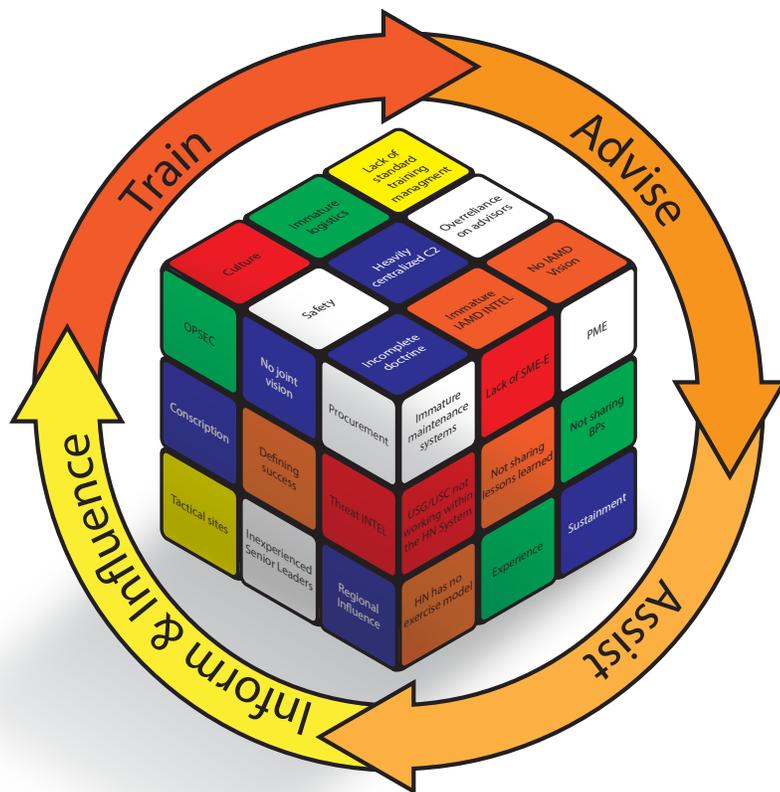


US air defense artillery foreign advising

The strategic NCO leveraging the operational art

By Maj. Christopher Garnett



Working themes

Get them to see themselves

Work within the HN system

Keep it simple

Stay on message

Patience: capabilities take time to mature

A Rubik's Cube is used to depict some of the challenges faced during the train, advise, assist, inform and influence phases along with the themes to overcome the challenges. (Rick Paape/information provided by Maj. Christopher Garnett)

As the global trend for air defense capabilities to deter regional actors continues, so will the need for U.S. Army air defenders to possess the operational flexibility to conduct theater security cooperation or U.S. State Department-led Foreign Military Sales' long-term advisory missions in order to train, advise, and assist foreign militaries.

For training basic-to-intermediate gunnery and campaign planning implementation to be effective while working in small teams, advisors must go beyond simply providing foreign disclosed documents and training manuals in an effort to train the host nation defense forces. While working with host nation defense forces with highly centralized decision-making, and

immature systems and processes, the advisory team leaders must be able to properly assess both the current defense forces' as well as the advisory team's capabilities. This will ensure they devise a realistic plan with broad lines of operation (LOOs) and realistic lines of effort that are supported with attainable objectives.

Though the officer has a defined strategic role on the advisory team, it is the non-commissioned officer that must be able to operate at the tactical level while being able to influence leaders at the strategic level thru key leader engagements, classes and briefings. This article provides both a concept and considerations for advising foreign air defense forces with the end-state of "working oneself out of a job."

Inform and influence

Broad LOOs: train, advise and assist, inform and influence and interagency integration. Advisory operations begin-and-end with influencing decision-makers. Therefore, making it an independent LOO is a safe starting place. For air defense operations, creating three to four classes with a specified target-audience addressing battalion-level maintenance and sustainment operations class (targeting battalion-level staff officers), Battery Commander's Class (focused on battalion and battery commander's, current and future), and a 'Patriot 101' Class (targeting division-level and higher leaders).

Maintenance and sustainment systems



Soldiers from C Battery, 5th Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery, 10th Army Air and Missile Defense joined armies across Europe to celebrate and officially mark one hundred years of the Republic of Estonia. (Courtesy photo)

and processes, globally, shows a lack of knowledge for the level of support needed to sustain air defense operations without impeding operational readiness. A further concern, regardless of region, is the special operations force threat against Patriot operations and the need to defend against asymmetric threats. Addressing tactical site manning and design considerations in order to enhance survivability for battery commanders is a class that provides leaders alternative considerations based on the regional threat.

Lastly, a class that broadly discusses basic Patriot capabilities and limitations with senior leaders addresses training and readiness observations made and allows advisors to directly discuss with key decision-makers. This often results in immediate decisions being made. Having a LOO focused solely on informing and influencing leaders at all levels, is a critical component to advisory operations while setting conditions for institutional changes needed.

Interagency integration

Working with other U.S. agencies requires an understanding of their culture, how they operate and their expectations and previous experiences in working with the U.S. Department of Defense. However, at the end of the day “people and personalities” ultimately prevail as the single indicator of success for interagency relationships. Similar to a good marriage, striving for 60 percent in a supporting role of the partnership leads to success. This includes adopting their jargon, dress attire and genuinely supporting their organizational objectives.

Advising themes

In lieu of clear-cut objectives while advising, themes at designated phases and levels of leadership across the host nation’s organization enables synchronized mes-

saging. This vertical and lateral approach to messaging maximizes the efforts and applies the correct level of support as the host nation defense forces mature in capability. Keeping the host nation’s military and ethnic culture in mind, the following 10 advising themes are examples during specific phases throughout an advisory mission:

1. Work within their system: It’s multiple-centuries old. We’re not here to change their culture, we’re here to work in it.
2. Put them into position to see themselves: Host nations won’t understand it until they experience it first-hand.
3. Build the bench: Broaden a host nation to train more crews, not just the top performers. Focused training wins out.
4. The Beatles effect: U.S. advisors have immediate legitimacy before walking into the room. Be careful on what you advise as it can quickly become policy.
5. The human connection: The best hip-pocket training with the host nation is to talk about your family and interests back home.
6. BP-OILLs: Best practices and observations, insights, and lessons learned. Spread them and emphasize them.
7. Test and gauge: Use initial host nation engagements to test and assess their understanding of operations, training and sustainment requirements.
8. Patience, staying on target: Emphasize the small things and keep the messaging simple. Basic capabilities take time to mature.
9. Centralized control: Don’t let the frustrations detract from staying on course.
10. Tactical assessment messaging: Doctrine, doctrine, doctrine.

Decentralized operations

In order to maximize the subject-matter

expertise from an advisory team, a classic and genuine decentralized approach of assigning advisors to individual battalions and brigades, while operating independently over extended periods of time, provides the most influence. This approach rapidly allows the sharing of host nations’ observations, best practices, insights and lessons learned amongst the advisory team and enables the team to identify trends while analyzing and assessing the operational needs.

Green-suiter-contractor teams

ADA advisors will find U.S. contractor system support within the host nation. In lieu of operating parallel to each other, constructing two-man green-suiter and contractor teams can have added value and create a balanced approach to messaging training value to the host nation. As the advisory team leader, matching personalities with contractors will create a significant influencing force when messaging is reinforced from both parties, as well as having the organizational reach-back (i.e., doctrine and training as well as material and system support).

Exercising genuine decentralized operations by assigning capable ADA NCO advisors to battalions and brigades, with broad guidance while operating in a degree of ambiguity, unleashes a tremendous amount of influence while simultaneously demonstrating trust among the team. Pushing the envelope by enabling the professional growth that these highly qualified ADA NCOs gain by exercising the operational art of linking the tactical to strategic objectives is not only a concept that should to be embraced, but also a quality that needs to be celebrated.

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