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# COMMANDERS GUIDE *to* Army Family Team Building (AFTB)

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**The AFTB Logo.** The three persons represent the millions of people in the Army comprised of Soldiers, (active, Guard and Reserve), Army civilians, Retirees and all their Family members. These people stand in the shadow of the American flag expressing their willingness to serve the Nation. The bald eagle, symbol of the United States of America and its Army, serves as the focal point of the logo. The eagle pauses in its flight for freedom to offer all the golden key to unit/agency and Family readiness: Army Family Team Building. The double bands encircling the logo depict unity of Family. The scroll grasped by the eagles' claws symbolizes the themes of commitment, support, and service of the Army Family. The golden wreath represents excellence in all achievements by the Army.

## What is Army Family Team Building?

Army Family Team Building, better known as AFTB, is not a new idea or concept. It is the formal way of recognizing and naming something the Army and Army Families have been doing for over 200 years -- sustaining and nurturing the force and serving the Nation.

Army Family Team Building is serious business. It is about READINESS: mission readiness and Family readiness, adapting to Army life, accepting challenges, dealing with change, and developing life skills. The mission of AFTB is to educate and train America's Army in knowledge, skills, and behaviors designed to prepare our Army Families to move successfully into the 21st century.

AFTB is designed to inform our Soldiers and Families of the benefits offered, both personally and as leaders. Army Family Team Building will teach them that the more informed they are about the military and its environment, the better their chances are for a successful career; and the better prepared their Families are to handle the challenges of military living, the more Soldiers can concentrate on the mission.

Army Family Team Building is divided into three levels of training. When or where a Soldier or Family member enters into AFTB training is based on his/her experience or choice of course enrollment, not rank or grade of sponsor. **Level I** courses are expanded upon in **Level II**, and some in **Level II** are elaborated upon in **Level III**.

AFTB contributes to the Army mission by educating and training the Army Family to be self-sufficient leaders within their communities. AFTB **Level I** focuses on the basic skills and knowledge needed to live the military life. **Level II** allows the participant to grow into a community leader. Finally, **Level III** goes into inspiring and mentoring others into leadership positions.

There are many reasons to attend AFTB classes. Aside from the tangible benefits of receiving training on the Army's mission, Family preparedness, and learning about community resources, AFTB classes are fun! They provide an opportunity to meet new friends and to get involved in the community. An increase in knowledge strengthens self-confidence and independence which gives the Family member more control over stressful situations such as alerts, deployments, and long term exercises. However, the most important reason for a Family member to take AFTB classes is that they learn practical life management skills which can always be used!

For the Soldier, promotions points are available. A total of four promotion points can be awarded for accumulating 40 hours of course instruction in Army Community Service classes, which includes Army Family Team Building.

For the Family member, after AFTB Family members feel less frustrated, more knowledgeable and more accepting of the military and the demands of the military lifestyle. Strong Families are the pillar of support behind strong Soldiers.

AFTB courses are progressive and sequential and are designed to be taught by volunteer instructors. Knowledge is mobile and so is AFTB. Knowledge gained through AFTB is not limited to the military environment but may be used in other areas of life.

See if you can fill in the blanks:

At 0400, you will layout your \_\_\_\_50 and be ready to \_\_\_\_ for a 45 day  
\_\_\_\_ prior to your \_\_\_\_ in route to your \_\_\_\_ assignment.

Or try matching these:

- A. ACS \_\_\_\_\_
- B. AWOL \_\_\_\_\_
- C. CINC \_\_\_\_\_
- D. FTX \_\_\_\_\_
- E. FRG \_\_\_\_\_

- a. Field Training Exercise
- b. Available With Only Logistics
- c. Called in Clinic
- d. Army Community Service
- e. Family Readiness Group
- f. Commander in Chief
- g. Absent without Leave

Let AFTB help....Sign up for Module 1.2 Military Acronyms and Terms. This is just one example of how AFTB trains.

*Answers: At 0400, you will lay-out your TA 50 and be ready to roll out for a 45 day FTX prior to your TDY in route to your PCS assignment. D, G, F, A, E*

"Department of the Army AFTB has always been impressed by the quality and effectiveness of the elite group of AFTB Program Managers and volunteers, and how selflessly you contribute to the community."  
*Sonia I. Wriglesworth, Chief, Army Family Enrichment Division*

## LEVEL I

Level I courses are targeted toward people new to the Army or anyone interested in updating personal skills or basic knowledge.

### **1.1 Expectations and Impact of the Mission on Family Life**

Length: 60 minutes

Explores expectations Family members have of the Army and the impact of the Army mission on Family life. It will also provide tips to assist in developing realistic expectations.

### **1.2 Military Acronyms and Terms** Length: 45 minutes

Introduces many of the military acronyms and terms most frequently used as well as the military phonetic alphabet and military time.

### **1.3 The Chain of Command** Length: 45 minutes

Explains the military chain of command through explanation of rank, discussing the various branches of the Army, and exploring the Army's organizational structure.

### **1.4 Introduction to Military Customs and Courtesies**

Length: 45 minutes

Reviews some of the customs and courtesies that are basic to the day to day functioning of the military and to the social aspects of the military lifestyle.

### **1.5 Basic Military Benefits and Entitlements** Length: 45 minutes

Introduces the basic benefits and entitlements received by military personnel.

### **1.6 Introduction to Military and Civilian Community Resources** Length: 60 minutes

Provides an overview of the resources in both the military and civilian communities.

### **1.7 Introduction to Family Readiness Groups** Length: 45 minutes

Provides an introduction to the mission, structure and benefits of Family Readiness Groups (FRG).

### **1.8 Supporting Your Child's Education** Length: 45 minutes

Reinforces the importance of parent involvement in child's education. It also provides an overview of the School Liaison Officer's (SLO) role to assist Army Families in obtaining a good educational experience for their children particularly when they are transitioning from school to school.

### **1.9 Introduction to Family Financial Readiness** Length: 45 minutes

Introduces basic money management and financial planning techniques. It illustrates the advantages and techniques of creating a Family financial plan, how to save wisely, and information on credit. It defines savings and investment and reinforces the importance of planning for the future.

### **1.10 Basic Problem Solving** Length: 60 minutes

Describes and provides an opportunity to practice a six step problem solving process to help determine solutions to various real-life scenarios.

## **LEVEL II**

Level II courses are targeted toward emerging leaders within the Army community.

### **2.1 Communication** Length: 75 minutes

Discusses various types of communication and assesses the students' ability to effectively communicate with others. Explores barriers to communication and develops strategies to improve their communication skills.

### **2.2 Personal Time Management** Length: 60 minutes

Helps students assess personal time management skills and prioritize activities using a time management tool.

### **2.3 Stress Management** Length: 60-75 minutes

Defines stress, identifies symptoms and sources of stress, and discusses stress management techniques.

### **2.4 Acknowledging Change** Length: 45 minutes

Defines change, discusses the four phases of change, and examines strategies to overcome the tendency to resist change.

### **2.5 Exploring Personality Traits** Length: 60 minutes

Identifies personality traits, identifies primary personality tendency and discovers more effective ways to interact with others.

### **2.6 Enhancing Personal Relationships** Length: 60 minutes

Discusses how to develop and maintain healthy personal relationships, the importance of being a supportive group member.

### **2.7 Team Dynamics** Length: 75 minutes

Discusses the stages of group development and how various roles impact the success of a team.

### **2.8 Personal Conflict Management** Length: 60 minutes

Defines conflict management and how individuals handle conflict differently, determines how conflict affects relationships, both working and personal, and examines methods to productively manage conflict.

### **2.9 Creative Problem Solving** Length: 60 minutes

Explores different methods of creative problem solving and how to evaluate solutions to problems.

## **2.10 Traditions, Customs, Courtesies and Protocol**

Length: 75-90 minutes

Reviews Army customs and traditions and the social aspects of the military life style.

## **2.11 Crisis, Coping and Grieving** Length: 45-60 minutes

Defines crisis, discusses the grieving process, and introduces coping strategies for preparing and dealing with crisis and helping other people who are experiencing crisis.

## **2.12 The Volunteer Experience** Length: 60 minutes

Examines the importance of volunteerism within the military and civilian communities as well as why people choose to volunteer and explores the benefits of volunteering to both the volunteer and the community organizations.

## **2.13 Family Readiness Groups and the Deployment Cycle**

Length: 60 minutes

Describes the structure of Family Readiness Groups and how members may contribute to its success and examines how an FRG can assist Family members during the deployment cycles.

## **2.14 Introduction to Leadership** Length: 60-75 minutes

Explores leadership and the difference between leader and follower, discusses characteristics associated with effective leaders, and discovers important principles of leadership.

### **LEVEL III**

Level III offers training to enhance the professional growth and leadership development opportunities of Family members, especially those who might assume leadership roles within the community and the unit.

## **3.1 Communication Skills for Leaders** Length: 75 minutes

Discusses ways to effectively communicate as a leader, assesses personal communications skills, and determines areas for improvement.

## **3.2 Understanding Needs** Length: 60 minutes

Examines the basic needs of individuals and explores the impact of needs on motivation.

## **3.3 Leadership Styles** Length: 90-105 minutes

Discusses situational leadership, discovers personal leadership styles, and evaluates follower needs in order to apply the appropriate leadership style.

## **3.4 Building Cohesive Teams** Length: 75 minutes

Discusses ways in which leaders can build strong and cohesive teams by capitalizing on a positive attitude, understanding roles in the stages of team

development, building commitment within the team, and being aware of the characteristics of an effective team.

**3.5 Managing Group Conflict** Length: 75-90 minutes

Defines conflict and the characteristics of conflict within a group and assesses personal approaches to conflict and recognize when to apply other conflict management styles in group situations.

**3.6 Leader Assisted Problem Solving** Length: 60 minutes

Provides leaders with necessary skills to guide groups through the decision-making process.

**3.7 Delegation for Leaders** Length: 75-90 minutes

Focuses on delegation and illustrates its benefits for both the leader and the team member.

**3.8 Meeting Management** Length: 60-75 minutes

Outlines the reasons for meetings and how to effectively conduct them and further explores implementing the phases of meeting management to organize productive meetings.

**3.9 Coaching and Mentoring** Length: 90 minutes

Explores the roles of a leader as a coach and mentor and how that leader can provide effective feedback.

**3.10 Family Readiness Group Leadership** Length: 60 minutes

Describes the role of the Family Readiness Group (FRG) leader within a unit and the tools and resources needed to start or revive an FRG and discusses the roles and responsibilities of FRG members, commanders and rear detachment commanders from the FRG Leader's perspective.

"The AFTB program has already shown tremendous potential. Training is the glue that holds the Army together. We expect that leaders at all levels will support this program. The best way to care for our Families is to give them the resources that allow them to enhance their own independence and self-confidence."

*The AFTB Program policy memorandum issued on 16 December 1994, signed by the Chief of Staff of the Army(CSA) and the Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA), announced the AFTB Program as an official Army program.*

# AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

AFTB Modules are portable and may be “concept blocked” to fit the needs of your unit.

To arrange for AFTB to come to your unit, call  
785.239.9435

## **Concept Block examples:**

### **Did you hear what I think I said?**

*(2.1 Communication, 3.1 Communication Skills for Leaders and 3.2 Understanding Needs)*

### **Stop your wheels from spinning.**

*(2.2 Personal Time Management and 3.8 Meeting Management)*

### **Why do we do what we do?**

*(1.1 Expectations & Impact of the Mission on Family Life and 1.3 The Chain of Command)*

### **Follow the yellow brick road.**

*(1.5 Basic Military Benefits & Entitlements and 1.6 Introductions to Military & Civilian Resources)*

### **A is for Apple.**

*(1.2 Military Terms & Acronyms and 1.10 Basic Problem Solving)*

***Many more options to choose from or develop your own  
“Concept Block of Instruction”***

The Army Family Team Building Program needs volunteer instructors to conduct classes! All course materials are provided, after completion of the AFTB Instructor Course, with a complete, step-by-step outline on how and what to teach including training handouts and class involvement ideas.