



U.S. ARMY ENGINEERING AND SUPPORT CENTER, HUNTSVILLE



The Bulletin

January 2023



Center's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results released; leadership addresses with action plan

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The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, engineers adaptive, specialized solutions across a broad spectrum of global enterprise covering five main lines of effort: Energy, Operational Technology, Environmental, Medical, and Base Operations and Facilities



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U.S. ARMY ENGINEERING
AND SUPPORT CENTER,
HUNTSVILLE



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Commander's Thoughts

“ In the coming year, I ask each of you to continue the work you all do so well.”



Col. Sebastien Joly

Team, I hope you all had a happy and festive holiday season. The holidays are traditionally a time when we gather with friends and family to celebrate and reflect on our blessings.

There is much that Huntsville Center has achieved this past year, and your commitment to the mission was and remains unparalleled. Your work has a tremendously positive impact on people and projects around the world, and I'm both honored and humbled to be a part of this team.

Let us not forget, we have Huntsville Center teammates serving overseas during the holidays and I am especially grateful to those supporting our operations. Spending the holidays separated from loved ones is tough.

Their sacrifices are truly appreciated.

Last year was a banner year with so many of our programs and projects delivering services to the Army, the Joint Force, and other Federal agencies around the world. Since our founding in 1967, Huntsville Center has had a singular and global mission of supporting Army ballistic missile defense system.

Today, we continue to operate without geographic boundaries, but with 43 programs supporting more than 2,000 projects around the globe. We are a robust organization capable of tackling the toughest engineering and acquisition challenges.

In the coming year, I ask of each of you to continue the work you do so well. I also ask that each of you look for ways to innovate in the structure of how we provide products and

services for the Joint Force and other agencies. Our focus should be on expediting delivery of our stakeholders' requirements by synchronizing actions, developing new tools, and streamlining activities.

Also in 2023, we will be moving closer to seeing completion of our new facility at Redstone Arsenal. However, there will be challenges associated with our move. The logistics for a move of this magnitude are immense, but we've done this before in 2018 and the lessons learned from that are being applied to this move. We have a project delivery team working this upcoming relocation. Led by Nate Durham, the team incorporates all areas of expertise to include logistics, human capital and information technology.

Their professional knowledge and understanding of how to execute the relocation with minimal impact to productivity is fundamental to mission and they are focused on ensuring all the bases are covered.

As the physical relocation begins in the fall, the move will require most Huntsville Center employees to telework for a few months. As the COVID-19 pandemic forced most of us into a telework status, we demonstrated our ability to succeed under telework conditions. The pandemic didn't change the business we do; it changed how we did business—and we succeeded. Our workforce is known for being creative problem solvers, and Center leadership can rest easy knowing the Center's innovative workforce will be ready to tackle any challenges that arise during this period of transition. There

will be more information regarding the relocation coming to you throughout the year as I am committed to keeping each of you informed on a regular basis.

In November, Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers published a Daily Tasking Order directing all USACE employees to complete a DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data) and provide a copy to their supervisor. This form is used to provide the command with the names and addresses of the people the employee desires to be notified in case of emergency, death, or if an employee is missing or ill. Moving forward, the completion and updating of DD Form 93 will be an annual requirement for all employees. Although this form has not been required in the past, it will aid the Department of Defense in expediting notification of listed individuals in the event of emergency or death. I hope everyone completed this form and sent it to their supervisors. If you haven't completed the form, please do so before the Jan. 13 deadline.

It's also time to complete the Army Sexual Harassment and Reporting Program training. The Army is dedicated to eradicating sexual harassment and sexual assault, and annual SHARP training is the first step in the effort. This training is mandatory and more than a dozen training dates will be conducted over the next several months, so all of you should have the opportunity to participate.

Now that we have celebrated and recharged, we should all be ready to begin a New Year. Essayons!

Leadership addresses viewpoint survey results, implements action plan

By William Farrow
Huntsville Center Public Affairs

Data from a recent federal workforce survey implies most of the Huntsville Center workforce is content. However, Huntsville Center leadership is committed to set in motion a plan of action to address and improve areas cited in the survey's results.

The Office of Personnel Management's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), conducted throughout the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in June and July, measures employees' perceptions of whether, and to what extent, conditions characteristic of successful organizations is present.

Of the 979 surveys administered to Huntsville Center employees, almost 682 completed the survey for a response rate of 69.9 percent, the second highest response rate in USACE. Col. Sebastien Joly, Huntsville Center commander, said the survey is the best tool he has available to ensure the Center's workforce feels valued, supported, and respected.

"Our (Huntsville Center) greatest strength and asset is our people, and we owe it to our people to respond to their feedback by improving the workplace so that they can safely deliver quality

projects on time and within budget," Joly said.

Valerie Ward, Human Resources strategic advisor for the Center, reviewed the data received in the survey and provided leadership with results. Ward said top scores in this year's survey correlated to mission accomplishment, achieving goals, producing high quality work and supervisor's treating employees with respect. She said the lowest scores correlated to changes in work priorities, employees feeling under too much pressure, differences in performance recognition and management not involving employees in the decision-making process.

One area of concern, Ward said, was employees lacking confidence that the survey itself will be used to make the agency better.

Joly said that concern is telling, and he is doing everything he can to ensure the lower survey results are addressed by activating an action plan to tackle employee's concerns.

He said the action plan includes conducting a Center-wide town hall to discuss the FEVS results with the workforce as well as a "State-of-the-Center" address from Chip Marin, Huntsville Center Programs and Business director, to update the entire workforce on the Center's recent

progress toward our target goals. Joly said he continues to promote use of the Center's anonymous feedback program (found on the Center's SharePoint front page) to find solutions to problems as they arise.

"If an employee sees something that requires a deeper look, and they have followed their chain of command yet felt their issue isn't being addressed, the feedback program is there for them and I assure you I put eyes on every message sent," Joly said.

Other planned actions to address employee's concerns include assessments for supervisors, an informal mentoring/shadowing program, a more robust on-boarding program for new employees and greater focus on Individual Development Plans, technical training and leadership development.

"Our People are the centerpiece of the Huntsville Center mission, and we must do all we can to take care of them," Joly said.

"They want and deserve to be recognized for their unique talents; they want purpose, a feeling of belonging, and a say in their pathway to success. When our People are afforded these considerations, we know that they perform better, stay longer, and make our Army, USACE and the Center stronger."

Record of Emergency Data policy mandatory for personnel

By Elizabeth Canfil
Public Affairs

The new year rings in a new policy at Huntsville Center and all of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. There is a new requirement for all employees to complete the DD Form 93, known as the Record of Emergency Data.

On Nov. 23, Headquarters USACE published a Daily Tasking Order directing all USACE personnel to complete the DD Form 93 and provide a copy to their supervisor.

This form is used to provide the command with the

names and addresses of the people the employee desires to be notified in case of emergency, death, or if an employee is missing or ill. Beginning this year, the completion and updating of DD Form 93 will be an annual requirement for all employees.

Although this form has not been required in the past, it will aid the Department of Defense in expediting notification of listed individuals in the event of emergency or death.

Completion of the DD Form 93 is required by Jan. 13.

For questions, reach out to Kevin Brackney, lead human resources specialist, at kevin.m.brackney@usace.army.mil



Photo by Kristen Bergeson

Joshua Lecroy, safety and occupational health specialist, and Kyle Shireman, safety manager, interview Dawn Douglas, a.k.a. “Billy,” during a simulated accident investigation during the Safety Investigation Board course at Huntsville Center on Dec. 7.

Safety Investigation Board training improves USACE mishap reporting process

By Kristen Bergeson
Huntsville Center Public Affairs

Dozens of safety officials from across the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) enterprise recently convened at Huntsville Center to learn how to properly investigate, document and report safety incidents.

The three-day course held in December marked the first time Huntsville Center has hosted the Safety Investigation Board training. Two more courses are scheduled for fiscal year 2023 at other USACE locations.

Instructors Jason Walsh, USACE loss outcome manager, and Marty Werdebaugh, USACE safety and occupational health specialist, taught students how to implement a step-by-step process for investigating accidents and guided them through a series of scenarios to test and hone their skills.

Walsh defined an accident as “any unplanned event or series of events that results in death, injury, or illness to personnel, or damage to or loss of equipment or property.”

Students were exposed to three accident scenarios during the application portion of the course: a fall from the roof while repairing a roof leak, resulting in a fatality; a fall from scaffolding while replacing a ceiling tile, resulting in a fatality; and a table saw mishap, resulting in a finger amputation.

Working in teams, they investigated each accident location, interviewed witnesses, analyzed their findings and presented a

final report and briefing.

The ultimate goal of each investigation, Walsh said, is to identify causes and underlying factors, not to find fault or assign blame.

“When we understand what caused and contributed to an accident occurring, we can implement corrective actions to reduce the likelihood of re-occurrence,” he said.

Eight Huntsville Center safety officials attended the training, including Alicia Hodge, safety and occupational health specialist responsible for the Center’s Civilian Safety Program.

“Although fatalities and permanent disabilities are rare for us here, the training was really valuable because the same techniques can be used to investigate any safety incident we come across, and we were able to practice those techniques in the scenarios,” Hodge said.

“It was the next best thing to actually getting the experience in real life.”

Also in attendance was Travis Brokaw, a lead occupational and health specialist for the Army. Brokaw audited the course to determine if it fulfills the requirements for the Army’s training for safety and occupational health specialists. If approved, the SIB training offered by USACE will also count toward the Army’s level 1 certification for career program 12, or the safety and occupational health program.

Human resource workshop spotlights USACE synchronization of efforts

By William Farrow
Huntsville Center Public Affairs

More than 50 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees gathered at the USACE Learning Center at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Dec. 6-8 for a Talent Acquisition Workshop.

Kate Furlong-Borth, Headquarters USACE Directorate of Human Resources Field Division chief, whose team spearheaded the event, said the USACE human resources team recognized talent acquisition is being accomplished in many different occupations at many different levels across USACE, and there is a need for better collaboration across the enterprise to keep talent acquisition professionals on the same page.

“We felt the best way to synchronize efforts, begin to form a common understanding of challenges, best practices, goals and establish relationships, was to host a Talent Acquisition Workshop that invited all the players who have stakes in talent acquisition,” Furlong-Borth said.

Karen Pane, USACE Director of Human Resources, opened the workshop encouraging attendees to use every hiring resource and authority available to fill vacant USACE jobs and assist in preparing for tomorrow’s engineering challenges.

She said more than any other area, USACE relies on educated cohesive teams of professionals and specific field specialists.

To maintain a quality work force, she said, USACE must transform the way it recruits and retains its employees. Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon, 55th Chief of Engineers and the Commanding General of USACE, took time to address the group as well, emphasizing the role of talent acquisition and the importance of people in meeting the



Photo by Kristen Bergeson

Brandon Rutkowski, Detroit District management analyst, addresses attendees at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Talent Acquisition Workshop at the USACE Learning Center at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Dec. 7. The workshop focused on collaboration across the USACE enterprise to keep talent acquisition professionals synchronized in their efforts.

mission of USACE.

During the workshop, attendees received presentations from guest speakers Bruce Delaporte, Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation talent management director; Sgt. Maj. Claudia Whitney, Army Recruiting Command; and Larry Mack, National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s Marshall Space Flight Center human resources deputy director.

Breakout sessions included topics on non-competitive and direct hiring authorities overview, hiring and recruitment incentives, diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, student intern program and roundtable discussions focusing on best practices in the human resources field.

Federal agencies, including USACE, are currently challenged with an aging workforce with more than 25 percent

of the workers over 55 years old and 55 percent over 45 years old.

This demographic sets the stage for a human capital crisis if a significant percentage of these governmental workers retire without a new generation of workers coming in to mitigate the resulting loss in experience and intellectual capital.

Additionally, with the workforce transformation changes that happened during the COVID-19 pandemic, Federal agencies are also challenged with recruiting during a new telework and remote work paradigm.

To meet current and future challenges in Talent Acquisition, USACE is working as an enterprise to effectively market the USACE brand and use all the tools available to attract and retain top talent.



Photo by Kristen Bergeson

Amanda Sticker, Huntsville Center engineer, and Ellen Haapoja, Huntsville Center geophysicist, visited Columbia Elementary School in Madison, Alabama, Nov. 18 to teach students about explosives safety with the 3Rs (Recognize, Retreat, Report) Program.

Heroes teach students to Recognize, Retreat, Report

**By Kristen Bergeson
Huntsville Center Public Affairs**

Representatives from Huntsville Center taught children about the dangers of munitions during Columbia Elementary School's (CES) "Community Heroes Day" Nov. 18.

The event, coordinated by CES's Parent Teacher Association, provided students an opportunity to celebrate and learn about the everyday heroes living in their local community, said Mary Zappe, the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) director of programs.

"We are so fortunate to have so many organizations right here in the Huntsville area who are doing impressive work to keep us all safe," said Zappe.

"And that's what Heroes Day is all about – those heroes who have dedicated their lives to keeping us safe and also the kids themselves, who can be heroes, too, by taking what they've learned today and teaching others."

Amanda Sticker, engineer and technical lead for the 3Rs Explosives Safety Education Program, and Ellen Haapoja, geophysicist, joined Madison City firefighters and police officers to highlight elements of their jobs and teach life-saving safety skills to students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

"I think it's wonderful to show children they can be whatever they want to be by showing them our careers, which they may not have known existed," Haapoja said.

"But the most important thing for me will always be safety because teaching them the three Rs can save their lives and allow them to follow through on their dreams."

The 3Rs Explosives Safety Education Program is a Department of Defense effort to teach community members what to do if they come across munitions, which can be found anywhere but are more likely to be encountered in areas currently or formerly used for military training or testing.

Sticker taught the students to respond by following the three Rs: "Recognize, Retreat, Report." "We first have to recognize that we are looking at something that could be dangerous," she said.

"Then, we retreat by backing away, and we report what we found to a grown-up, like a police officer, who can help."

Students also learned how Huntsville Center geophysicists visit locations where munitions may be present and use a variety of tools, such as metal detectors, to identify them and remove them safely. Haapoja showed students how to use a metal detector and gave them some hands-on training by allowing them to find metal objects on the ground.

"The kids had fun and many asked follow-up questions," she said. "Allowing them to participate in the 'clean-up' made it more engaging and exciting."

To learn more about the 3Rs Explosives Safety Education Program, visit 3Rs.mil.



Photo by Kristen Bergeson

Kyle Shireman, Huntsville Center safety manager and visionary behind the Center's new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Safety Trainer 360, explains how to use the virtual reality construction safety game's headset and controllers to Shane Henry, audit technician, during a Occupational Safety and Health Administration 10-Hour training course held at Huntsville Center.

'Way of the Future': Safety Office, Army Game Studio unveil virtual reality game

By Kristen Bergeson
Huntsville Center Public Affairs

Employees participating in a recent construction safety course at Huntsville Center toured a construction site, identified safety hazards and experienced the dangerous outcomes of safety violations – all without leaving their classroom.

This real-world experience was made possible by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Safety Trainer 360, a virtual reality construction site game created by the Huntsville Center Safety Office and the Army Game Studio. The new training tool allows users to navigate a computer-simulated

construction site while looking for and correcting potential hazards.

The game is the brainchild of Kyle Shireman, Huntsville Center safety manager, who has been working with developers at the Army Game Studio since 2021 to bring his vision to light. Like most innovative ideas, his originated with a problem that needed to be solved.

"We don't have many construction sites close to our office, and most of the employees attending our safety courses have never been to one," Shireman said.

"But they will eventually be on the job at a construction site, and they need to know how to stay safe. It's hard to

retain the information in these courses without actually understanding what it looks like."

The Safety Office needed a tool that would allow employees to experience a construction site during the training process.

"I knew a little about gaming, and I knew that VR is the way of the future," Shireman said. "Once I found out that the Army Game Studio was doing this kind of work here in Huntsville, I knew we could create something really exciting."

The Army Game Studio, located at

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VIRTUAL

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the Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation and Missile Center's Software, Simulation, Systems Engineering and Integration Directorate on Redstone Arsenal, is a recognized leader in the development of virtual, interactive and multimedia systems for outreach, education, simulation and training. The studio, which includes five laboratories, a motion capture studio, a sound studio and an expert team of programmers and designers, is best known for America's Army, the realistic video game that showcases the Army experience and is often used as a recruitment tool.

Recently, the studio has worked on multiple projects requiring virtual reality, which is growing in popularity because of its inherent training value, said Daniel Kolenich, executive producer of the USACE Safety Trainer 360.

"VR is the latest technology, but not everyone has started using it," he said.

"In this case, it worked perfectly to meet the needs of our customer."

Using computer modeling and simulation, virtual reality provides a realistic, three-dimensional environment that users can explore and interact with. A headset with goggles provides the sight and sound stimuli, and handheld controllers allow the user to move around and make selections.

"We've done several virtual reality games, but this one was unique in that it was a real place, so it involved modeling an environment with specific items like cranes and ladders," Kolenich said. "It was far more realistic than what we normally do."

Most VR games run directly off the headset, but Army Game Studio developers needed more power to create the most realistic environment possible, so the USACE Safety Trainer 360 runs off a high-performance laptop, said Thomas Morris, a systems engineer for Science Applications International Corporation who served as a producer



A screenshot of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Safety Trainer 360 shows the first-person perspective of a user navigating the simulated construction site. The virtual reality game, developed through a partnership between Huntsville Center and the Army Game Studio, was recently unveiled during a construction safety course led by the Center's Safety Office.

on this project. The headset — in this case, a Meta Quest 2, formerly known as an Oculus — is tethered to the laptop.

"The computer is what runs the game, not the Quest itself, so it's much higher in graphics and provides a higher fidelity simulation that was needed for the construction environment," Morris said. "It's like the difference between a Fortnite character and more realistic character."

The high-quality graphics allow users to see vital details, such as a safety label on the side of a ladder. Paying attention to the small things is often what keeps people safe on a construction site, Shireman said.

"While navigating the VR environment, people are looking for all the potential hazards, and if they miss them, they experience the consequences -- for example, a crash for walking under a suspended load, or an explosion from an unidentified electrical hazard," he said.

"We are giving them a chance to learn from their mistakes without actually experiencing any real danger." Currently, the game is being used for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration 10-Hour Training Course, which is required for all

employees in a Quality Assurance role and is recommended for any employee who visits contractor construction or maintenance and service sites. The training provides an overview of QA safety responsibilities and covers general safety topics such as workplace hazards, safety culture and personal protective equipment.

The game, which is available to download for free for all Department of Defense agencies, can be modified to include additional modules, said Kellie Williams, safety chief for Huntsville Center.

"We're hopeful that after a year or two of use that additional activities and hazards can be added to the game," she said.

Center employees will have another opportunity to test their safety knowledge and skills on the new virtual reality game during the next OSHA 10-hour Construction Safety training course Feb. 15-16 at Huntsville Center.

Those interested in attending should obtain supervisor approval and sign up by visiting the Safety Office's SharePoint site and clicking on "Request Training."

For more information, contact Kyle Shireman at 256-609-0558.

BULLETIN FOCUS:

SAFETY

Safety Office supports Center employees

Most U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville employees are familiar with the Huntsville Center Safety Office (SO) and its role in ensuring the thousands of Huntsville Center projects around the world are carried out with a “safety first” focus.

However, Huntsville Center employees may not be familiar with the roles and responsibilities SO staff has in ensuring Huntsville Center employees stay safe and healthy here at the Center.

Despite most of the Center’s employees working primarily in an administrative capacity, there are still associated hazards in an administrative work environment.

Employees may need personal protective equipment (PPE), ergonomic evaluations, hazard assessments and mitigations, or site-specific training before a temporary duty (TDY) trip. All

of these services are provided by staff within the SO.

Other services the SO provide for Center employees are hazard reporting; workstation set-up; any injury, illness, or near miss regarding the work environment; requests for PPE; ergonomic evaluations; first aid supplies for first aid attendants; review tasks perform that are not covered in an annual physical health assessments; TDY trips or site visits in which hazards are present that are not on a program’s contractor site (this typically does not include training or administrative TDY and examples of possible hazards would be confined space entry, working at heights, exposure to chemicals).

Current Huntsville Center staff assigned to personnel: Kellie Williams, SO chief and Emily White and Alicia Hodge, SO specialists.

(Information provided by Huntsville Center Safety Office)

Upcoming Safety Training

First Aid/CPR:
Feb.7, May 9 and Aug.8.

10 Hour OSHA:
Feb. 16-17, May 11-12,
July 13-14

**New Employee/
Supervisor Safety
Awareness:**
Mar. 9, June 8, Sept. 7

Supervisor Development:
Jan. 25

Bloodborne pathogen:
May 16

Black History Month celebration

Panel format via MS Teams, Feb. 28 at 1.p.m.

Topic Focus Leaders:



Michael Lanier
Mental Resilience



Quintessia Fuller
Educational
Resilience



Angela Wilson
Political
Resilience



Tonju Samuels
Economic
Resilience



BULLETIN FOCUS:

OPERATIONAL SECURITY

Operations Security (OPSEC) is defined as an analytical process used to deny an adversary information, generally unclassified, concerning intentions and capabilities by identifying planning processes or operations.

This is accomplished through a five-step process to identify, control, and protect critical information and analyze friendly actions and indicators that would allow adversaries or potential adversaries to identify and exploit vulnerabilities.

The five-steps that make up this process are:

1 – Identify Critical

Information: Examples of critical information can include deployment dates and location, military operations, schedules and travel itineraries, social security numbers, credit cards and banking information.

2 – Identify Threats: Threats can include actions by adversaries such as using the internet to collect data from social media websites, going through trash, observation of actions to detect patterns to predict behaviors and using people to collect information. These also include



listening to conversations in public, social engineering, and more.

3 – Analyze Vulnerabilities:

Vulnerabilities can include forgetting to remove an ID badge when leaving a facility, posting sensitive information over the web, discussing sensitive information in public or over the phone, and using a device, application, or services with geolocation capabilities.

4 – Assess Risks: It is imperative to assess how likely an adversary would be to collect, analyze and exploit critical information; this can negatively impact the mission and one's safety.

5 – Apply OPSEC

Countermeasures: Examples

of countermeasures include knowing what an agency considers critical information, being aware of surroundings, understanding OPSEC and data aggregation, using social media with caution by limiting the amount of personal information posted and being aware of information put out in emails, online, in phone conversations, photos, and in open unsecure conversations in public.

OPSEC awareness and execution is crucial to Army success. OPSEC is applicable to all personnel, missions, and supporting activities on a daily basis. OPSEC denies adversaries information about friendly capabilities, activities, limitations, and intentions that adversaries need to make competent operational decisions. Without prior knowledge of friendly actions, adversary leaders cannot act effectively to prevent friendly mission accomplishment. OPSEC applies to all Army activities and is required during training, sustaining, mobilizing, preparing for, and conducting operations, exercises, tests, or activities.

(Information courtesy Huntsville Center Security Office.)



Photo by Kristen Bergeson

Appreciation

Col. Sebastien P. Joly, Huntsville Center commander, presents a certificate of appreciation from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Hurricane Ian Recovery Office to Andrew Boston, safety engineer, for his work in support of Hurricane Ian relief efforts. Boston volunteered to deploy to Mobile, Ala., where he trained teams to conduct remote assessments before heading to the affected areas of Florida in support of the Blue Roof Mission. Managed by USACE for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Operation Blue Roof provides homeowners and permanently occupied rental properties in disaster areas with fiber-reinforced sheeting to cover their damaged roofs.

BULLETIN FOCUS:

LEADERSHIP

Addressing cumulative stress in a team

By Chaplain (Col.) Geoff Bailey
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

In organizational analysis, there exists a potential to focus on the organization in isolation from its environment. For example, an assembly line performs a function and provides a product. The assembly line will theoretically continue producing products with adequate supplies, employees, and energy. The reality is that the dependent variable (productivity) is affected by independent variables beyond supplies, energy, and employees. Economic forces, market competition, and customer demands impact the organization's function and output.

As leaders realize systems' complex and adaptive nature, they recognize that individual members function as independent variables and that their memberships in external organizations affect their commitment and contributions in the workplace. Stated more succinctly, the impact of events in one area of life impact other areas of life for each person. Leaders must consider the effects of life events and demonstrate care and concern for followers.

Recent events like the COVID-19 pandemic and workplace transformation highlight the growing importance of empathic leadership. Over the course of the pandemic, many experienced what is referred to as "cumulative stress." Many also experienced a "sharp decrease in hours they spent engaging socially with work friends." These individuals are valued members of teams now undergoing workplace transformation. For leaders, the task is as simple as A-B-C [Assess, Build, Consult], yet as



Chaplain (Col.) Geoff Bailey

complex as dealing with complex and adaptive systems where adaptive solutions are required. Technical solutions are insufficient.

Assess Individuals and Teams

Leader-follower interactions are opportunities for two-way communication of professional requirements and interpersonal understanding. Simple and regular interactions are "actually valuable points of connection for your employees (and you)." Through conversations (formal and informal), we learn what followers' priorities, concerns, hopes, and challenges are. We also understand the internal team dynamics, communication styles and preferences, and stressors within the system and individuals. This understanding fosters belonging and validation for the individual and knowledge for the leader to make decisions attuned to the individual, team, and organization.

Many leaders stand disconnected from followers due to professional obligations and bureaucratic layering. Influential leaders seek ways to prioritize interpersonal engagements as part of their professional obligations and recognize that this engagement builds understanding and increases productivity and outcomes in individuals and teams. Some leaders utilize group lunches, coffees, or

informal social gatherings to accomplish this. One of the most effective brigade commanders I worked for regularly wandered unchaperoned through dining facilities, the motor pool, and work areas to develop situational and individual understanding. His ability to personally engage with Soldiers at all ranks exponentially increased followers' respect for him as a leader. His wanderings were not a distraction but a necessary component of follower engagement and leader awareness.

Build the Team and Climate

As leaders assess through regular engagement in formal and informal settings, they create a climate where psychological safety is fostered and sustained. As leaders "make others feel important and needed," they model the qualities associated with authentic leadership, where leaders and followers alike seek and receive feedback and support.

Research demonstrates that employees are more productive, miss less work, and experience significantly lower stress-related health issues in healthy work environments. Leaders create healthy work environments by fostering social connections, showing empathy, going out of their way to help followers, and encouraging people to talk to them – especially about their problems.

Within this climate, leaders learn the stressors followers experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic and how cumulative stress impacts their ability to make decisions or re-establish normative pre-pandemic relationships. With that trust established, they can assist the person in finding the appropriate support to address issues



LEADERSHIP

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and restore individual resiliency and self-confidence.

Building a climate of trust and demonstrating care for followers and peers who show vulnerability is one of the most effective methods of embedding the value of loyalty in a team. When other employees witness the commitment and sacrifice of a leader or organization for the sake of an individual, their commitment to the team increases, and stories gain a life of their own, somewhat like the mythic creation stories of organizations like Southwest Airline's start on a cocktail napkin.

Consult, Network, and Refer

Influential leaders resist the urge to be the resident expert in engaging followers and building the climate. They create and rely upon a network. These resources serve as a consultation source for the leader and a library of options for helping followers with

their challenges. Most organizations provide or contract access to counseling agencies, critical incident stress management teams, workplace chaplains, executive coaches, and conflict resolution experts.

Leaders benefit immensely from familiarizing themselves with each of the capabilities available within their organization, modeling healthy vulnerability by disclosing their personal utilization of these resources, and referring followers to appropriate agencies. Another vital aspect of consulting is continually increasing the network of potential helping agencies for referral, understanding that each follower's situation and personality are unique, requiring just as unique an approach to resolution. Referral to outside assistance aids leaders in maintaining appropriate professional boundaries while communicating empathy and concern congruent with authentic leadership focused on the well-being of individuals.

The consultation also takes place across the team within healthy professional boundaries and appropriate leader-follower transparency and accountability, leading to faster problem-solving, rapid team building, authentically grown relationships, increased trust, and higher performance levels.

Conclusion

The A-B-Cs of addressing cumulative stress form a framework for leadership that builds trust and awareness to support the wellness and healthy functioning of teams and individuals. The framework is intentionally outlined as a circle with feedback loops because the process is neither linear nor driven by only the leader or followers. The essential element required for this model to function is effectively built and sustained if properly utilized.



Photo by Kristen Bergeson

Energized

Jon Winkler, left, Huntsville Center Energy Division chief, and Col. Sebastien P. Joly, Huntsville Center commander, presented achievement medals to the Energy Savings Performance Contract project delivery team for exceptional professionalism, cohesiveness and expert program knowledge. PDT members pictured are Gerald Weber, Bruce Forsberg, Mike Norton, Lisa Steenburn, Dale Adkins and Adam Sunstrom. Not pictured are Shah Alam, Brian Ballard, Traci Davis, April Rafael-Adams, Jan Robinson, Paul Robinson and Margaret Simmons.

BULLETIN FOCUS: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



Celebrate holiday with community service

By Angela Morton
Huntsville Center Equal Employment Opportunity

On Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal holiday, we recognize one of America's greatest visionary leaders, and we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King, the man remembered as America's preeminent advocate of nonviolence and a leader of the Civil Rights Movement.

In 1995, Congress designated Martin Luther King Jr. Day as the first and only federal holiday observed as a National Day of Service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this national effort.

The MLK Day of Service is a way to channel King's life and teaching into community action. Each year, on the third Monday in January, the nation honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by making the holiday a day of community service— "A Day On, Not A Day Off."

Americans across the country answer the call to action by serving their neighborhoods and volunteering their time to make a difference in their communities. Freedom, Equality, and Inclusion are true force multipliers and imperative to the strength of our nation. As we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his birthday, let us continue to live up to the standard he set, ensure his legacy lives on, and rise up to meet the challenges that remain.

Dr. King guided us toward a mountaintop on which all Americans – regardless of skin color – could live together in mutual respect and brotherhood. His bold leadership and

prophetic eloquence united people of all backgrounds in a noble quest for freedom and basic civil rights. Inspired by Dr. King's legacy, brave souls have marched fearlessly, organized relentlessly, and devoted their lives to the unending task of perfecting our Union.

Their courage and dedication have carried us even closer to the promised land Dr. King envisioned, but we must recognize their achievements as milestones on the long path to true equal opportunity and equal rights. We must face the challenges of today with the same strength, persistence, and determination exhibited by Dr. King, guided by the enduring values of hope and justice embodied by other civil rights leaders. Dr. King devoted his life to serving others, reminding us that "human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle – the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals."

Commemorating Dr. King's life is not only a tribute to his contributions to our Nation and the world, but also a reminder that every day, each of us can play a part in continuing this critical work. For this reason, we honor Dr. King's legacy with a National Day of Service.

All Americans are encouraged to visit www.MLKDay.gov to learn more about service opportunities across our country.

By dedicating this day to service, we move our Nation closer to Dr. King's vision of all Americans living and working together as one beloved nation.



BULLETIN FOCUS:

ETHICS

New Year, New Financial Disclosure

**By Melanie Braddock
Office of Counsel**

A new year means it is time for a new financial disclosure. People in certain executive branch positions are required by the Ethics in Government Act to file an OGE Form 450 because of the responsibilities associated with the position such as those whose duties involve contracting (including CORs), procurement, administration of grants and licenses, and regulating or auditing non-Federal entities are required to file.

These requirements are intended to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the federal government. As Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin stated in May, “we should avoid even the appearance of unethical behavior. We’re all role models for the department. And the way our actions appear often affects our reputation, as individuals and as an institution.”

The Financial Disclosure requirements are met through the

filing of the OGE 450 in the Army’s automated Financial Disclosure Management system (FDM) which lists the employee’s assets, liabilities, and outside positions they hold.

These forms can then be utilized to analyze and prevent financial conflicts of interest. If you filed an OGE 450 form last year, you are required to file one this year, unless your duties have changed. Required filers should already be registered in the FDM system.

If you have previously filed on the FDM System, the form will populate using the last year’s data. You will not have to re-enter old information but you can make changes to the downloaded data.

For new data, fill out the information requested (assets, liabilities, gifts, etc.) and click through each section until completed. Remember that the entries should be correct for calendar year 2022. If you are not sure what you are supposed to be reporting, there are helpful hints on the right side of each page that should help answer

any questions. There are also links to several tutorials that may also answer questions. At the end of the process you have to “e-sign” your disclosure statement.

Please note that for the FDM system, the “supervisor” is either your division chief, or for Ordnance and Explosives Directorate – the OE Director. This may not be your immediate supervisor. Please do not try to change this or call the help desk.

If you have questions on that, please contact Margaret Simmons in the office of counsel.

Once you electronically sign and hit submit, the form automatically routes in the system to the “supervisor.” If there are any questions or concerns after their review, they will reach out.

The deadline for completing the OGE 450 form in the FDM system is Feb. 15. If you have questions about whether you should file an OGE 450 form this year or about what is included, please contact Margaret Simmons.



Birds-eye view

The latest aerial photo shows the progress of construction on Huntsville Center’s new facility at Redstone Gateway at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. The new 205,000 square foot facility is a purpose built, three story building allowing the Center to consolidate its off-post leases, consolidate the Center’s workforce, and provide a more secure environment for the Center’s staff.

About Huntsville Center

HNC

Unique to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,

Huntsville Center provides innovative engineering solutions to complex, global missions. Our team of professionals engineer adaptive, specialized solutions across a broad spectrum of global enterprise covering five main lines of effort: Energy, Operational Technology, Environmental, Medical, and Base Operations and Facilities. Our portfolios comprise 43 program areas, as well as nine mandatory and six technical centers of expertise, and 17 centers of standardization. Through partnership with Department of Defense agencies, private industry and global stakeholders, we deliver leading edge engineering solutions in support of national interests around the globe.

FY2022 40+ Programs

8 Mandatory Centers of Expertise,
6 Technical Centers of Expertise
and 17 Centers of Standardization

\$ 2.5B

**“HNC Delivers
Innovation”**

In fiscal 2022, Huntsville Center awarded contract actions totaling more than
\$2.5 billion in obligations for its stakeholders.



The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, engineers adaptive, specialized solutions across a broad spectrum of global enterprise covering five main lines of effort: Energy, Operational Technology, Environmental, Medical, and Base Operations and Facilities