



# Lessons from Yusufiyah

## Module 15: Discussion Guide

### Taking Leave, Wintrich



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## “Taking Leave”



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For all members of the Army Profession

<http://cape.army.mil>

## “Taking Leave”

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## 1. Checklist

- Recruit additional strong/respected leaders from your unit to be facilitators with your unit. (Recruit as many as the situation mandates)
- Watch the video and read the transcript prior to your facilitation.
- Review the additional resources.
- Review the “How to run your workshop” guidelines prior to facilitating.
- Think about a personal experience that relates to the scenario.
- Resource Prep:
  - Make copies of the video transcripts and facilitation questions as needed for each of your facilitators.
  - If you plan on showing video clips, test to make sure they work on the system in your designated training area.
  - Make sure you have a whiteboard with dry-erase markers.

## 2. Who's Who



Fred Wintrich has been in the Army for more than 20 years and is a third-generation Soldier. He was also the Battalion Executive Officer for Bravo Company.

### 3. “Taking Leave” Video Transcript: Fred Wintrich discusses our culture and the common bonds we share as Soldiers



*Fred Wintrich was a battalion executive officer just before the surge in Iraq. His unit operated in a hotly contested area, averaging 11 direct fire contacts a day over the*

*entire deployment. Before taking leave, he handed his responsibilities to the S3, MAJ Rob Salome.*

“I took R&R in March. The day I was actually loading up to drive up to have a patrol take me up and drop me off for leave, standing in the hallway with my body armor stripped and standing there, and the radio call was coming in that Charlie Company had had a contact and it was kinda lingering down in the QaQaa Weapons Facility. I believe that we were starting to get the initial radio reports about a house that had been burned down in B Company’s area. Then there was another contact. I realized Rob was about to go down to the TOC to start stacking problems and I started to walk down the hall with him.

He just turned around and said, ‘Look, this is never going to end. There is never going to be a day where we don’t have just enough combat power to get it done. Turn around. Go get in that vehicle. I’ll see you in two weeks.’

He was right. Me going down there, I would have never been able to walk out of that TOC, nor would he nor would Tom if you kept waiting for the radio to blow up with a problem.

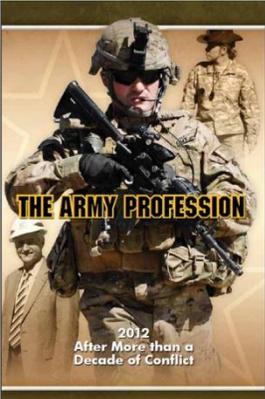
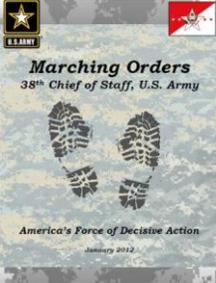
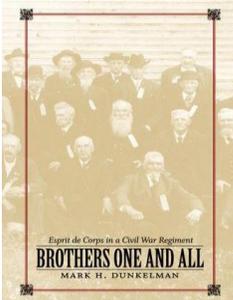
But really the talk about what it felt like to walk out that day in March—halfway through a very difficult tour that never really got any easier—wasn’t so much that I was so indispensable that the battalion wasn’t going to get past it, but it was more I’ve become so connected to what the Soldiers are trying to get done that I felt like that’s just where I should be. Leaving them was like leaving a brother or a sister who is struggling or is going through hard times.

Our noncommissioned officers and Soldiers are just an unbelievable resource. As long as we’ve got them in the Army, the Army will thrive. Your organization should be healthy enough to not have you there and still be able to function.

It’s not (that) your unit should be able to function without you and not commit war-crimes; they should be able to still excel. They should be able to be successful because you’ve built the leadership systems and the reinforcing trust and the competence in your organization to where whether you’re there or not is irrelevant.”

## 4. Additional Resources

The following resources are available:

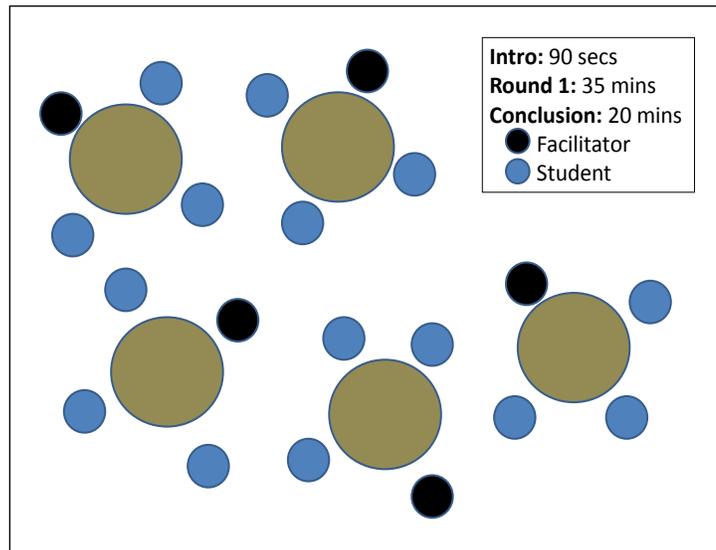
	<p><b><u>The Army Profession of Arms Pamphlet</u></b> <b><i>“Esprit de Corps”</i></b></p> <p>To prevail in arduous and chaotic warfare, the Army Profession must have spirited, self-aware professionals who compose cohesive and effective units embedded in a culture that sustains traditions, respects customs, and creates a sense of belonging by inspiring martial excellence and the fortitude to never quit. Winning in combat is the only acceptable outcome; the Army cannot fail the American people. Thus the obligation to create and maintain a dominant, winning spirit within the Army Ethic rests with leaders at all levels.</p>
	<p><b><u>Marching Orders: 38th Chief of Staff, Jan. 1012</u></b> <i>Article: <a href="http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/232478.pdf">http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/232478.pdf</a></i></p> <p>As part of his vision for an Army that is prepared for America's future conflicts, GEN Odierno makes it clear that trust is the foundation - "the bedrock" - upon which everything else is built.</p>
	<p><b><u>Brothers One and All: Esprit de Corps in a Civil War Regiment</u></b></p> <p>Dunkelman provides students of the Civil War with a well-researched look at the distinct bonds that form between men-at-arms which, on one hand, are so strong that one man will willingly lay down his life for the protection of his comrades, yet, at the same time so fragile that the smallest transgressions will cause them to shatter. The reader is introduced to the basic foundations of esprit de corps, morale, trust and common experience and how they are established and fostered within a military unit.</p>

## 5. How to run your workshop

The basic concept provided below is a way to facilitate this module. Modify as necessary to fit the needs and demographics of the group. We find that having a variety of ranks/leadership positions in each group increases perspective and maximizes takeaway.

**PREP:** Have a whiteboard and markers available. Bring copies of the video transcripts. Have a Facilitator Guide available for each facilitator. Get there early and set up the room in huddles large enough to support a variety of leadership at each table. Put chairs around one table (keep people close), rather than pulling several tables together.

**BASIC CONCEPT:** Meet for 55 minutes to discuss the module. The group breaks down into huddles large enough to support a variety of leadership at each table. For example, you want to have SLs, PSGs, PLs and CDRs in the same huddle so you can maximize the overall effectiveness and increase the number of vantage points. Have one facilitator at each table to guide (NOT LEAD) the discussion. The workshop begins with facilitators asking the participants what their response was to the module. The facilitators' main role is to be a catalyst for conversation and learning about the topic at hand. This module includes two rounds of discussion, and ends with personal stories and vignettes that relate to the module.



### KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Let participants do most of the talking.
- The facilitators' key role is to ask questions that spark thought and conversation.
- Ensure you engage each level of leadership and everyone within your group. Do not let any one person dominate the conversation.
- Have questions prepped for each round to drive the conversation. (See "Detailed Plan" on page 5.)
- You are a catalyst for conversation. Make sure that you continue to ask questions that make your group dig deeper.

## 6. Detailed plan for your workshop

### INTRODUCTION (90 seconds)

*Introduce the Workshop in a way that communicates the purpose of the event.*

*"Today we're going to look at the Army Profession and discuss the common bonds we share when it comes to our culture, trust, and esprit de corps."*

### ROUND 1 - (35 minutes): Discuss our culture, trust, and esprit de corps.

#### [Watch "Taking Leave"]

1. Just as Wintrich is about to leave for R&R he learns that some of his units are in contact. What is his initial reaction?
2. A) What legitimate concerns or motivations make it difficult for a leader to take leave during a deployment? B) What are some of the negative concerns or motivations?
3. A) What have been some of the negative impacts you have seen from a leader leaving? B) What are some of the positives? C) What is the purpose of "R&R"?
4. MAJ Salome the S3 says, "Look, this is never going to end. Go get in that vehicle. I'll see you in two weeks." What do you think of MAJ Salome's statement?
5. Wintrich followed MAJ Salome's suggestion. Wintrich says, "He was right." What does this tell you about the relationship between the XO and the S3?
6. A) If Wintrich and Salome had not established a deep trust, how might Wintrich's departure have been different? B) Describe the trust-relationship you have with your peers/leaders.
7. Wintrich views his decision-point from a leadership perspective. He says, "Your organization should be healthy enough to not have you there and still be able to function." A) What do you think of that? B) How long can a leader NOT be present and the unit still function in a healthy manner?
8. In what ways is a leader going on-leave during a deployment similar to and different from losing a leader to reassignment? To death?
9. A) What are some characteristics of a competent unit? B) What specific actions can leaders take to develop those characteristics?

## 6. Detailed plan for your workshop (continued)

10. In what ways can *esprit de corps* help a unit function when a leader is gone?
11. ADP 6-22 lists, “Develop Others,” as a Leader Competency. To what degree is this competency validated by how a unit acts while its leader is gone?

### **ROUND 2-Conclusion (20 minutes): Personal Vignettes and takeaways.**

*Facilitator asks students to share any personal vignettes and takeaways from the module.*

**It is important for the group to relate to this story on a personal level. Conclude the module emphasizing the significance of our culture and the common bonds we share as Soldiers. Leaders should walk away with a better understanding of our culture, trust and esprit de corps.**

**Upon concluding, the following questions are useful for determining learning and promoting reflection:**

<b>Learning</b>	Q - What did you learn from listening to the reactions and reflections of other leaders?  Q - What are the future implications of this decision and or experience?
<b>Reflection</b>	Q - How do you feel/what do you think about what you learned?  Q - What will you do with your new information?  Q – How can you integrate new learning into your Command team philosophy, command structure and climate?