop system of recruiting station inspection. Do not be concerned if you feel this course has placed you into "information overload." Your informal recruiting education will continue for many months after you assume command.

LEADERSHIP MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Good leadership is the foundation of all success in Army recruiting. Leadership does indeed make the difference in successful recruiting battalions, companies, and stations.¹¹ Do not pass off this leadership concept as "just another trite Army slogan." As a recruiting battalion commander, you will command a very large and powerful sales organization.

Civilian sales organizations depend largely on commissions and the profit incentive to motivate their sales force. Solid leadership is the key ingredient to sales force motivation and recruiting success in USAREC. Critical to the success of a recruiting battalion is its coach, the battalion commander. The following thoughts on recruiting battalion leadership were developed through interviews of former USAREC battalion commanders:

- * The Battalion Leadership Team (BLT), comprised of the battalion commander and his sergeant major, must promote a command climate of teamwork. Teamwork and integrity are absolutely vital to long-term success. Rarely will all companies of a battalion meet their assigned monthly recruiting mission. A recruiting battalion's ability to meet recruiting objectives (Mission Box) usually depends on overproduction from one or more companies. Teamwork and good leadership are critical in orchestrating overproduction to cover recruiting shortfalls.
- * Develop a winning attitude in your sales force. All soldiers want to be part of a winning team and good organization. "Winning", in recruiting, starts with a belief that the recruiting mission is achievable. As the battalion commander, you must always be positive and upbeat. In the words of Lou Holtz, head football coach of Notre Dame, "To build a winning

team, you must first of all develop a winning
attitude."¹²

- * Battalion commanders must lead with INTENSITY. A laid-back style of leadership in recruiting is a recipe for failure. The "cheerleader" approach to recruiting leadership only produces marginal results. Good recruiting battalion commanders are intense, caring, and involved in the recruiting process. Do not accept or condone failure. Set high standards early, and enforce them rigorously.
- * Consistency and persistency are vital in leading a recruiting battalion.¹³ Consistent recruiting policies and basic prospecting standards must be enforced. Do not continually change policies or standards in a "search" for something that works. Standards which continually change are rarely enforceable.
- * Establish and maintain a climate of integrity throughout the battalion. Do not tolerate or condone recruiters who continually operate in the "grey area" of integrity. Investigate and report all alleged or suspected improprieties in accordance with USAREC Regulation 601-45.¹⁴ Prevention of recruiting improprieties through a command climate of integrity is far preferable than endless investigations and shattered careers.

* Battlefield presence is a must for a recruiting battalion commander. A good infantry battalion or brigade commander leads from a position well forward in combat to see the battlefield and inspire his troops. A recruiting battalion commander must be positioned well forward for similar reasons. Battalion commanders and sergeant majors must inspect companies and recruiting stations on a regular basis. Interviews, conducted as a part of this study, indicated that most successful battalion commanders spent at least 3 to 4 days per week in the field conducting inspections and training company commanders. Many former battalion commanders also made it a point to randomly visit recruiting stations on Saturday.

TAKING CHARGE

* Prior to the change of command ceremony, meet with the outgoing battalion commander to ascertain strengths and weaknesses of the organization. Some new commanders may prefer not to ascertain strengths and weaknesses in order to give subordinates a clean slate. The "clean slate" approach may lead to poor decisions and mistakes which harm the organization.¹⁵ A new commander's knowledge must be as complete as possible. A transition meeting with your Brigade Commander may also be quite helpful in establishing

priorities for your battalion.

- * Immediately after your change of command ceremony meet with your Battalion Executive Officer (XO), Sergeant Major, Company Commanders and First Sergeants. Outline your "Philosophy of Command." Make it very clear that you will not condone or underwrite continually failing recruiters or violations of integrity. Be positive, upbeat, and¹⁶ above all, be yourself.
- * The day following your change of command, allow a maximum of 3 to 4 hours for staff briefs. During this time period you should also discuss your "Philosophy of Command" with the staff. You may find during your initial meeting with the staff that a very combative "WE/THEY" attitude exists between the staff and the field recruiting force (companies, stations, and recruiters). Although this negative attitude is found in many recruiting battalions, it can and must be corrected. Make it very clear to the staff that support to the field recruiter is their 1st priority. Following your meeting with the staff, depart immediately with your sergeant major on a 2-3 week trip around the battalion area to visit your field recruiting force.
- * During your initial trip around the battalion with the sergeant major, you should visit each company

headquarters and recruiting station to learn your recruiting area and meet your soldiers. Station visits should start with a briefing by the station commander utilizing information from USAREC Form 816-A (Station Assets Form), the station operations and market map, and production data from USAREC Form 711-3. Focus on meeting your recruiters and building team spirit. Clearly state your recruiting standards, emphasize integrity, and the necessity for each recruiter to pull his share of the load.

- * A secondary objective of your trip around the battalion is to assess the "state of command" of your organization and the leadership ability of key team members. As you travel, discuss your observations with the sergeant major. The trip also provides an excellent opportunity for the sergeant major to continue your recruiting education. At the conclusion of your trip, share your observations and impressions with the chain of command.

ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES

In addition to those items discussed in Leadership Makes The Difference and Taking Charge, the following additional objectives should be accomplished within the first 30 days of command:

- * Visit your supporting Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) commander on his turf. A good positive

relationship between you and the MEPS commander is important for your battalion.

- * Spend one night in the MEPS hotel, and the next morning follow an applicant through enlistment processing. You may want to combine this objective with your visit to the MEPS commander.
- * Understand the Production Management System (PMS) from recruiter level through battalion level.
- * Observe and understand the station commander Daily Performance Review (DPR), and the importance of good leadership by the station commander.

Throughout your first 30 days of command, establish a positive command climate and be relentless in your quest for recruiting knowledge. In the next chapter, the critical areas of personnel management and training will be discussed.

CHAPTER III

PERSONNEL AND TRAINING

Sound personnel management and solid training programs are mission essential to building and maintaining a successful recruiting battalion. Unfortunately, many battalion commanders tend to overlook these two critical areas. According to the USAREC Inspector General, poor personnel management and a lack of training characterize many failing/low producing recruiting battalions. Battalion commanders and their sergeant majors must focus on personnel management and training to prevent needless inefficiency.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Traditional methods of personnel assignment, solely by MOS and pay grade, must be modified in a recruiting battalion to maximize the recruiting potential of the new soldier and to provide for his welfare. For maximum recruiting efficiency/production a new recruiter or station commander must be carefully matched to a market prior to pinpointing his assignment to a recruiting station. Language proficiency, financial status of the inbound recruiter, experience, and special needs of the recruiter's family all must be considered prior to making a station level pinpoint assignment. The battalion commander and his sergeant major are uniquely qualified, by virtue of their extensive travel and knowledge of the battalion market area, to match inbound recruiters to the proper market. Do not delegate this task

to the Battalion S-1. The following recommendations on personnel management were developed through interviews with former battalion commanders and the USAREC staff:

- * The priority for assignment of new recruiters to projected/actual vacancies or overstrength positions should be established by the battalion commander after consultation with his company commanders and the battalion sergeant major. The sergeant major should be the individual to match/assign inbound recruiters to station level based on the priorities established. Prior to assigning inbound recruiters, the SGM should telephonically contact all new recruiters to determine special skill qualifications, geographic desires of the soldier (city or rural), and other family related considerations pertinent to the assignment. Under this system of personnel management, the Battalion S-1 takes care of the important administrative aspects of the assignment to include the welcome letter, appointment of a sponsor, and orders.
- * Identify potential and known personnel losses early. USAREC assigns recruiters to battalion level utilizing a computerized data base of personnel losses. Based on information furnished by the chain of command, the USAREC loss data base must be updated accurately by the Battalion S-1. Updating the data

base in a timely manner is also important to preclude on-production recruiter strength falling below 100%. A detailed discussion of anticipated personnel losses (by name and position) at monthly battalion production meetings will greatly assist the Battalion S-1 in maintaining accurate data. The battalion will benefit through the timely replacement of losses.¹⁹

* The conversion of outstanding detailed recruiters to MOS OOR (Recruiting and Retention) is important to the long-term health of your battalion and the Recruiting Command. Do not convert marginal recruiters or weak leaders to MOS OOR. Battalion commanders should insure that detailed recruiters requesting conversion meet minimum production standards (100% Quality/Volume), and possess the leadership ability necessary to become good station commanders.

* The selection of a qualified recruiter for a station commander position must be made by the battalion commander.²⁰ Objectivity is essential in station commander selection. Prior to any decision, the battalion commander should consider recommendations from his company commanders and the advice of his trusted advisor, the battalion sergeant major. This decision is frequently complicated by PCS rules and constraints. The Battalion commander's final

decision must place the most qualified leader
(available for re-assignment in the battalion) into
the vacant station commander position.

TRAINING

"Training is the foundation from which all successful
recruiting originates." ²¹ Unfortunately, many recruiting
battalions fail to understand the importance of good training
programs. Training is virtually non-existent in many
recruiting battalions. Simply stated, these battalions
question whether sufficient time exists to train recruiters
and meet monthly recruiting objectives. Planned training is
frequently cancelled at company level when achieving a unit's
monthly mission appears difficult. Do not fall into this
trap as a battalion commander. A properly executed sales
training program is absolutely essential for success.
Sustainment training on basic sales techniques must be
conducted regularly. Additionally, training builds recruiter
confidence and helps the recruiter deal with the rejection he
faces on a daily basis. Give consideration to the following
ideas as you build your battalion's training program:

- * Use the Battalion Training Management System (BTMS)
model to develop a long range training plan for the
battalion. Key participants in the development of
this plan should include the battalion commander,
sergeant major, battalion executive officer,

operations officer, company commanders, and first sergeants.

- * Company level training, organized by the company commander and first sergeant, should be conducted monthly. This training period also provides an excellent opportunity to recognize recruiting achievements, build cohesion, and promote teamwork.
- * The training of guidance counselors (GC) and recruiter trainer NCO's (RTNCO) is frequently overlooked in many battalions. Training for guidance counselors/recruiter trainers enhances product knowledge and sales skills, and should be included in your BTMS developed long range training plan.
- * Station level training for field recruiters should occur weekly. Consider standardizing the time when station level training is conducted to improve training execution.
- * Station commander training, organized and led by the sergeant major, should be conducted once per quarter. This training should focus on station commander level skills and building cohesion/teamwork in the battalion.
- * New recruiter training is the primary responsibility of the station commander under the Transitional Training and Evaluation (TTE) program specified in USAREC Pam 350-2. Consider implementing a battalion/

company level training program for new recruiters which augments and reinforces the training given by station commanders. The Lee Dubois sales training program (available at battalion and brigade headquarters) is an excellent program to augment USAREC's standardized TTE training for new recruiters.

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- * The primary trainer of company commanders is the battalion commander. In conjunction with his sergeant major, the battalion commander should develop a training program for new company commanders which stresses Company Leadership Team (CLT) skills. A new company commander should spend a minimum of 3 to 4 days training with an experienced company commander in the battalion prior to his assumption of command.

CHAPTER IV

IMPERATIVES FOR RECRUITING SUCCESS

Recruiting success at the battalion level is a combination of many factors. In addition to good leadership, sound personnel management, and solid training, many other essential programs and activities contribute directly to the success or failure of a recruiting battalion. Chapter IV highlights programs, activities, and techniques to build and maintain recruiting excellence. The ideas discussed in this chapter represent a synthesis of command experience developed through interviews) of past and present recruiting commanders.

ENFORCING STANDARDS

Army recruiting is a continual sales process which emphasizes prospecting and the processing of qualified applicants for enlistment. A good recruiter is dedicated to both prospecting and processing on a daily basis to ensure long-term success. Some recruiters are overly optimistic, and tend to rely on "lady luck" (walk-in/call-in applicants) for enlistments instead of recruiter effort. A consistent work ethic, which emphasizes the accomplishment of prospecting and processing standards, is vital for recruiter productivity. The following techniques should be useful in increasing recruiter productivity and overall production:

- * The battalion commander and his sergeant major must drive production through the Production Management

System (PMS). Prospecting standards must be realistic and rigidly enforced. A salesman who is not prospecting is doomed to failure. Weak leaders who cannot or will not enforce recruiting standards (prospecting and processing) must be removed from recruiting duty.

- * Production Management System (PMS) data (appointments made, conducted, tested, and contracted) must be used pro-actively by the battalion commander, his sergeant major, and the entire chain of command on a daily basis. A battalion, company, or recruiting station which reviews PMS data on a weekly basis (common in some battalions), simply conducts a historical review of the previous week. The daily collection and analysis of PMS data allows the chain of command to re-direct prospecting effort as required and to correct prospecting shortfalls prior to the end of the recruiting week.

- * Army standards on saluting, haircuts, appearance, weight control, physical fitness, and the wearing of hats must be maintained in recruiting to promote discipline and professionalism. For recruiting success, Army recruiters must project a positive and professional image to the civilian community.

COMPANY AND RECRUITING STATION INSPECTIONS

The Battalion Leadership Team must position itself well forward for maximum effectiveness on the recruiting battlefield. Recruiters, like all soldiers, respond to positive, direct leadership. A solid program of company/recruiting station inspections by the BLT is absolutely vital. Command visits/inspections provide an excellent opportunity to enforce standards, energize lagging production, and foster teamwork. The following ideas from former battalion commanders may be helpful in fine tuning your own inspection program:

- * Many battalion commanders overlook the inspection of company headquarters in an effort to maximize available time inspecting recruiting stations. Unfortunately, this is a fairly common mistake in many battalions. Company level inspections should focus on how the Company Leadership Team (CLT) utilizes the company management system to drive recruiting station production. Without inspection, important tools such as the Processing List (USMEPCOM Form 730), the MET Test Log (USAREC Form 671), and the Delayed Entry Program Tracking Log (USAREC Form 611) will become historical records rather than working documents to drive recruiting station production.

- * Recruiting station inspections/visits should be positive and focused on areas most critical to

recruiting production. Inspect at least one area of the station production management system and emphasize integrity during each visit.²⁴ To enhance productivity, conduct an analysis of the prospecting and processing effort (work ethic) of each assigned recruiter and ensure that the station commander is conducting a Daily Performance Review (DPR) with each assigned recruiter.

- * During inspections, some recruiters will attempt to offer excuses or rationalizations for poor production. This "smoke screen" of recruiter myths can not be tolerated. Typical excuses such as "My mission is too high" or "Everyone is going to college" often hide a lack of recruiter effort. Commanders who accept excuses authorize failure.
- * Emphasize balanced prospecting during all station visits/inspections. Balanced prospecting includes a blend of telephonic prospecting and face-to-face prospecting (area canvassing). Although telephonic prospecting is more time efficient, face-to-face prospecting tends to produce a more committed ap-²⁵pointment because it is made in person. Prospecting is essential to success in recruiting. Do not allow your recruiting force to rely solely on "Call-In"/ "Walk-In" applicants. Prospecting standards must be enforced.

- * Share your observations privately with the station commander at the conclusion of your inspection. Prior to departing the recruiting station always ask if you can be of assistance to the recruiters or the recruiting station. Be prepared for a wide variety of requests. Often, many problems can be resolved by a simple phone call or involvement by a caring commander.

PRO-ACTIVE COMMAND

The Battalion Leadership Team and chain of command must be actively involved in the recruiting process. Critical programs such as high school recruiting, Delayed Entry Program (DEP) management, and the missioning process require pro-active leadership from the BLT. Consider integrating the following pro-active techniques to enhance your battalion's recruiting production:

- * Build and maintain a strong program of high school recruiting. A good graduate recruiting market is the direct result of a solid high school recruiting program. School access, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) testing, and the construction/use of Lead Refinement Lists (LRL) by recruiters should receive priority attention from the chain of command. Battalion commanders must ensure that the high school student contact requirements established by USAREC Pam 350-8 are met or exceeded. Do not

accept the typical recruiter excuse of "I do not have a senior mission" for failure to contact high school seniors. High school student contact requirements must be enforced to prevent other services from dominating the school recruiting market.

- * Command attention should focus on improving recruiter access in high schools and junior colleges. Surprisingly, many school officials remain convinced that Army recruiters actively encourage students to drop out of school for enlistment. This misconception must be resolved through the education of faculty members and school district administrators. Commanders, in conjunction with the Battalion Education Coordinator, must pro-actively work to improve recruiter access in high schools and junior colleges.
- * Civilian community support is an important aspect of recruiting. Recruiters and commanders alike should be actively involved in the civilian community. Key community leaders (civic, business, and education) can be very helpful in creating a good atmosphere for local Army recruiters. Battalion commanders should maintain contact with the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army and local congressmen in their battalion area. These key individuals should be updated (at least annually) on the status of Army recruiting in their area. Do not hesitate to ask for

their assistance if required. Local chapters of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) also can be very helpful in establishing and maintaining a positive recruiting environment.

- * The proper missioning of companies, recruiting stations, and recruiters is crucial to the success of your battalion. Incorrect missioning significantly increases the chance of recruiting failure.

Battalion commanders should be actively involved in the missioning process to ensure fairness and equity. Important factors such as the recruiting market, recruiter shortages, recruiter experience, and absences due to leave, TDY, and schooling must be considered during the missioning process.

- * The loss of high quality soldiers from the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) is a serious problem throughout USAREC. Apathy related DEP loss can be significantly reduced through strong leadership and an effective program of DEP management. A laissez faire approach to DEP management by the BLT will not work. The BLT and the chain of command must be active in the enforcement of DEP management standards. DEP orientations (within 3 days of contract), active recruiter follow up to prevent "Buyers remorse"/ apathy, regular DEP functions, and the proper transfer of DEP members to incoming recruiters must

- be conducted. Battalion commanders should require company commanders to provide the BLT a by-name list of potential DEP losses 30 to 45 days in advance of ship date. Hold company commanders accountable for their projections, and turn up the heat on commanders for unanticipated recruiter influenceable DEP losses.
- Good leadership and the enforcement of DEP management standards can indeed significantly reduce apathy related DEP loss.
 - * Unproductive recruiters or recruiters who consistently fail to achieve their assigned monthly recruiting mission must not be tolerated. Commanders who tolerate poor production send the message that "It is okay to fail." Direct maximum effort to provide assistance, training, and counseling (if required) to recruiters with low production. Procedures to return unproductive recruiters to their original MOS are contained in Chapter 5 of Army Regulation 601-1.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Recruiter awards and recognition are powerful incentives. Numerous studies have indicated that "successful salesmen are motivated more by recognition than by any other form of incentive."²⁶ The USAREC Recruiting Incentive Awards Program (USAREC REG 672-10) of Recruiting Badges, Stars, and the Recruiter Ring provides visible recognition for mission accomplishment and overproduction. Properly administered, the

USAREC Recruiting Incentive Awards Program can become an important element in your battalion's program of awards and recognition. The following ideas on the recognition of recruiter excellence are provided for your consideration:

- * Reward excellence! Do not provide recognition or present awards for recruiting mediocrity.
- * The battalion commander and/or his sergeant major should present all Gold Badges. The Gold Badge is a significant recruiting achievement which deserves special recognition.
- * USAREC Recruiting Incentive Awards must be presented in a timely manner to be meaningful. Ensure that your Battalion Awards Clerk is timely and accurate in the computation of monthly award points in accordance with USAREC REG 672-10. Present all Gold Badges immediately following battalion level verification of award points. Timely awards (particularly Gold Badges) reinforce recruiting excellence and promote the development of a winning attitude throughout the battalion.
- * Utilize the battalion newspaper monthly to recognize outstanding recruiting achievement. Front page coverage or feature stories on outstanding recruiters and recruiting stations provide important recognition to the battalion's top performers.
- * Informal recognition by the battalion commander/

sergeant major is a powerful tool for motivation. A simple phone call or note each month to high performing recruiters promotes excellence and acknowledges your appreciation of their hard work. Do not underestimate the value of this simple technique.

- * Impact awards are very effective in recognizing sustained excellence. Standard awards such as the Army Achievement Medal and the Army Commendation Medal can indeed be very important to a detailed recruiter who plans to complete his recruiting assignment and return to his MOS. Impact awards should be an important component of your battalion's program to recognize and sustain excellence.

CONCLUSIONS

Recruiting battalion command can be one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of an officer's career. The recruiting of bright, educated young men and women for today's Army is a tough, competitive business. A new battalion commander must quickly take charge of his sales organization to avoid a sharp decline in recruiting production. Strong leadership is an essential ingredient for success in today's competitive recruiting market. Sound personnel management, training, and a program of awards/recognition also foster recruiting success. A good recruiting commander promotes teamwork, integrity, and a winning attitude throughout his organization. Although a recruiting commander may face adversity, he must always maintain a positive/upbeat winning attitude. In recruiting, "Leadership Makes The Difference."

Army recruiting during the 1990's will continue to focus on quality High School Diploma Graduates (CAT I-III A). As the Army reduces in size from 764,000 soldiers, USAREC's annual accession mission, budget, and recruiting force will undergo a corresponding decrease. The quality content of our Army must be maintained or increased if a 500,000 to 630,000 man Army is to remain a credible deterrent against our potential adversaries.

Army recruiting stands ready for the 1990's. Strong leadership and the "warrior spirit" will prevail.

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APPENDIX 1

RECRUITING ACRONYMS

ACF - Army College Fund

AFQT - Armed Forces Qualification Test

ASVAB - Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery

BLT - Battalion Leadership Team

CLT - Company Leadership Team

DEP - Delayed Entry Program

DPR - Daily Performance Review

GC - Guidance Counselor

LRL - Lead Refinement List

MEPS - Military Entrance Processing Station

MOS - Military Occupational Specialty

PCS - Permanent Change of Station

PMS - Production Management System

RTNCO - Recruiter Trainer NCO

TTE - Transitional Training and Evaluation

USAREC - United States Army Recruiting Command

USMEPCOM - United States Military Entrance Processing Command