

Proposal for an Improved Physical Fitness Plan

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Introduction

As a United States Army soldier there are a lot of responsibilities you inherently have that come with being a soldier. One of those responsibilities is to stay physically fit at all times so they can accomplish any task, anytime, in any environment. To ensure soldiers remain fit they conduct P.T. starting at 0630 in the morning until 0730. Soldiers normally do whatever their platoon has planned and continue in the program that is set up by the platoon sergeant or other NCOs in the platoon. While this is adequate and ensures the soldiers are conducting some type of physical fitness during the day, I believe there is a better way to have the fittest soldiers in the world. In this proposal, I will suggest a plan which will support a hectic schedule that is the life of the U.S. soldier, ensures a soldier does not perform exercises too strenuous and advanced for his or her capabilities, and also ensures that the soldier is maintaining Army standards while also doing it in a way that prevents injury.

Solution One

The first thing to take into consideration is the typical soldier does not keep a schedule that will ensure he or she can complete physical fitness at the same time every single day. So by allowing a soldier to take more control of their P.T. plan it will ensure that they can get a good workout in even if it is at 1700 in the afternoon. Soldiers that have been in the Army for a while think the only time you can conduct P.T. is in the morning. It may take a bit more time for the NCO, but if you allow soldiers to start work an hour earlier at 0800 they will be able to leave at 1600 to conduct P.T. The NCO will just have to check to make sure their soldiers are doing it.

Giving soldiers the flexibility to decide their schedule does present some risk, but it may also be a way to allow them to feel in more control of their life when the truth of the matter the Army controls almost every aspect of it.

Solution Two

The second part to consider is soldiers coming into the unit could be on different levels of fitness, so forcing them to do all of the same exercises at the same intensity could expose them to injury. So on top of being able to work out at a time of their choosing, I feel they should be able to have a civilian fitness trainer to help them build a fitness plan which will fit them best. The Army does have Master Fitness Trainers (MFT) in their units, but they are other higher-ranking soldiers that do this as an additional duty and usually have far more responsibilities on top of that. So the MFT job usually becomes less important and more of an annoyance. Also, if the Army hires a civilian fitness trainer that is embedded in each unit, it will ensure each soldier will have access to a trained professional as well as have someone dedicated run their P.T. program. According to Facet Seven Fitness, fitness trainers will be able to, “use the right equipment and facilities at the gym,” and, “With a professional-looking after you, you’ll be doing challenging workouts without the risk of burning yourself out,” (Chess, 2021). Those two things alone tend to get overlooked by NCOs and soldiers easily get bored with repetitive workouts. According to lessons.com, the low-end price per hour for a personal trainer is \$35 per hour. With that being said, the Army could negotiate with the prospective trainer to fit the budget just like all contractors. The advantages of having a civilian fitness trainer greatly outweigh the reasons not to have one. I believe this would be the best solution to the problem created by a poorly ran P.T. program.

Personal Experience

In the last part of the proposal, I would like to share a personal experience with physical fitness while being in the Army. My last duty station was at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. I was assigned to Delta Company 2-25 Assault Helicopter Battalion. I was the Production Control NCO and worked crazy hours so, with the approval of my supervisor, I joined a CrossFit gym that held hour-long classes from 0530 in the morning until 1930 in the evening. I was able to go workout when I was able and build a relationship with people outside of work. I also had a coach to help me through the movements, and modify exercises for me when I had an injury. I was more motivated to go and felt a responsibility to the people I met to continue with the classes. I was able to lose 23 pounds as well as 4% body fat. I felt great and was able to keep well below the Army standard. That was the most excited I have ever been to work out every day. If we can do the same thing with our soldiers, I believe it will lead to fewer P.T. failures, fewer injuries, and fewer soldiers on the height and weight program.

Conclusion

This proposal presented a plan that supported a soldier's hectic schedule, ensures soldiers don't perform exercises too strenuous and advanced for his or her capabilities, and also ensures soldiers are maintaining Army standards. I believe there are several ways to get soldiers excited about physical fitness. Giving soldiers so say in how and when they complete it, is the best way to get the most buy-in and have the most success with soldiers maintaining the Army fitness standards.

References

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