

OBTE & CATC

Outcome Based Training & Education (OBTE) and the Combat Application Training Course (CATC) at Fort Sill Overview by Jim Connolly

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." ~ Winston Churchill

Outcome Based Training & Education (OBTE)

The FCOE is embracing an effort to improve training started by the Asymmetric Warfare Group called Outcome Based Training and Education (OBTE). The goal of this training methodology is to improve training and make it outcome based focused on combat applications.



In simple terms OBTE focuses on the identification of the ultimate combat outcome of the training desired. It breaks that training down to the required basic tasks/skills. OBTE then focuses on coaching and mentoring to obtain mastery and understanding of those basic skill sets culminating in a Soldier who understands the task and its application in a variety of scenarios related to a

combat environment.

Through this focused training using the crawl, walk and run approach the Soldier develops confidence and competence (and other positive "intangible attributes") guided in a coaching and mentoring environment. This training approach builds in challenge and intensity as the Soldier learns and improves, creating a more "adaptive" Soldier.



This sequenced combat focused training method also helps develop key intangible attributes (confidence, responsibility, motivation for learning, problem solving, discipline, initiative, skill transference and others).

One of the key fundamentals of this approach is taking the time to explain to the Soldier why he does the task and the impacts of doing the task steps so the Soldier understands the key aspects of the performance of the task. Also, as the task is mastered, the Soldier is placed in more realistic combat scenarios where the tasks are eventually performed as they would in a real situation versus executing them in a series of isolated task performance events. "Challenge" and "stress" are added as competency improves.

This approach may not seem new to an experienced trainer and it is not "rocket science". However, over the years, in some cases Army training has come to focus on tasks in isolation versus building to the real mastery of tasks then adding challenging scenarios incorporating several tasks. Taking the time to build mastery then applying it in realistic



"If a man does his best, what else is there?" ~ General George Patton Jr.

OBTE & CATC

scenarios is really what causes a Soldier to become an “adaptive thinking Soldier” responsible for determining how and when to execute the task based on combat relevant scenarios. This is really a key outcome we are seeking in all our training.

OBTE is a common sense training methodology that easily fits into our current training development process. We just need to review our POI’s to ensure we are using a real outcome based approach. This approach should be focused on building the mastery of tasks then applying them in combat related scenarios. OBTE can certainly apply to all training situations with a little innovation and thought.



Additionally, one of the most important parts of the OBTE methodology is also the delivery of training. One of the significant aspects of OBTE methodology is a true coaching and mentoring environment done in a positive and constructive manner. The trainer has to be a subject matter expert to be a true coach and mentor. He has to know well beyond the rudimentary performance of the task. Trainers must be proficient in the task and be able to identify required corrective actions when the Soldier is not performing the task properly. The trainer must understand the building block approach and sequence the increasing challenges to stimulate the learning. This expertise and positive coaching and mentoring are key to the success of this training methodology.

This approach also develops motivation and interest when the Soldier knows his trainer really cares about his performance. This is the key to the development of the “intangibles” that will make the Soldier a more adaptive leader in the future.

Although there is a time and place for “do it because I said so” or “do it like this” . . . in most training scenarios that approach stifles learning and limits initiative. In educational circles, it is a well known fact that understanding the why of any task will, in the long term, increase the likelihood the individual will retain the information longer and apply the information in more than one learned scenario.

Having seen this training methodology demonstrated in the Combat Applications Training Course, I am a strong supporter and believer in this approach. I was a significantly more confident, more proficient and better trained individual after the training. The course clearly demonstrated the significance of a positive coaching and mentoring environment. It also displayed applicability to every type of training scenario to include classroom type training. The ingenuity of the training developer or instructor is the only limiting factor.



*“Look beneath the surface; let not the several quality of a thing nor its worth escape thee.”
~ Marcus Aurelius*

OBTE & CATC

Bottom line, the OBTE methodology not only provides a better foundation for learning any given task. It also promotes a more adaptive thinking Soldier who can better adapt his learned tasks to new conditions. The development of intangible attributes becomes an important part of this methodology and should lead to a more responsible and adaptable Soldier.

“A lot of people have gone further than they thought they could because someone else thought they could.” ~ Like a Good Leader, Coach or Mentor



The Combat Applications Training Course (CATC)

The CATC is a training demonstration of the OBTE methodology presented by the Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG) cadre using rifle marksmanship tasks as the venue to take leaders through a training approach using coaching and mentoring techniques that clearly enable the mastery of selected tasks as well as building intangible attributes we seek in our Soldiers (confidence, responsibility, motivation and etc.).

The CATC program at Fort Sill is a 3 to 5 day classroom and range live fire training event led and presented by the AWG cadre. Rifle marksmanship is used as the tool to demonstrate the OBTE methodology. The course begins with a seminar overview of OBTE with input and discussions on related topics by the leaders enrolled. This seminar builds some base understanding of the OBTE philosophy and methodology used during the course that will also be readdressed during the end of course AAR (usually very interesting outcomes and observations are discussed by the participants at this AAR).

After the OBTE seminar discussion the AWG cadre also conduct a variety of classes/ seminars starting with “Ballistics 101” which provides an overview of ballistic trajectory, Point of Aim (POA)/Point of Impact (POI) methodology, maintenance, weapons setup to include slings, magazines, gear, optics and overview and mounting, to include Minutes of Angle (MOA) adjustments for all issued optics and sights.

The general schedule is depicted in the following slide and can be based on a 3-5 day program. Participants generally fire between 500-750 rounds during the training and there is a night fire option based on time and resources.

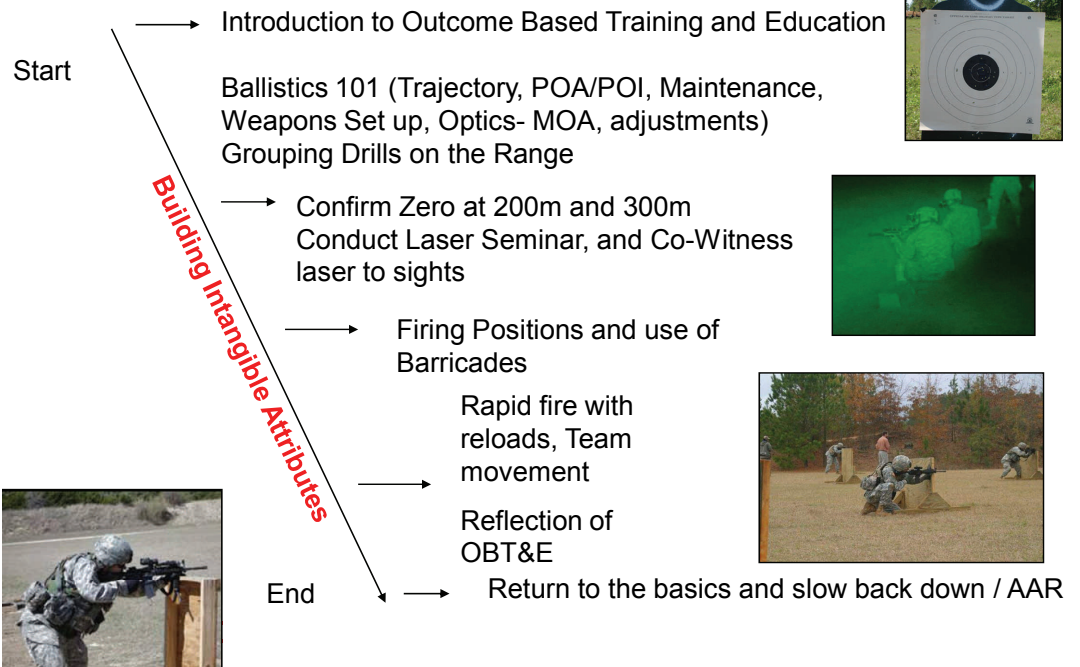
“The quality of each man's life is the full measure of that man's personal commitment to excellence and to victory.” ~ Vince Lombardi



OBTE & CATC



CATC Schedule



“One thing I know; the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.” ~ Albert Schweitzer



The CATC is an excellent demonstration of OBTE and the AWG cadre are superb in their demonstration of OBTE as well as the demonstration and importance of subject matter expertise and solid coaching and mentoring skills. The leaders going through this course have a much better and deeper understanding of the key philosophy and methodology of OBTE.

The participants also gain first hand experience in numerous techniques to build and

“We live in a world where bulk is equated with quality.” ~ Robertson Davies

ARMY STRONG

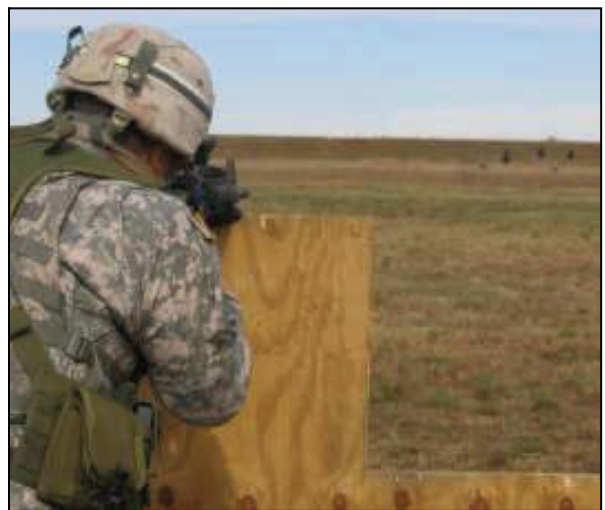


OBTE & CATC

develop skill mastery of a variety of tasks which they can hopefully apply to any training scenario with a little ingenuity and thought.

My experience going thru CATC clearly refocused and reinforced the importance of quality outcome based, combat focused training – I am looking at training from an improved perspective:

1. Focus on mastering the fundamentals first – ensure they are mastered and that those trained understand the why of the task.
2. Build the training challenge and stress as mastery of individual tasks occur. While doing a task in isolation to build basic mastery is fine, but the real value is ensuring the Soldier is challenged. The Soldier should improve by doing it in a combat type scenario where the mastery of the task is put in context with other tasks which must be thought through and applied based on varying conditions. The rote memorization and performance of a task in isolation will not promote success in varying combat situations nor does it promote adaptive thought in our Soldiers. Adaptive Soldiers are what we are really seeking in the current operating environment.
3. Use positive coaching and mentoring techniques that improve motivation, learning, individual responsibility, initiative, discipline and numerous other intangible attributes.
4. Focus on the overall desired outcome of the training related to the Combat Application of the task/tasks being training. Train the task in realistic as possible scenarios as the end goal. A simple training environment can train realistic and stressful training events.
5. Place responsibility on both the trainee and the “coach” to ensure learning occurs. The “Do it because I told you so” in task training is very short sighted.
6. The OBTE method challenges leaders and trainers to become better SMEs. It also will require more work initially to become true SME coaches and mentors. This approach is more challenging and more demanding on those conducting training (it may be “easier” to do the training the “old way”). But the payoff for doing OBTE properly is enormous in comparison – well worth the effort.
7. Trainers and leaders must review current POIs and training to ensure the outcome desired is really the outcome they are obtaining in their current training venues. Always focus on the combat application. Is our training setting the conditions for success in combat for the Soldier in any given set of training tasks?
8. Each trainer and leader must ask how can I make this training event more realistic and more challenging? Did we allow for basic mastery before we over challenged the Soldier? What



“The measure of your quality as a public person, as a citizen, is the gap between what you do and what you say.” ~ Ramsey Clark

OBTE & CATC

must change in this training event to make it Outcome Based? Are there new risk mitigation factors I must now consider?

I fully enjoyed the CATC and learned many good lessons - self discipline, confidence in the tasks trained, motivation and a burning desire to assist in the implementation of the OBTE methodology to improve training at Fort Sill for the benefit of our Soldiers and the Army.

Go to CATC if you can – it's worth the time and effort (even in bad weather)!



A few quotes from Fort Sill leaders attending the course:

1. "CATC identified the importance of individual skills and positive intangibles".
2. "You can make OBTE work because I've seen it work for me and I've seen my own improvements".
3. "Good coaching built understanding and individual responsibility, challenging scenarios reinforced mastery and built confidence, competition added motivation and fun, after only 3 days I am a better leader – I'd go back to Iraq a more competent and confident rifleman and leader".

"True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost." ~ Arthur Ashe

Where do we go from here in OBTE?

This OBTE effort is a "Grass Roots" effort and also a "Command Program".

Trainers at all levels must look at those training events they conduct and apply OBTE principles directly to their events where and when they can. Support from commanders and leadership at every level across each command (BDE to Company) in support of the OBTE methodology will ensure this effort moves forward. Some things can happen immediately. Others will require more deliberate planning and supporting resources. All are worth the effort.

OBTE is compatible with our current training development processes and in many

"Every civilization depends upon the quality of the individuals it produces." ~ Frank Herbert



OBTE & CATC

cases can positively impact almost all training events – we just need to review our training and POI's and adjust them based on our assessments of intended outcomes – are we on the mark or do we need to adjust? I believe some of our courses already meet OBTE methodology – in other areas we can fix and improve our courses and training.

Each week more personnel will have a better understanding of OBTE. You now have the understanding and the tools to make a difference in your lane!

A variety of OBTE/CATC readings, briefings and reference material are available on the Fort Sill intranet P Drive, QAO Folder, CATC & OBTE Folder.

Many thanks to the Asymmetric Warfare Group Team for bringing OBTE to Fort Sill and their dedication and subject matter expertise in running the CATC here . . .

Much of the information in this article came from AWG sources.
They are Great Americans dedicated to improving Army training.

“Be the change you want to see in the world.” ~ Gandhi



“A competent leader can get efficient service from poor troops, while on the contrary an incapable leader can demoralize the best of troops.” ~ John J. Pershing

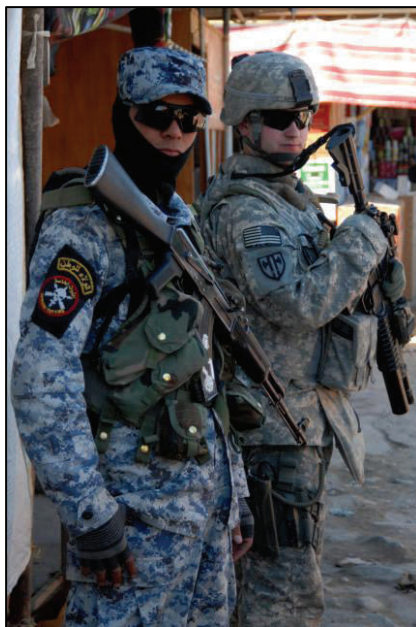
ADAPTING TO AN EVER CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Adaptive Leaders Methodology (ALM) A Methodology for Leading Into the Unknown

Posted by
John Baldoni
on July 21,
2008 9:12 AM

One of the toughest things to teach leaders is how to lead when the context and variables are constantly changing. One man who is helping leaders make better decisions is Don Vandergriff, a retired Army major, lecturer and author. Vandergriff has developed the Adaptive Leader Methodology (ALM) that helps individuals learn to lead in situations of escalating complexity.

“A boss creates fear, a leader confidence. A boss fixes blame, a leader corrects mistakes. A boss knows all, a leader asks questions. A boss makes work drudgery, a leader makes it interesting.” ~ Russell H. Ewing



“Confidence comes not from always being right but from not fearing to be wrong.” ~ Peter T. McIntyre

The principles of ALM are universal and applicable to anyone who must manage and lead others. As Vandergriff explained to me, ALM immerses students in “complex scenario and facilitates them as they attempt to solve it.” As Vandergriff sees it, ALM “places people in roles of responsibility so they understand the context their unit or organization operates in... In ALM, they are placed two or three levels higher [than their ranks] in many of the scenarios.”



“A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be.” ~ Rosalynn Carter

ALM is uniquely suited to teach military officers how to lead in “asymmetrical warfare,” where the unknown variables outweigh the known ones. “Instead of repeating a given scenario, you continue on and do a different one, with different conditions.” As Vandergriff explains, “By varying the scenarios, the conditions and then... giving a good “reflection” session from peers, the teacher and [observers], the learning process becomes continuous.”

“Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results.” ~ George S. Patton

“You can determine how confident people are by listening to what they don't say about themselves.” ~ Brian G. Jett

ARMY STRONG



ADAPTING TO AN EVER CHANGING ENVIRONMENT



“Leaders aren’t born they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that’s the price we’ll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal.” ~ Vince Lombardi

This is break from the Army’s traditional approach to education which emphasizes competency. A shortcoming of that model is boredom and barriers. Says Vandergriff, “Good and great students got bored very easy. Plus, they did not discover their

unit’s place in the larger picture because they were only allowed to go as high as that unit in their learning environments.”

A twenty-four year veteran of the Army and Marines, Vandergriff taught ROTC at Georgetown University and routinely received top marks for his instruction. Today his students are lieutenants and captains in the field leading combat troops. Lessons they learned from ALM are “what prepared them (the most) for what they face now.” Specifically, ALM provides a tool kit approach that fosters innovative thinking, new approaches to problem solving and rapid decision making. Vandergriff’s influence extends beyond the Army; he has taught Marines, Navy SEAL’s as well as units in the British and French military.

“The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence regardless of their chosen endeavor.” ~ Vince Lombardi



“Nothing would be done at all if we waited until we could do it so well that no one could find fault with it.” ~ John Henry

Vandergriff also teaches in the corporate and public sectors, applying the same principles. Part of his instruction includes tactical decision games that can be very challenging. Participants “were frustrated, confused and challenged. As the day went on, they got into it, and then remarked at the end of the day and follow-on emails, how much that made

them better leaders. When developing adaptability, you want to put your students in uncomfortable situations doing scenarios they are not familiar with,” he says.

“The number one objective in my developing leaders is strength of character,” says Vandergriff. “I believe in what I am doing... What keeps me going is a belief in what I am doing is right. I was raised to see a problem, fix it.” That’s good advice for anyone leading in a complex environment. Leaders lead by doing and so often they must do the fixing and solving so that the organization can move forward.

“I would rather have five energetic and competent enemies than one fool friend.” ~ Edward G. Bulwer



TRAINING (AND EDUCATING) TOMORROW'S SOLDIERS AND LEADERS SUMMARY

Reference:
Vandergriff, Donald.
Military Recruiting:
Finding and Preparing
Future Soldiers.
Westport, CT:
Greenwood, 2008.



The United States Army is in the process of change. The increasing threats to national security and the growing demands of the 21st century forced our military to adapt to a new world. Reorganizing our military requires the need to restructure our leadership and training. There is growing debate over the methods used in those changes.

How do we redesign our military training? Donald Vandergriff asserts that training and education that emphasizes outcomes is the best method. Developing critical thinking skills and assigning accountability and responsibility to Soldiers early on can help restructure our forces to adapt to a changing battlefield. Modern American Soldiers are required to know a whole host of skills to win wars. The traditional tasks of state on state warfare is outdated. Now Soldiers are required to perform more tasks on the battlefield. Conducting full scale military operations, peacekeeping operations and humanitarian relief are a few examples.

Complex leadership is required to be pushed further down the command chain. The term "Strategic Corporal" is used to describe how the lowest ranking NCOs may be required to make decisions in time critical situations. They must also understand the strategic and political consequences of those decisions.

CG / PCC Book List

Heath, Chip and Dan (2007).
Made to Stick. New York,
NY: Random House.

Kotter, John P. (1996).
Leading Change. Boston,
MA: Harvard Business
School Press.

Sample, Steven B. (2003).
***The Contrarian's Guide to
Leadership.*** San Francisco,
CA: Jossey-Bass.

How do we make those changes in training? In simple terms Vandergriff asserts that training needs to focus on "why" rather than just "how." Traditionally the military trains its Soldiers by strict procedure and method. However a new doctrine on training mandates that Soldiers need to understand outcomes and why those outcomes occur. Applying critical thinking skills become paramount, especially on the battlefield. No longer are Soldiers required to just simply know "how" to do something, but now they must understand the methodology around it.

Traditionally, people retain more information and develop skills quicker when they can analyze and understand methods rather than just accepting rote procedures. An example that Vandergriff uses is the SPORTS (slap, pull, observe, release, tap, shoot) method of clearing a rifle. This is a linear method to un-jam a weapon. The key question is why. The overall answer is obvious. Fire the weapon. When a Soldier can walk through the process and make a logical assessments, then that Soldier can truly begin to understand the methodology. The Soldier is required to think through his actions, understand the usefulness and apply the appropriate action. When the Soldier can independently think through a process then that Soldier becomes more confident with his/her skills.

Major (ret.) Donald Vandergriff is a Military Science teacher. He received his graduate degree in Military Science from the Leadership Excellence Program at Georgetown University.



"Six essential qualities that are the key to success: Sincerity, personal integrity, humility, courtesy, wisdom, charity." ~ William Menninger