



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION
BUILDING 28000, 761ST TANK BATTALION AVE
FORT HOOD, TX 76544



AFVA-DCG

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Leader Note #2: Exploit the Initiative.

1. Purpose. This memo is for our division, brigade and battalion level leaders to describe how we continue to operationalize People First (PF) in the 1st Cavalry Division. As we are weaving People First back into the fabric of our organization **we must demonstrate that People First is in everything we do, NOT just another thing that we do.**

2. Situation. *The reason we exist Army is to Fight and Win our Nation's wars. We do this by putting our People First, Modernizing our Force, and Building Lethality – in that order of priority.*

People are our most important weapon system and People First is the critical enabling operation for Modernization and Readiness. When we take care of our people and treat each other with dignity and respect, we have a stronger and more committed Team. It is our people who deliver our lethality and modernization. Leaders are obligated to build cohesive teams that are highly trained, disciplined, and fit that can deploy and win anywhere.

We are now at a critical time in this People First journey. Last quarter we seized the initiative, focusing on problem definition and experimentation. This quarter we must exploit the initiative, next quarter we solidify our gains and through the end of the year we inculcate this into our culture. We will continue to work at all levels to make People First a reality, to ensure the "video matches audio" in the eyes of our Troopers.

3. Framework. Our PF framework comprises four complementary key tasks and our **decisive point¹ is the Squad Leader.**

Our Squad Leaders must have the moral character to intervene, the commitment to 24/7 leadership, the genuine care and concern for Troopers and Families, and the competence to know how to lead.



a. **BE A COHESIVE TEAM.** The foundation of the PF framework is Cohesive Teams. Cohesive teams drive readiness and enable us to deploy, fight and dominate any adversary, anywhere, under any condition. Cohesive teams are led by engaged, inspiring leaders and comprised of holistically fit Troopers who are good teammates, motivated to learn. Cohesive teams genuinely care for one another, hold one another accountable and prevent the corrosives of sexual assault/sexual harassment, suicide and extremism/racism. If we invest on these foundational issues, we will achieve the desired **outcome to know our Troopers and sustain a culture of dignity and respect where we care for one another and prevents corrosives.**

'BE A COHESIVE TEAM' is our desired state.

¹ The decisive point of an operation is a "geographic place, specific key event, critical factor, or function that, when acted upon, allows commanders to gain a marked advantage over an adversary or contribute materially to achieving success." JP 3-0, Joint Operations

b. **BE PREDICTABLE.** A perceived lack of predictability is the single biggest inhibitor to integrating PF initiatives at the company level. We owe it to our Troopers that they know what to expect whenever possible. Predictability starts with a disciplined training management system that enables coherent, well-resourced training. The most successful commanders create their own predictability through well thought out and disciplined training management focused on developing Troopers who are highly trained, disciplined, fit, and ready.

The desired **outcome** is **disciplined training management systems from division to company that provide predictability and, therefore, instill credibility.**

'BE PREDICTABLE' is the system that will allow our PF framework to flourish.

c. **BE A LEADER.** Battalion level leaders are our agents of change and our company level leaders will allow us to WIN at the Point of Contact. In order to be People First, Troopers require engaged and inspiring leaders, committed to their personal development (character) as much as their professional development (competence). These traits do not occur organically. Successful squad leaders are the result of multiple, prolonged investments made by company level leaders. Leader development and leader certification programs are the method to make these investments. Leveraging protected windows to conduct LPDs focused at battalion and below leaders, conducting PF Terrain Walks for each battalion and providing bottom up feedback through monthly PF Update Assessments will drive leader development at echelon.

The desired **outcome** of these investments is: **engaged, inspiring Leaders at every echelon, armed with the knowledge and understanding of the programs and systems that empower them to accomplish the mission while caring for their Troopers and Families.**

'BE A LEADER' instills competence and confidence in our junior leaders to genuinely care for and build their cohesive teams.

d. **BE PROUD: "WE ARE THE CAV, WE ARE THE FIRST TEAM."** Pride is essential for our troopers to feel a sense of belonging and trust, particularly given the turbulence of past months. We need to remember what it means to be a CAV trooper:



COURAGEOUS: We have the moral courage to do the right thing at all times.

AUDACIOUS We display initiative and innovation. It's why we are America's First Team.

VICTORIOUS: We WIN where we fight by putting our People First!

Soldiers exude Pride when they know they are in a well-trained, disciplined, fit, and caring team. This pride will enable them to fight and win any battle in the most difficult and trying conditions. We display this pride outwardly in the wear of Stetsons, spurs, and unit t-shirts; and it is on display when we proudly demarcate CAV country with the emblems and colors of our units. We have the most distinctive unit patch in our Army, worn in some of the most iconic and historic battles. Our Troopers need to walk tall when wearing the patch!

'BE PROUD' is the result when we have a strong sense of purpose and belonging.

4. Leaders at all levels must continue to evaluate and implement programs at their echelon to support People First initiatives. The current fights at echelon are:

Division Fights

- 1) Emphasize/codify programs that promote cohesion (PFAW, PFFW, TIMS, ChIPP, Sponsorship and Mentorship programs);
- 2) Address specific FHRC findings and recommendations.
- 3) Adhere to and enforce published fixes to Training Management timelines, to include a revised de-conflicted battle rhythm, weekly FRAGO publishing, and elevated task approval authorities based on time to effect.
- 4) Rigorously enforce Protected time (LTT, Family Time, Training Meetings etc.)
- 5) Enable brigades and battalions with synchronized resources and protected time
- 6) Address Barracks, Housing and Quality of Life issues with III Corps and Garrison
- 7) Intentional, predictable and protected Leader Development time
- 8) Development of the visible symbols of the 1st CAV ownership: "CAV Country"
- 9) Communicate our Legacy of 100 years of Service

Brigade and Battalion Fights:

- 1) Implementation of Division programs at echelon; especially sponsorship and mentorship programs for new Troopers
- 2) Continue to Develop and enforce disciplined Training Management systems; especially quality training meetings and adherence to the 8-step training model
- 3) Rigorously enforce published protected times
- 4) Invest in leader development programs that develop and certify Company level leaders
- 5) Invest in Councils to take care of Soldiers and Families (Barracks, QOL etc.)
- 6) Seek out opportunities to genuinely care for their Troopers and families in all events.
- 7) Ownership and pride of unit areas and equipment
- 8) Communicate what it means to be CAV; 100 years of America's First Team

5. We all have a great responsibility and an even greater opportunity to be agents of positive change within the CAV and the broader Army. Realizing a change in culture is more challenging than it appears on the surface, the division will continue to provide the space and time for you to address issues at your level. We will continue to seek your feedback on what is working and where you require further support. We will reinforce success!

6. People First is the philosophy of How we do business – delivering modern and lethal formations in service of our nation – and not just another thing we do. When the nation calls, we don't go to participate or try hard, we go to Win! WE ARE THE CAV. For 100 years we have been Courageous – Audacious – Victorious.

7. We are counting on you to display initiative, every day, to BE A COHESIVE TEAM; BE PREDICTABLE; BE A LEADER; BE PROUD! Please feel free to contact me with your questions, concerns or new ideas at brett.g.sylvia.mil@mail.mil.

#BeTheLegend

BRETT G. SYLVIA
Brigadier General, USA
Acting Commander