

Outcomes-Based Training and Education (OBTE)

Directorate of Basic Combat Training
2104 Warehouse Row • Ft. Jackson, SC 29073
Phone: (803) 751-4212 • DSN: 734-4212
DBCT AKO <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/345546>



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OBTE Defined for IET

Outcomes-Based Training and Education (OBTE) is a philosophical approach to military training that seeks to target the Soldier's developmental end state. Soldiers will acquire skills, mental intangibles, and attributes required by the commander for full-spectrum operations. The training is guided by the commander's intent to obtain the greatest effectiveness and to enable Soldiers to learn better.

*"Traditional training and education may not meet all the needs of an expeditionary Army. The Army is **adapting training and education as appropriate to meet the conditions of today's operational environments. Developing new approaches may be necessary to ensure Soldiers and Army civilians are confident in their ability to conduct full spectrum operations anywhere along the spectrum of conflict with minimal additional training.**"*

Army Field Manual No. 7-0 (FM 7-0), *Training for Full Spectrum Operations*, U.S. Army, p. 3-2, paragraph 3-9, December 2008 [emphasis added].

OBTE Principles

Grow Problem Solving

Teach Soldiers to "learn for themselves" the skills necessary to succeed in their mission, within an established framework of knowledge.

Increase Intangibles

Develop intangible attributes like confidence, accountability, initiative, judgment, and awareness. Reinforce positive character traits.

Increase Understanding and Awareness

Teach through contextual understanding of the task and its mission application.

Increase Deliberate Thought

Condition Soldiers to always exercise a deliberate thought process (evaluation, judgment, and decision) while under both controlled and increasing levels of stress.

Improve Combat Performance

Condition Soldiers to overcome the psychological and physiological effects as well as the physical requirements of combat.

OBTE Characteristics

- Focus is on Soldiers learning better
- Outcome-focused, not process-driven
- Designed to obtain the desired combat-required outcomes in Soldiers, including mental intangibles, attributes, and skills
- Develops effectiveness instead of fixating on efficiency and restrictive processes
- Allows Soldiers to make appropriate decisions and understand the "Why" behind tasks
- Allows for flexibility and for Soldiers to think, apply knowledge, or solve problems
- Instructors must know the OBTE approach
- Requires revisions to existing instructor, educator, and leader training
- Does not necessarily require more resources
- Requires buy-in of accepted outcomes by the entire chain of command
- Commanders and cadre assess Soldier outcomes to ensure that the desired results are obtained

OBTE Company Approach

1. Identify Individual Task and Commander's Guidance

- After mission-essential tasks are selected, commanders identify training objectives for each task. A *training objective* is a statement that describes the desired outcome of a training activity in the unit.

2. Identify Outcomes Associated with the Task

- Desired outcomes may be from the five BCT Outcomes (see opposite side) or additional outcomes developed by the commander.
- Carefully analyze your assessment processes. Are you already obtaining your desired outcomes from your Soldiers with your processes (random skills testing, assessments done in combat-like conditions, etc.)?
- Spend more energy on the intangibles. They are a dominant part of the outcomes.
- Determine levels of performance (mastery, proficiency, introductory, etc.) to help determine emphasis.

- Avoid fixation on process and efficiency—focus on effectiveness.
- Once complete and approved, post the outcomes and measures of effectiveness around the company area—review regularly with Soldiers.

3. Identify the Best Method of Delivery Based on the Soldiers' Experiences*

- Active Learning
- Problem Solving
- Link to Combat
- Teach the "Why"
- Target Intangible Attributes

*See *Execute: "Science vs. Art"* on opposite side

*"The high quality of Army leaders and Soldiers is best exploited by allowing **subordinates maximum latitude to exercise individual and small-unit initiative. Tough, realistic training prepares leaders for this, and FM 3-0 prescribes giving them the maximum latitude to accomplish the mission successfully. This requires a climate of trust in the abilities of superior and subordinate alike. It also requires leaders at every level to think and act flexibly, constantly adapting to the situation. Subordinates' actions are guided by the higher commander's intent but not circumscribed by excessive control.**"*

Army Field Manual No. 3-0 (FM 3-0), *Operations*, U.S. Army, p. viii, 27 February 2008 [emphasis added].

4. Incorporate Problem Solving to Target the Deliberate Thought Process

- Manage Personal Finances: Have the Soldiers develop a budget using their current leave and earnings statement (LES).
- Map Reading: Hand buddy teams a map and have them find their current location before attending the class.
- Urban Operations: Have the platoon secure a building without telling them how. They should have had some prior tactical training.
- First Aid: Have a Soldier evaluate and treat a casualty that has certain symptoms.

NOTE: *Do not explain anything other than the task.*

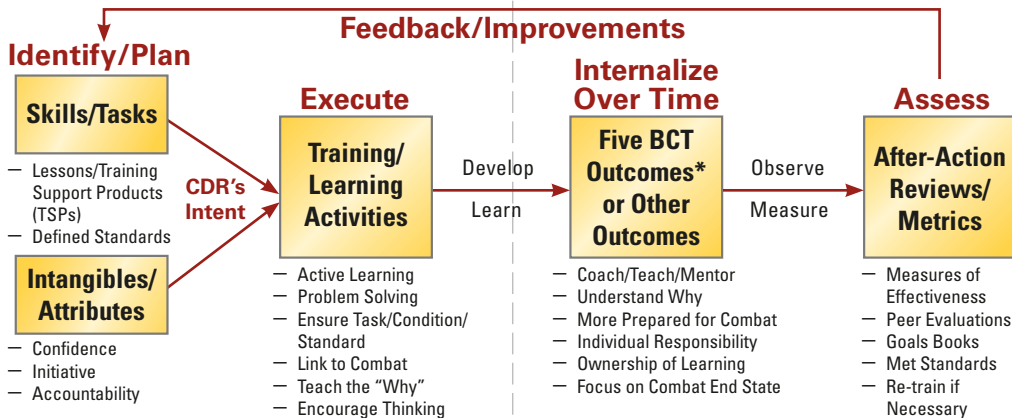
5. Develop a Plan to Train and Assess Outcomes

- Develop a training environment in which individuals have the freedom to make decisions; this produces individuals better able to learn and adapt during operations.
- Determine measures of effectiveness for desired outcomes.
- Set a flexible environment. Let the company cadre develop training plans to arrive at outcomes as much as possible. *Take the plane off of auto-pilot.*
- Power down. Let the Soldiers do more—leadership, responsibilities, and privileges.

6. Remember:

- C**onduct training
- A**ssess training (achieve end-state outcomes)
- P**rovide feedback to Soldiers
- M**ake adjustments (if needed)
- R**e-train (if needed)

IET OBTE Model: "Art vs. Science"



*The Five Basic Combat Training (BCT) Outcomes

1. Is a proud team member possessing the character and commitment to live the Army values and Warrior ethos
2. Is confident, adaptable, mentally agile, and accountable for own actions

3. Is physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally ready to fight as a ground combatant
4. Is a master of critical combat skills and is proficient in basic Soldier skills
5. Is self-disciplined, willing, and an adaptive thinker, capable of solving problems commensurate with position and experience

These outcomes can and have been modified by some brigades.

Execute: "Science vs. Art"

Active Learning

- Any method of instruction that focuses the responsibility of learning on the learner as opposed to the educator
- Builds innovation
- Students can form natural linkages that are easier to remember
- More time required
- Must be followed up with "checks on learning" and re-train time

Problem Solving

- Students self-teach by attempting to solve specific problems that may or may not have clear answers
 - Good in small groups, enhances teamwork
 - Fosters innovation and freedom to explore
 - Students take pride in results . . . ownership
 - Time-intensive
 - Requires some base knowledge to self-solve
- ### Link to Combat
- Use combat experience to assist in teaching the "Why"

- Grow confidence by developing experiences as close to combat experiences as possible
- ### Teach the "Why"
- Able to see the end state of a task
 - Can better internalize, gain ownership, and thus promote accountability for a task
 - The "Why" is needed to encourage the use of a higher order of thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation)

Target Intangible Attributes

- Grow confidence
- Promote accountability
- Cause initiative

"[Education] helps develop individuals and leaders who can think, apply knowledge, and solve problems under uncertain or ambiguous conditions. Education is associated with 'how to think.' It provides individuals with lifelong abilities that enable higher cognitive thought processes. Education prepares individuals for service by teaching knowledge, skills, and behaviors applicable to multiple duty positions in peace or war. Educated Soldiers and Army civilians have the foundation needed to adapt to new and unfamiliar situations."

FM 7-0, p. 3-2, paragraph 3-8 [emphasis added].

OBTE Soldier Results

Higher-Trained Product with Mental Intangibles:

We want Soldiers to be at this higher level (In the bull's-eye)

Minimal Army Standards:

Soldiers need to be coached to a higher level (On the target, but not in the center)

Not Meeting Army Standards:

They should be re-trained, new-started, or sent home (Not on the target)



Move Soldiers to the Bull's-Eye

- Increase counseling
- Reward good performance
- Coach Soldiers
- More repetition of training

Levels of OBTE

Company Commanders or First Sergeants



- Be creative
- Ask to change what doesn't work—stress effectiveness
- Know standards and ensure that the cadre is developing Soldiers to those levels
- Be flexible/adapt to change
- Constant feedback is essential—and must be acted upon
- Review your unit's goals books
- Ensure that training is developing intangible attributes
- Align incentives: What's rewarded? What's penalized?
- Give trained teachers as much latitude as possible, then hold them accountable for achieving outcomes
- Create an environment in which it is O.K. to make mistakes—penalize only failure to think or failure to try

Instructors



- Focus on the "Why," not just the "What" and "How"
- Be role models—especially of the intangibles
- Coach, teach, and inspire Soldiers to perform at a combat level
- Explain, demonstrate, and enforce task standards
- Ask to implement better ideas; be effective
- Use developmental counseling
- Use your unit's goals books
- Make students solve problems even as they acquire skills
- Build from no stress to heightened, managed stress by increasing the difficulty of problems to be solved
- Do not tell Soldiers how to solve a complex problem; let them try to solve it themselves as much as they are capable

Assess: Metrics

Sources of Tangible and Intangible Measurements

- Measures of effectiveness developed for each outcome
- Peer evaluations
- Standards listed in the lesson
- Observations of performance
- The unit/Soldier goals books
- After-action review results
- Direct developmental counseling
- Lessons learned
- Forum feedback

For additional information on OBTE, contact:

Asymmetric Warfare Group
 2282 Morrison St. • Ft. Meade, MD 20755-5355
 SIPR awg.cis1@us.army.mil
 NIPR awg.cis@us.army.mil
 AWG AKO <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/353158>
 or
Army Training Network
 ATN AKO <https://atn.army.mil>