LESSON TWO

ESTABLISH A POSITIVE COMMAND CLIMATE

Critical Task, 03-9001.11-0002

OVERVIEW

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson you will learn how to assess and improve or establish a positive command climate.

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

ACTION: Develop a plan to establish a positive command climate.

CONDITION: You have been assigned as the leader of an organization. Given a military situation, extracts from DA Pam 600-69 and a sample Unit Climate Profile.

STANDARD: Assess the current command climate and prepare and execute a plan to establish or continue a positive command climate. Evaluation of the plan will be in accordance with DA Pam 600-69.

REFERENCES: The material contained in this lesson was derived from the following publications: FM 22-100, FM 22-102, FM 22-103, DA Pam 600-69.

INTRODUCTION

How is your morale? How is the morale in your unit? We spend much of our time talking about morale but like "Sarge," we frequently fail to see the obvious.

Figure 2-1. State of Morale.
Unfortunately, the humor in this situation is closer to truth than fiction in some units. We've all been in units where the unit's morale was lousy. If you command such a unit, what can you do to turn around the unit's morale? Knowing that the unit's morale is lousy is one thing, the ability to fix it is another. A unit commander is responsible for both the command climate and morale of his organization. This lesson focuses on what command climate is, how you assess a command climate, how to develop and implement a plan to improve a command climate and, the leader actions that contribute to a positive command climate.

PART A - DEFINE COMMAND CLIMATE

1. The Definition of Command Climate.

   a. Command climate is one of those things many people talk about but few understand. We frequently use the words "morale" and "command climate" interchangeably. Webster's New World Dictionary defines morale as:

   A moral or mental condition with respect to courage, discipline, and confidence.

   Morale is a component or part of a unit's command climate. FM 22-103 defines command climate as:

   A perception among the members of a unit about how they will be treated by their leaders and what professional opportunities they see within the unit.

   The key to this definition is that it looks forward. It focuses on the future and concerns both the treatment by leaders and the opportunities that the soldiers perceive as available to them.

   b. What is the command climate in your current unit? Take a minute or two and write down your perceptions of how the leaders in your unit treat their soldiers. Then write down the professional opportunities that your soldiers honestly feel are available to them because of being in the unit. List both the positive and negative perceptions. If your listing appears to be one-sided, double check the list. Are the items you've listed your perceptions or your soldiers' perceptions? As you double check your list remember that as leaders we frequently overlook the positive things that go on around us.

2. Why is command climate so important? It is important because our soldiers' perception of the command climate affects how they perform. Differences in command climate affect unit cohesion, reenlistment rates, a soldier's job satisfaction, and the overall effectiveness of a unit. A positive command climate allows soldiers and leaders to take initiative and risks within the commander's intent. Leaders create the conditions for a positive command climate. They create a healthy command climate from the top down.
PART B - IDENTIFY THE CLIMATE AREAS THAT AFFECT A UNIT'S COMMAND CLIMATE

1. Commanders who have an accurate awareness of the perceptions and views of their soldiers, possess a definite leadership advantage. The traditional methods of obtaining this type of information have included such informal methods as open-door policies, "rap" sessions, and suggestion boxes. While these methods are useful, they are generally inadequate as a means of obtaining complete, unbiased, and representative information regarding the actual unit climate. Because of this, the Army developed an instrument called the Unit Climate Profile (UCP). The UCP is based on 21 climate areas.

2. The climate areas. Figure 2-2 identifies the 21 climate areas addressed in the Unit Climate Profile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UCP CLIMATE AREAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Officer Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. NCO Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leader Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Promotion Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Rewards and Corrective Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Quality of Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Freedom from Harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Military Courtesy and Discipline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2-2. UCP Climate Areas.

Each climate area addresses a different aspect of the unit. Let's take a closer look at the climate areas by focusing on what makes up a unit climate area.
1) Officer Leadership. This area looks at the overall quality of officer leadership in the unit (including the commander). Officer leadership focuses on the respect and concern unit officers display toward the enlisted soldiers in the unit. It looks at the amount of respect soldiers have in their officers.

2) NCO Leadership. NCO leadership addresses the overall quality of NCO leadership in the unit. Like officer leadership, this area focuses on the respect and concern the unit's NCOs show for the enlisted soldiers in the unit. It also includes the respect soldiers have for their NCOs.

3) Immediate Leaders. Immediate leaders are the immediate supervisors in a unit. This area focuses on the general quality of immediate leadership in the unit. This area deals with the treatment of the soldier on the job, the clarity of duty instructions, and leader expectations. This area also addresses the receptiveness of the immediate leader to constructive suggestions, and the amount of respect soldiers have for their immediate leaders.

4) Leader Accessibility. Accessibility to unit leaders is important to soldiers. How easy is it for enlisted soldiers to discuss problems with their leaders? Do the leaders listen? How is the soldier treated once he or she gets to see the leader?

5) Promotion Policy. The promotion policy area assesses the soldier's perception of the fairness of, and overall satisfaction with, the promotion policies in the unit. This area identifies the extent to which promotions are contingent upon performance. Also included is the concept of racial or ethnic fairness in promotions.

6) Rewards and Corrective Actions. This climate area focuses on the frequency of leaders rewarding soldiers for good performance. The area of corrective actions looks at how leaders treat "honest mistakes" and poor performance. There is a difference and the leader's actions in this area influence a unit's climate.

7) Quality of Training. This climate area is very important to soldiers since they spend most of their time "training." The area addresses the quality of physical training, MOS training, and combat training. It includes how frequently the unit wastes training time or resources.

8) Tools, Equipment, and Supplies. The availability and condition of job-related tools, equipment, and supplies influences a unit's climate.
Job Satisfaction. The job satisfaction area focuses on the soldier's interest in and the sense of fulfillment he derives from his work. If soldiers don't perceive their jobs as contributing to the unit's mission, they are likely to be dissatisfied.

Freedom from Harassment. A climate area often overlooked is the soldier's perception of harassment by unit leaders. This area looks at the prevalence of "harassing" rules and practices in the unit.

Military Courtesy and Discipline. This area addresses the standards of military courtesy and discipline in the unit. The leaders' adherence to and enforcement of unit rules, regulations, and policies has a great deal to do with this climate area.

Human Relations. The human relations area looks at the leadership's treatment of soldiers as it pertains to race, ethnic background, and gender. The presence and handling of human relations problems is part of this climate area.

Unit Cohesiveness. This area concentrates on the degree of mutual respect and confidence present, how well soldiers work together, and whether soldiers think the unit would "stick together" during combat.

Sports Activities. This includes the amount and variety of sports activities in the unit.

Social Activities. The amount and variety of social activities in the unit also influence a unit's climate.

Freedom from Substance Abuse. This area looks at the perceived prevalence of alcohol- and drug-related problems.

Food. Yes, even the quantity and quality of food in garrison and the field reflect on a unit's climate.

Soldier Attitude Toward Unit. The soldier's attitude is an important climate area. The area concentrates on the soldier's evaluation of the unit as a whole. How the unit gets the job done, how the soldier feels the unit would perform in combat, and if the soldier likes being in the unit.

Morale. The climate area of morale focuses on the soldiers' perceptions of their morale and the unit's morale.
Reenlistment Potential. This area addresses the soldier's attitude toward Army life in general and reenlistment in particular.

Commander's Use of the Unit Climate Profile (UCP). The last climate area focuses on the probability of the commander using the results of the Unit Climate Profile to initiate changes in the unit. This area focuses on the perceived probability that the unit commander will use the survey results of the UCP to improve the unit.

The Unit Climate Profile. The Army Research Institute developed the Unit Climate Profile (UCP) at the request of U.S. Army Forces Command and Headquarters III Corps to overcome the major shortcomings of our informal methods of assessing unit climate. The purpose was to provide a valid, reliable, and standardized method for company-level commanders to identify unit strengths and weaknesses associated with the 21 unit climate areas.

a. The Unit Climate Profile focuses on each of the 21 climate areas. It is not just "another questionnaire." It is a scientifically developed tool that has undergone successive refinements. Each questionnaire item and each profile area passed a series of stringent tests of practical and statistical value. The UCP is a formal assessment tool based on the 21 unit climate areas.

b. The Unit Climate Profile (UCP) is available for Army-wide use and is published in DA Pam 600-69, Unit Climate Profile Commander's Handbook. The UCP provides the commander information on the actual perceptions of the enlisted soldiers in the unit. It provides a picture of the unit climate from the soldiers perspective.

PART C - ASSESS THE COMMAND CLIMATE OF AN ORGANIZATION

When should a commander assess his unit's command climate? Unfortunately there isn't a single answer to this question. The two most obvious occasions are, (1) after assuming command and (2) when you begin feeling that things in your unit just aren't right. Besides these, there are several other uses for the Unit Climate Profile. Figure 2-3 shows some typical uses of the Unit Climate Profile.
Although you should not overuse the UCP, it gives you a simple yet powerful tool to stay well-informed about the "health" of your unit in the 21 climate areas.

a. Although the UCP is not required, battalion commanders often ask new company commanders to administer the UCP shortly after taking command. When using the Unit Climate Profile, some commanders complete a copy of the profile with the intention of predicting how the "average" enlisted soldier will respond. This "prediction" often identifies the difference between the commander's perception of the unit's command climate and the soldier's perception. Large differences between the commander's perception and the soldiers' perception indicates an area in need of improved communication or clarification. Some commanders ask other unit leaders to complete the questionnaire to determine the perception differences at various levels in the organization.

b. If the soldiers in your unit take the UCP questionnaire seriously and answer the questions honestly you will gain a great deal of information about your unit. Using the UCP is similar to putting your unit under a microscope. Many of the climate areas addressed are the type that remain invisible to unit leaders until they become problems.

c. The value of the UCP is two-fold. First, it allows you to examine the areas in which leaders and soldiers interact. The interaction between soldiers and leaders is what forms the soldiers' perception of how unit leaders treat them and the opportunities available to them. Second, the interaction that takes place in each climate area can be controlled by the unit leaders. By looking at the individual climate areas you can begin to see the causes of a poor unit climate rather than just the symptoms or results of that climate. The climate areas focus the leader's attention in the right places, but, they do not tell the commander how to solve unit problems. The UCP is particularly useful to the Reserve Component commander who has a limited amount of time to observe and work with his entire unit.
The procedures for using the UCP involve three basic steps:

- Administering a 20-minute UCP questionnaire to the enlisted soldiers in your unit (PVT through SGT).
- Analyzing the questionnaire data using the procedures described in DA Pam 600-69, Unit Climate Profile Commander's Handbook.
- Using the unit climate profile as a leadership tool to maintain or enhance the climate of your unit.

Let's take a closer look at a unit climate. Appendix A-2 contains the instructions for completing the UCP and the UCP Questionnaire. Turn to page A-2-1, read the UCP instructions and then complete the questionnaire. Answer each question in the way you think the average enlisted soldier in your unit would answer the question. Be honest. When you complete the questionnaire return to this point in the lesson. The completed questionnaire will be used in this lesson's practice exercise.

As you complete the UCP you should begin to see the relationship between various leader actions and your soldiers' reaction to those actions. Unpopular decisions or difficult tasks don't always have an adverse influence on a unit's climate. On the other hand the general attitude of your officers and NCOs and the way they treat soldiers may have a significant impact on the unit's climate. The completed questionnaire represents your perception of the unit's climate from a soldier's perspective.

Unit Climate Profile Data Analysis.

- The second step in using the UCP is the analysis of the questionnaire data. If you administered the questionnaire to your enlisted soldiers (for example, 68 soldiers PVT through SGTs) you would have 68 different responses for each question. Page A-2-8 is a copy of the Unit Climate Profile (UCP) Data Analysis Worksheet. To record the responses for each of the 82 questions you must make 17 copies of this form. Recording the responses is most easily and accurately accomplished by two persons. As one reads aloud the responses from the questionnaires, the other records the responses on the Data Analysis Worksheets (DA Form 5548-1-R) with tally marks. An example of this is shown on the next page in Figure 2-4.
b. Once you have transferred the data to the tally section of the worksheets you are ready to find the response frequencies for each possible answer to the question. Count the number of tally marks in each row and enter the number in the "n" column. The sample data from Figure 2-5 would produce the following:

```

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #()</th>
<th>Tally</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>nX</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(      )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Subtotals:

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Figure 2-4. Data Analysis Worksheet.

Figure 2-5. Response Frequencies.
c. After determining the response frequency (n), your next step is to complete the intermediate calculation for the column marked "nX." To do this:

(1) Multiply the response frequency (n) by the weighted value of that response (X) and enter the product in the "nX" column. For example: 3 x +2 = 6.

(2) Sum and then enter the subtotal for both the "n" and "nX" columns in the appropriate blocks. The "nX" subtotal may be a negative number. When you add this column, ensure you maintain the appropriate sign (+/-).

Complete these calculations using Figure 2-5, Response Frequencies, and then check your work using Figure 2-6, Completed Intermediate Calculations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #() Tally</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>nX</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(       )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>-38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotals:</strong></td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
<td>-54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2-6. Completed Intermediate Calculations.

d. Determining the percentage profiles for each response is an optional step. The percentage profile for a particular question shows what percentage of the soldiers checked each of the five alternative responses. To do this: divide each number in the "n" column by the subtotal "n." Multiply each result by 100. Round to the nearest whole number and enter the result in the "%" (percent) column. For example:

(3 divided by 68 = .04
 .04 x 100 = 4%)

Complete the calculations using Figure 2-6 then check your work with the data contained in Figure 2-7, Percentage Calculations.
e. The last calculation for each question is the average response. The average response represents the average X value based on the distribution of responses. In simple terms, if you have one "average soldier" this is how he would have answered the question. To compute the average response:

1. Divide the subtotal nX by the subtotal n.

2. Round the answer to one decimal point and enter the result in the space under average. Include the minus (-) sign if the average is negative.

For Example: 54 (nX) divided by 68 (n) = -0.8

A completed worksheet for this question appears in Figure 2-8, Average Response on the next page.
f. Although these calculations are not difficult, you must follow the same procedure for each of the 82 questions. Two persons working on the task makes it easier and generally ensures accuracy. Don't allow the analysis of the individual questions to frustrate you. The next steps convert the data from the 82 questions into data that relates to the 21 unit climate areas.

g. Turn to the Profile Worksheet on page A-2-9. The column titled "Question Numbers" contains the question numbers that relate to each of the 21 climate or profile areas. Questions 1 through 5 correspond to the area of officer leadership, and questions 6 through 9 correspond to the area of NCO leadership. Each of the 82 questions relates to a specific profile area. Let's use the following example to illustrate how to complete Section II of the Profile Worksheet.

1. Questions 1 through 5 relate to the profile area officer leadership. The average values for each question are as follows:

   Question 1. -0.8
   Question 2. 0.0
   Question 3. +1.1
   Question 4. -0.5
   Question 5. -0.4

   By adding these values you find that the sum is -0.6. Enter this value as shown in Figure 2-9, Profile Worksheet.
(2) Determine the "Profile Score" for each area by dividing the sum of the area averages by the number of items in the area. Round the profile score to one decimal place and enter the score on the Profile Worksheet, including minus signs as appropriate.

For example:

-0.6 divided by 5 = -.12

Round -.12 to one decimal place = -.1

All profile scores will be in the range -2.0 to +2.0. A completed entry is shown below:

Figure 2-9. Profile Worksheet.

The profile score represents the average soldier's response in this climate or profile area.

(3) After computing the profile score for each profile area, compute the "Average Profile Score." Add the 21 profile score values in the profile score column of the worksheet (taking negative scores into account). Divide the sum by 21 (the number of profile areas), round to one decimal place, and enter the result (either positive or negative) at the bottom of the column next to the annotation "Average Profile Score." Figure 2-10, Average Profile Score illustrates the worksheet and the calculation. The average profile score portrays the total unit climate in a single value. It represents the collective perception of your soldiers.
The final unit climate profile form is Section III - Profile Record. A copy of this form is included on page A-2-10. Transfer the profile scores and the average profile score from the Profile Worksheet to the Profile Record by marking the appropriate spot on each profile area scale. Note that each scale is divided into tenths. The profile scores are rounded to one decimal place so you can plot them accurately on the profile record as in the following example:
This type of graphic representation of a unit's climate is very revealing. If your unit climate is poor it may shock you. The graph clearly identifies areas that are strong or weak. In the example above, notice that the soldiers' perception of the unit's leaders is generally weak. Leader accessibility is the weakest. Also note that although NCO leadership is in the positive area, the immediate leaders have a negative impact on the unit climate. The natural question is why? Is it that squad leaders or immediate supervisors are weak? Or could it be that your officers are involved in the nuts-and-bolts of the job and the soldiers perceive them as the immediate leaders? If this is the case, it may account for the similarity in values between the officer leadership and immediate leaders.

1. You need to do this type of analysis for each of the 21 climate areas. In some areas you may need to refer to the data worksheets to get a clearer picture. To do this, Look at the group of questions that combine to form the profile scores. Your soldiers' responses to specific questions may provide some insight into the reason for the profile score and ultimately provide you with the clues necessary to improve your command climate. Let's look at the following example of responses to questions 4 and 5 of the UCP.
Notice that we've added the question and the possible responses to our example. This makes it easier to analyze the data. A quick calculation shows that 74 percent of the soldiers think that your subordinate officers are "bad" or "very bad" (63% + 11%) and 55 percent of the soldiers have "little" or "very little" respect for their officers (48% + 7%). This type of information gives you more information in the area of officer leadership than simply looking at the profile area score. Conduct this type of analysis for each profile area. It's as important to analyze a unit's strengths as it is its weaknesses. Once you've analyzed the data, it should be fairly easy to identify those areas that are weak and those areas that are strong.

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**Figure 2-12. Sample Data Analysis Worksheet.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As leaders, how are the other officers in your unit?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question #4 Tally</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotals:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you respect the officers in your unit?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question #5 Tally</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotals:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The UCP is not the only means of assessing a command climate. Earlier in this lesson we said that some less formal, traditional methods of obtaining information regarding the unit's climate included open-door policies, "rap" sessions, suggestion boxes, the recording of complaints, and casual observations. Each of these methods is valid and, when used correctly, help in the assessment of your unit's climate.

k. Summary.

(1) In Parts A and B you learned what command climate is and the climate areas that affect a unit's climate. In Part C you used the Unit Climate Profile and assessed the "health" of your unit. Once you've identified the climate areas that are healthy (strengths) and those that need improvement, the next step is to develop and implement a plan to establish or improve your unit's command climate.

(2) Before you continue with Part D, refer to the Unit Climate Profile forms in Appendix A. As a review, complete the UCP forms contained in Appendix A using the questionnaire you completed. Complete Section II - Profile Worksheet (page A-2-9) by determining the sum of area averages, the profile score, and finally the average profile score. Then plot your profile scores on the Profile Record (page A-2-10). Once you've completed this, analyze the data. Are there any surprises?

(3) The UCP assessment or analysis is a very formal means of determining the climate of an organization. However, it is not the only means of assessing the "health" of an organization. The UCP should not be used more than once a year. Simple observation is one of the best informal methods of assessing a unit's climate. Observe your unit's activities and training. Review unit reenlistment records and look for trends. If you're concerned about a specific climate area, review the UCP questions that relate to that area and then, keeping those questions in mind, observe the interaction between soldiers and their leaders. Remember that you can always conduct a self-assessment by answering the UCP questions from a soldier's perspective. Discuss the climate areas that concern you with your key subordinate leaders. The point is, don't accept the answer, "Command climate and unit morale are lousy!" Do something!

PART D - DEVELOP A PLAN TO ESTABLISH A POSITIVE COMMAND CLIMATE

1. Once you've identified the climate areas that are healthy and those areas that need improvement, the next step is to develop and implement a plan to establish or improve your unit's command climate.
2. Developing a plan to establish or improve the command climate of a unit involves four steps:

- Determine the command climate of your organization.
- Identify the climate areas you want to influence.
- Establish clear goals and objectives for each climate area you wish to influence.
- Execute the plan. Recognize that a command climate is created from the top down.

a. Determine the command climate of your organization. We've addressed this step in great detail. Regardless of the assessment tool you use, the goal of determining the climate of your unit is to find out how things really are. When you complete this step you should be able to answer the question, "What are your soldiers' perceptions regarding the command climate of this unit?"

b. Identify the climate areas you want to influence. This is more difficult. Look at the Profile Record (page A-2-10) you prepared based on your responses to the UCP Questionnaire. Which climate areas do you think require immediate attention? If your unit climate is good, the answer is easy; however, if your unit climate is poor, many areas will require attention. When identifying the areas you want to influence, use the following guidelines:

   (1) Select areas over which you have immediate control. For example, you control the officer and NCO leadership of your unit. On the other hand, the Department of Army (DA) may have initiated restrictive promotion policies and the soldiers' reaction to the policy may have influenced their answers in this area. You can educate and inform the soldiers of the policies but you have no control over DA policy.

   (2) Identify and select areas that will make a difference. Don't select a couple of easy areas and hope that the rest will take care of themselves; they won't! Select areas that are meaningful to the soldiers. When possible select climate areas that have multiple impact. For example, if there is a significant shortage of tools, equipment, and supplies, correcting this climate area also could effect a change in the soldier's job satisfaction and quality of training. Resist the temptation to make quick, easy fixes without addressing some more difficult areas. Your soldiers will see right through your efforts.
c. **Establish clear goals and objectives for each climate area.** This is the most critical step. You should involve key subordinate leaders in this step. Brief them on the results of the UCP or your findings if you used a less formal assessment method. Seek their input and involve them in establishing goals and objectives for each climate area. Remember that command climate is created from the top down. Your platoon leaders, first sergeant, and platoon sergeants are the individuals who will implement the steps necessary to achieve the goals. The implied task in this step is to decide how you plan to achieve the goal or objective. Your subordinate leaders’ input in this step gives them a sense of ownership in the plan. When setting goals and objectives here are a few points to remember:

- The goals must be reasonable. Don't shoot for the stars when you can't see the tops of the trees.
- Link each goal to a unit climate profile area—don't say "we're going to improve our command climate."
- Identify how you will measure achievement of the goal—you could use impromptu discussions with soldiers or a subsequent UCP to measure your results.
- Remember that you are dealing with perceptions—and perceptions change slowly. If you used the UCP your soldiers will expect something to happen. If you change a policy, let them know. If your plan deals with areas such as officer and NCO leadership or leader accessibility, allow your actions and the actions of your subordinate leaders to do the talking.

d. **Execute the plan.** Recognize that a command climate is created from the top down. The execution of the plan depends entirely on the profile areas you selected, and the goals you've set. There isn't a prescription for this step. You might say that this is what we, as leaders, get paid for. No matter what your execution plan involves it must provide for periodic after-action reviews (AARs). Conduct the AARs with your key leaders and make adjustments as necessary. Select new climate areas to improve as appropriate and maintain your success in previously selected areas.

3. **How will I know when I've established a positive command climate?** Must I complete another UCP to determine my new command climate? These are two very valid questions. You may decide to administer the UCP a second time to evaluate your plan and its implementation. Feedback from your key leaders and soldiers is also helpful. Another method is to observe your unit looking for the presence of leader actions that contribute to a positive command climate. Examples of leader actions are:
- **Communicate a sense of vision or focus.** This one of the most overused, least understood expressions in the Army today. A leader's vision or focus is a clear understanding of the conditions he wants to do in the future. What is it that the unit needs to accomplish today, tomorrow, and next year and how will successive events tie together? We frequently find ourselves leaping from one event to another. Although these events are important, they often have little to do with the mission of the organization. Vision provides a reference point against which the leader measures progress. Vision or focus can be communicated by many means: publishing training guidance, holding long-range planning meetings, or by simply talking with the soldiers. Vision provides a direction and sense of purpose for the unit.

- **Maintain a battle focus in all training activities.** This action goes hand in hand with the first. Our soldiers want to be prepared in the event of war. The Army's role in Southwest Asia leaves little doubt about the importance of this leader action.

- **Establish high, attainable, clearly understood standards.** Challenge without overwhelming. Ensure that all soldiers understand your expectations. This applies to both individual and collective efforts.

- **Encourage competition against standards rather than each other.** If you set high, attainable standards, achieving these standards will be difficult enough. Don't force your soldiers to compete against each other by establishing "best crew" or "best mechanic" types of rewards. Establish programs that result in the soldiers attempting to exceed the standard. There is nothing wrong with many of your crews earning a "superior crew" streamer if they meet the appropriate standard.

- **Allow subordinates the freedom to exercise initiative.** Give mission-type orders and instructions rather than detailed direction. Allow the soldier the opportunity to plan, execute, and assess his performance within the scope of his responsibility.

- **Establish accountability at the appropriate level.** This includes both property accountability and the accountability for the authority we entrust to our soldiers. If a soldier fails to achieve a performance standard, he should be held accountable. On the other hand, if he exceeds the standard he should receive the appropriate reward.
- **Show confidence in subordinates.** Soldiers thrive on the trust and confidence their leaders place in them. It gives them a feeling of worth, belonging, and responsibility.

- **Encourage and reward prudent risk taking.** Our AirLand Battle doctrine, under the tenet of initiative, states: "All leaders must take prudent risks." However, leaders frequently define a prudent risk as: "You took a risk and won. Great job!" But what about those times when a prudent risk does not result in successful completion? If taking the risk was appropriate, recognize the leader's ability to identify the situation. Identify the action or actions that led to the failure and correct them. Don't inhibit prudent risk taking by critiquing the risk, critique the performance.

- **Achieve high performance through positive motivation and rewards.** Soldiers motivated by fear or reprisal will not take risks. They will attempt to meet the standard but will not risk failure by trying to exceed the standard. Use positive motivators such as: recognizing and satisfying soldiers' needs, developing positive role models, and making good use of rewards.

- **Underwrite honest mistakes.** Mistakes are inevitable. They are a part of life. Mistakes that occur in training are opportunities to learn lessons that can be applied in future training or combat. However, not all mistakes can be underwritten. Dishonest mistakes cannot be condoned. Mistakes which result from a subordinate exceeding his authority or responsibility should not be underwritten. An important aspect of this action is that you can only underwrite mistakes in those areas where you have complete control. For example, during company-level training a commander can underwrite a lieutenant's failure to establish a platoon defensive position. If he makes the same mistake during the unit ARTEP, the company commander cannot underwrite the failure.

- **Share decision making with subordinates when appropriate.** This simple but effective action pays great dividends in the unit. Shared decision making contributes to team development and command climate.

- **Give clear missions indicating when subordinates have discretion and when they do not.** This action works hand-in-hand with allowing soldiers to exercise initiative, showing confidence in subordinates, and encouraging prudent risk taking.
- Listen to subordinates and seek subordinates' ideas. Soldiers who feel like they're part of a team perform better than those who do not. There is no substitute for pride, esprit-de-corps, or a positive feeling of self-worth. Soldiers who feel good about themselves are more likely to feel good about their unit.

- Demonstrate concern about the welfare of subordinates. Soldiers appreciate genuine concern and disdain superficial concern. Stand up for your soldiers.

- Establish and model high ethical standards. This is an ethical responsibility for all leaders. Soldiers want leaders they can trust. Leaders who demonstrate behavior that is less than ethical will not gain the trust and confidence of their subordinates.

- Practice what you preach. If you don't do anything else, do this! By failing to practice what you preach you establish a set of operating norms or values that are not consistent with the goals and objectives of the organization.

Although each leader action plays a role in improving a unit's command climate, it is important to understand that the commander cannot, by himself, improve a unit's climate. All unit leaders must be involved.

4. Reserve Component commanders face many unique challenges. Many Reserve Component units are divided into detachments located in different communities. The Reserve Component commander must train his detachment commanders to set up and sustain his command climate program. Unit technicians take care of many of the administrative details involved in the unit. The failure of the unit technician to provide effective administrative support can have an adverse effect on a unit's climate. The time available to the Reserve Component commander to influence his unit climate is significantly less than that of his active counterpart. Because of this the RC commander can't afford to spend time focusing on areas that have little or no impact on the unit's climate.

5. Summary.

   a. You may be saying to yourself: "This seems like we're making a lot out of something we do all the time. I don't have the time to assess my unit's climate in this depth." If you're in the middle of a major training event, you may be correct. Yet, if you allow events to drive your unit, conducting an assessment of your unit's climate may produce a few surprises. Whether you use the UCP or another method, you need an accurate assessment of your unit climate.
b. The development of a plan to establish or improve a positive command climate involves four steps:

(1) Determine the command climate of the organization.

(2) Identify the climate areas you want to influence.

(3) Establish clear goals and objectives for each climate area you wish to influence.

(4) Execute the plan. Recognize that a command climate is created from the top down.

Each of these steps is critical to the establishment of a positive command climate. Don't expect immediate results. Patience and coordinated execution by your subordinate leaders are the keys to success. Teach your subordinate leaders the leader actions that contribute to a positive command climate. Reinforce these actions by being a positive role model. Actions speak louder than words in creating a positive command climate.

PART E - SUMMARY

1. Command climate is defined as a shared feeling. It is the perception among the members of a unit about how they will be treated by their leaders and what professional opportunities they see within the organization. Unit leaders create the conditions in which a positive command climate develops.

2. The climate areas. The Unit Climate Profile is based on 21 climate areas that influence a unit. The 21 climate areas are:

- Officer Leadership
- NCO Leadership
- Immediate Leaders
- Leader Accessibility
- Promotion Policy
- Rewards and Corrective Actions
- Quality of Training
- Tools, Equipment, and Supplies
- Job Satisfaction
- Freedom from Harassment
- Military Courtesy and Discipline
- Human Relations
- Unit Cohesiveness
- Sports Activities
- Social Activities
- Freedom from Substance Abuse
- Food
- Soldier Attitude Toward the Unit
- Morale
- Reenlistment Potential
- Commander's Use of the Unit Climate Profile
3. The assessment of a command climate can be done by using either a formal assessment process such as the Unit Climate Profile or by an informal process such as observing unit activities, training, or reviewing unit reenlistment trends.

4. The four steps to establish or maintain a positive command climate include:
   - Determine the "health" of the organization.
   - Identify the climate areas you want to influence.
   - Establish clear goals and objectives for each climate area.
   - Execute the plan. Recognize that a command climate is created from the top down.

5. Leader actions that contribute to a positive command climate include:
   - Communicate a sense of vision or focus.
   - Maintain a battle focus in all training activities.
   - Establish high, attainable, clearly understood standards.
   - Encourage competition against standards rather than each other.
   - Allow subordinates the freedom to exercise initiative.
   - Establish accountability at the appropriate level.
   - Show confidence in subordinates.
   - Encourage and reward prudent risk taking.
   - Achieve high performance through positive motivation and rewards.
   - Underwrite honest mistakes.
   - Share decision making with subordinates when appropriate.
   - Give clear missions and indicate where subordinates have discretion and where they do not.
   - Listen to subordinates and seek subordinates' ideas.
- Demonstrate concern about the welfare of subordinates.
- Establish and model high ethical standards.
- Practice what you preach.