

OPENING ADDRESS – SOC # 46 ON MON 2013-10-07

Col AQ, Comd 1 and 2 Inf Bns, CO Trg Corps, FWO, SO 1 G1, CO CG, CO 5SSB, 2IC 2 Inf Bn, SO 1 G6, OC CUPOCS, Snr Offrs, Offrs, FSM, RSM Trg Corps, WOs, SNCOs, NCOs, sldrs, civilians.

The Standard Officers' Course # 46 commenced training on Mon 2013-03-18 and today Mon 2013-10-07 the course is being opened (just under 07 months after). I wish to apologise without explanation for this late opening of SOC # 46). Also, I wish to commend you the remaining 15 Ocdts today (down from a total of 24 when you started) for staying the course. – you have pass the point of no return – all should now graduate in Feb 2014.

The terminal objective of the Standard Officers Course “is to produce an officer capable of **leading** and **administering** soldiers while at the same time **upholding the values and standards** of the Guyana Defence Force.

This is the 46th Officer Cadet training course being conducted by the GDF and by now you should be aware that the Officer Corps group culture can be summed up in the phrase – train hard fight easy – and the fact that the Officer must be able (capable) of going the extra mile when all is tried and morale is low around him.

If you are being trained to **lead** and **administer** and **uphold the values and standards** of the GDF, you must understand that the history of the GDF and the reason for its formation.

The Guyana Defence Force was established in 01st November, 1965 prior to Guyana's independence on 26th May, 1966. Coming after the riots of the early 1960s the establishment of the GDF was therefore a pre-condition for formal independence from Britain.

Not surprising that the motto of the GDF, as seen on our regimental colour is “Service”. The Guyana Defence Force serves Guyana. The Guyana Defence Force was established to serve Guyana.

Therefore, the fundamental characteristic of our profession are our focus on **Service**. This focus on **Service** requires expert knowledge (a unique culture, and a

professional military ethos) {in philosophy, ethics studies the morale behavior in humans and how one should act. Ethos – Greek word for ethics which means “character”. Therefore, ethics involve the development of concepts of right and wrong conduct. Each organization over time will develop its own standards of right and wrong} for command and leadership in the Guyana Defence Force.

Section 5 of the Defence Act Chapter 15:01 of 1977 states “The Force shall be charged with the defence of and maintenance of order in Guyana and with such other duties as may from time to time be defined by the Defence Board”. – In essence your missions will be varied – have open mind.

If I am now to follow the key terms of the course’s terminal objective:

1. Leading – leadership is influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation – while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization.
2. Administering – Administration
3. Upholding values and standards

1. **Leadership** is the likelihood of the GDF. Confident competent leadership unites the other elements of combat power – men, material, methods – and serves as the catalyst that creates conditions for success. As leaders you have to inspire soldiers to behave professionally and to accomplish missions effectively.

Leadership requires imagination and initiative. It also requires sound judgement. Leaders adopt and internalize values and develop the requisite mental, physical and emotional attributes e.g., moral courage to insist on all to do the right things, and to do things right.

As leaders you learn the interpersonal, conceptual, technical and tactical skills required to lead your soldiers and to accomplish missions.

Leaders motivate subordinates, conduct operations and continually develop and improve their units, their soldiers and themselves.

Good Leaders do not fear the unknown, uncertainty or ambiguity. Good leaders are always willing to take risks, remain focused and mission oriented.

Deduction:

All leaders work towards

1. *Achieving the task (msns)*
2. *Building and maintaining the (team group)*
3. *Developing the Individual (soldier)*

Good Leaders attributes

- *Knowledge, judgement, tact*
- *Endurance, initiative, bearing*
- *Courage (incl moral courage)*
- *Dependability, justice, enthusiasm*

The GDF and the Belize Defence Force today need adaptive leaders – leaders that can successfully operate across the range of military operations (and non-military ops, MOOTW).

Therefore the ambiguous nature of our contemporary operational environment requires leaders who are self-aware (... understand their operational environment) and adaptive (ability to identify and adopt to changes in order to succeed on their missions).

Leadership is also about command and in the GDF command responsibility, “**The Commander is responsible for everything the unit does or fail to do**”. A Commander can delegate authority but not responsibility. Authority refers to who is in charge while responsibility refers to who is accountable.

2. **To administer – Administration**

You will be schooled in the principles of administration and the tools – Regulations and SOPs that will help you to administer your platoon on graduation from this course. However, you must note the importance of how:

1. Care and Protection of kit and equipment
2. Adherence to Force Regs and SOPs
3. Enforcement of Values and Standards
4. Training for role – focused on improving competency/skills development of our soldiers

5. Lead the AEP available for both the academic and professional development of our soldiers.
 6. Accountability – for your actions on ops, for finances and service property, etc.
3. The values and Standards of the GDF
- Read the booklet that was given to you all. Live the values and standards of the GDF.

As you pursue the remainder of your training on the standard officers' course # 46, you must do some introspection and in your own minds decide on the **leader** you wish to be on graduation from this course, both in the Belize Defence Force and the Guyana Defence Force. As a guide, as newly minted Second Lieutenants you must recognize "Leadership is a lifelong learning process – in the classroom, in personal study and in practice".

Mistakes will be made, as it is human to err, however, a professional is someone who learns from his and others mistakes and commits himself to accomplish the next task better than he did the last task.

As future leaders and young officers you must

1. Set high standards for yourself
2. Be disciplined and work hard (you do not have to be a priest)
3. Always have confidence in yourself
4. Be competitive but never compromise your morals.
5. Maintain a positive attitude.
6. Always remain humble (do not let success change the person who you truly are)

As future leaders of the GDF and the BDF you must at all times endeavour to be the best leaders/commanders of your men. Therefore you must now practice combining character (winner strength) with competence (knowledge) and action (getting the job done) for the rest of this course.

Therefore I now declare Standard Officers' Course # 46 open. Thank you.