

CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS

Introduction

Consideration of Others (CO2) has been developed for you, the commander. It is a tool--a tool designed to help you build unit cohesion and assist you in the complex task of leading soldiers. This vital task must be done well if we are to fulfill our primary mission: to fight and win our Nation's war.

A military unit must excel as an organization in order to successfully accomplish its mission. As the difficulty of the mission increases, so does the need for excellence in a unit's organizational character. We in the Army use the term "unit cohesion" to describe organizational character. This term has a great deal of value, not the least of which is its acceptance by a wide range of Army authorities as a common term of reference to use when discussing issues relating to how soldiers operate and fight as a team.

The exact term we use is not critically important. What is critically important is that our soldiers live and work in the type of organization which makes them want to excel and give their total commitment to the unit's mission; to exhibit and practice the "selfless service" we value as American soldiers.

Developing, maintaining, and leading an excellent organization is hard work. Doing so, however, is the vital "pre-mission" task that precedes the successful commitment of your troops to combat. If you, the commander, commit yourself to developing both the tactical/technical competence of you soldiers and their ability and willingness to work together as a military team, then there is little or nothing any enemy can do to stand in the way of our soldiers.

What is Consideration?

Definition "Those actions that indicate a sensitivity to and regard for the feelings and needs of others and an awareness of the impact of one's own behavior on them; being supportive of and fair with others,"

Consideration of Others (CO2) is a tool which focuses on the vital linkage between the individual soldier and his or her role as a member of a military team. CO2 is designed for service members and civilian employees. It encourages respect for others by incorporating a variety of sensitivity issues, from sexual-harassment prevention and cultural diversity to group dynamics in the workplace. Consideration of Others can be viewed as a concept, a readiness issue, a leadership quality, or a basic philosophy. It is not limited to any particular circumstance and covers the broad aspects of attentiveness.

Consideration of Others is also an essential ingredient in today's Army. Soldiers are motivated to accomplish the mission on the battlefield through an intense regard for

their fellow soldiers. They will risk their own lives, if necessary, to prevent their comrades from getting killed or wounded. There is no limit to developing the full potential of trust and cohesion necessary in an effective fighting force if we can instill in our soldiers a high degree of Consideration of Others.

Consideration of Others is built around training and sharing of ideas, because each individual has infinite dignity and worth. The program gets its strength from a focus on small group discussions. In a small group everyone has a chance to express their views and feelings. This is when the real education starts to take place. A certified facilitator guides discussions focusing on insensitivity, basic thoughtlessness and any offensive behavior that runs counter to Consideration of Others. Everyone should be able to come to work feeling good about themselves, their organization, the work they are doing and the people they work with.

Consideration of Others training emphasizes intimate groups of not more than 25, in which group participation is encouraged. The facilitator starts the ball rolling by introducing a topic and suggesting that participants share their feelings about the given subject. Facilitators may pose follow-up questions to advance a conversation or redirect a discussion that has digressed. The facilitator is to remain neutral throughout the group discussion. The emphasis on having a small group allows everyone a chance to be heard. The training should be conducted in a place where it will be free of distraction.

In order for the Consideration of Others program to be successful here at Fort Lee, it has to be institutionalized as a program as well as a policy throughout the entire installation which will build unity and cohesiveness in the organization " said Robert L. Brown " Chief of the Equal Opportunity Office.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE DISCUSSION LEADER/FACILITATOR

1. Your job is to encourage interaction among the group members, not interaction with you; therefore:
 - a. When someone is speaking, look at the other members of the group, rather than at the speaker.
 - b. Do not make a reply to each comment by a group member. Wait for someone else to do so. If necessary, ask the group, "Any reaction to that?"
2. If someone talks overly long, interrupt by saying, "I'm losing the point you are trying to make. Can you state it in 20 words or less?"
3. Encourage interaction by moving away from center stage. After identifying the topic, throw out a general question and then sit down or move to the back of the room.

4. If someone disrupts with too much humor, jokes, and wisecracks, enjoy it for a while and then say, "Now let's get down to business."
5. When questions are asked directly of you, refer them back to the group; say, "Someone here must have a response to that."
6. Use chart paper or chalkboard as a "group memory." As points are well taken or agreed on, jot them down in a list. This gives the group a sense of progress.
7. If you think you have grasped a complex point someone has tried to express, clarify it for the group by saying, "Let's see, if I understand you, you are saying..."
8. Avoid making personal comments that may be taken as disapproval, condescension, sarcasm, personal cross-examination, or self-approval.
9. Insist that people take personal ownership of opinions. Train the group member to say, "I think..." not "We think..."
10. Watch platitudes or generalizations that sound good but do not further an understanding of the topic. They show a lack of discriminating thought. Ask, "Can you go further into that?" or "What do you mean?"
11. If there is a debate about the meaning of words, probe for the feelings behind them.
12. Summarize periodically, or ask someone else to do so. Sometimes this can be done by asking, "Where are we at this point?" "Use individual input, in their own words, etc."
13. Do not allow an inference or conjecture to pass as a fact. Always look for the hidden assumption in others' statements and ask about it.
14. Do not insist on having the last word.
15. Do not show approval or disapproval of someone's contribution. You are not there to reward or punish.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN GROUPS

In all human interactions there are two major ingredients: content and process. The first deals with subject matter of the task upon which the group is working. In most interactions, the focus of attention of all persons is on the content. The second ingredient, process, is concerned with what is happening between and to group members while the group is working. Group process or dynamics deals with such items as morale, feeling, tone, atmosphere, influence, participation; styles of leadership, leadership struggles, conflict, competition, cooperation, etc. In most

interaction, very little attention is paid to process, even when it is the major cause of ineffective group action. Sensitivity to group process will better enable one to diagnose group problems early and deal with them most effectively. Since these processes are present in all groups, awareness of them will enhance a person's worth to a group and make him or her a more effective group participant.

PROCESS & ANALYZE GROUP BEHAVIOR

PARTICIPATION

One indication of involvement is verbal participation. Look for differences in the amount of participation among members.

1. Who are the high participators?
2. Who are low participators?
3. Do you see any shift in participation, e.g., highs become quiet; lows suddenly become talkative. Do you see any possible reason for this in the group's interaction?
4. How are the silent people treated? How is their silence interpreted? Consent? Disagreement? Disinterest? Fear? etc.
5. Who talks to whom? Do you see any reason for this in the group's interactions?
6. Who keeps the ball rolling? Why? Do you see any reason for this in the group's interactions?

INFLUENCE

Influence and participation are not the same. Some people may speak very little, yet they capture the attention of the whole group. Others may talk a lot but are generally not listened to by other members.

1. Which members are high in influence? That is, when they talk, others seem to listen.
2. Which members are low in influence? Others do not listen to or follow them. Is there any shifting in influence? Who shifts?
3. Do you see any rivalry in the group? Is there a struggle for leadership? What effect does it have on other group members?

DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES

Many kinds of decisions are made in groups without considering the effects of these

decisions on other members. Some people try to impose their own decision on the group, while others want all members to participate or share in the decisions that are made.

1. Does anyone make a decision and carry it out without checking with other group members? (self authorized) For example, he/she decides on the topic to be discussed and starts right in to talk about it. What effect does this have on other group interactions?
2. Who supports other members' suggestions on decisions? Does this support result in the two members deciding the topic or activity for the group? (Handclasp) How does this affect other group members?
3. Is there any evidence of a majority pushing a decision through over other members' objections? Do they call for a vote? (Majority decision)
4. Is there any attempt to get all members participating in a decision (consensus)? What effect does this seem to have on the group?
5. Does anyone make contributions which do not receive any kind of response or recognition (Clap)? What effect does this have on the member?

TASK FUNCTIONS

These functions illustrate behaviors that are concerned with getting the job done or accomplishing the task that the group has before them.

1. Does anyone ask for or make suggestions as to the best way to proceed or to tackle a problem?
2. Does anyone attempt to summarize what has been covered or what has been going on in the group?
3. Is there any giving or asking for facts, ideas, opinions, feelings, feedback, or searching for alternatives?
4. Who keeps the group on target? Who prevents topic jumping or going off on tangents?

MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

These functions are important to the morale of the group. They maintain good and harmonious working relationships among the members and create a good atmosphere which enables members to contribute maximally. They ensure smooth and effective teamwork within the group.

1. Who helps others get into the discussion (gate openers)?
2. Who cuts off others or interrupts them (gate closer)?
3. How well are members getting their ideas across? Are some members preoccupied and not listening? Are there any attempts by group members to help others clarify their ideas?
4. How are ideas rejected? How do members react when their ideas are not accepted? Do members attempt to support others when they reject their ideas?

GROUP ATMOSPHERE

Something about the way a group works creates an atmosphere which in turn is revealed in a general impression. In addition, people may differ in the kind of atmosphere they like in a group. Insight can be gained into the atmosphere characteristic of a group by finding words which describe the general impressions held by group members.

1. Who seems to prefer a friendly, congenial atmosphere? Is there any attempt to suppress conflict or unpleasant feelings?
2. Who seems to prefer an atmosphere of conflict and disagreement? Do any members provoke or annoy others?
3. Do people seem involved and interested? Is the atmosphere one of work, play, satisfaction, taking flight, sluggish, etc.?

MEMBERSHIP

A major concern for group members is the degree of acceptance or inclusion in the group. Different patterns of interaction may develop in the group which give clues to the degree and kind of membership.

1. Is there any sub-grouping? Sometimes, two or three members may consistently agree and support each other or consistently disagree and oppose each other.
2. Do some people seem to be "outside" the group? Do some members seem to be most "in"? How are those "outside" treated?
3. Do some members move in and out of the group? Under what conditions do they come in or move out?

FEELING

During any group discussion feelings are frequently generated by the interactions

between members. These feelings, however, are seldom talked about. Observers may have to make guesses based on tone of voice, facial expression, gestures, and many other forms of nonverbal cues.

1. Do you see any attempts by group members to block the expression of feelings, particularly negative feelings? How is this done? Does anyone do this consistently?

NORMS

Standards or ground rules may develop in a group that control the behavior of its members. Norms usually express the beliefs or desires of the majority of the group members as to what behaviors should or should not take place in the group. These norms may be clear to all members (explicit), known or sensed by only a few (implicit), or operating completely below the level or awareness of any group members. Some norms help group progress and some hinder it.

1. Are certain areas avoided in the group (e.g., sex, religion, talk about present feelings in group, discussing leader's behavior, etc.)? Who seems to reinforce this avoidance? How do they do it?

2. Are group members overly nice or polite to each other? Are only positive feelings expressed? Do members agree with each other too readily? What happens when members disagree?

3. Do you see norms operating about participation or the kinds of questions that are allowed? (e.g., "If I talk, you must talk," "If I tell my problems, you have to tell your problem"). Do questions tend to be restricted to intellectual topics or events outside of the group?