What is a PME Plan?

- Why PME?
- What is PME?
- Who does PME?
- When and Where do we do PME?
- Battalion FY PME Plan

Professional Development for Company Officers
LtCol B.B. McBreen
Why PME?

• Common language, philosophy, and education empowers a fighting organization
  – Implicit communication is a combat multiplier
  – Implicit communication requires educated officers
• Tactical and organizational decisions reflect broad insights and long-term perspective
• Curiosity is critical to continuous improvement
• “Old heads on young shoulders”
  No one should be less than 100 years old
Overheard in Conversation…

1. “I think Ambrose is not critical enough of the American soldier. But Van Crevald is too critical.”
2. “You know DePuy came up with that in Vietnam.”
3. “Remember what Guderian said about the engine.”
4. “S.L.A. Marshall never had to carry a MOLLE pack!”
5. “I want to be ‘Ender’!”
6. “We’ll do an Afrika Corps anti-tank hammer and anvil.”
7. “Can he take a message to Garcia?”
8. “Keegan? No idea. I need to catch up on my reading.”
   “You should already know the first 100 books.”
9. “Doesn’t a frontal assault violate Warfighting doctrine?”
What is PME?

• “Life-long study of the military profession.”
  - MCO P1553.4A PME

• “Minimum required PME” is less than “Recommended PME”

• Education is not Training

• NOT: MOS, billet, or rank-specific
  NOT: MBA, NATOPS, PES, guests, MCMAP

• Use accurate doctrinal terms: PME, training, education, officer skills, school, O-Call
Who does PME?

- Long-service professionals in good armies
- Officers: self-study & educate subordinates
- SNCOS & NCOs

When and Where do we do PME?

- Irregularly: with a surge during school
- Regularly: 5% of effort
- Some environments are better than others
Armies, eras & PME

- French 1940
  Doughty
- German 1806, 1868, 1922
  von Seeckt
- British 1934
  Milne vs Massingberd
- American 1934 vs 1964
  Marshal vs Westmoreland
- U.S. Marine Corps 1987
  Gray’s *Warfighting*
- IDF, Japanese, Russians…U.S. in Iraq

  If you’re planning for one year, grow rice.
  If you’re planning for ten years, grow trees.
  If you’re planning for centuries, grow men.

  - Chinese proverb
Individual Self-Study

• Set Reading Goals. Set Fighting Goals.
• Reading Lists
  – Recommendations: Standard texts
  – Sampling: Recommended
  – References: Types of History
  – Don’t spend a dime
• 10 books x 10 years = Major
• Caution: Avoid USMC-centric focus
Set Monthly PT Goals…
Set Monthly Self-Study Goals…

1. **One course.** All officers: Marine Corps non-resident seminar.

2. **One book.** All officers: One professional book per month.

3. **One journal.** All officers: One professional journal per month. Subscribe to *Marine Corps Gazette*.

4. **One fight.** All officers: One tactical decision per month. TDG or simulation. Best when officers fight each other.

5. **One verb.** All officers: One foreign language.

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Counterpoint to PME

• “In ten years, I can’t teach a Captain everything he needs on the battlefield. Let’s focus on complex combined arms TTPs, not Gettysburg!”
  – Ruthless pursuit of tactical excellence requires skills
  – IDF officers focus on battle skills, not theory

• “Why is EWS a staff course? It should be a commander’s course. Educate Majors!”

• “If he’s so busy reading, what does he think his Marines are doing?”
Battalion FY PME Plan

• (12) months = (12) events [Schedule Handout]
  – Last Friday afternoon of the month: 1500.
  – Each company presents twice. All officers present.

• Battalion Counterinsurgency Reading List

• Officer Self-Study Plans

“I feel a fundamental crippling incuriousness about our officers… With 2,000 years of examples behind us we have no excuse, when fighting, for not fighting well.”

- T.E. Lawrence
In a letter to B.H. Liddell-Hart 10