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THE SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS

June 2014

Lance Corporal Leadership-Ethics Seminar Staff,

Thank you for your committed and engaged leadership. You [we] will ensure our Corps continues to build and mold 21st Century Marines ... always standing ready to meet the complex challenges in an uncertain and dangerous world.

The Enlisted Professional Military Education Branch (EPME) has spent the last year working intensely towards evolving our opportunities. The sustainment and continual grooming of ethical and highly professional leaders capable of handling multiple tasks in a chaotic environment, making critical decisions at critical times at every level is the institutional imperative; worthy of the title NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER!

The Lance Corporal Leadership-Ethics Seminar was created based on the need for a continuum of leadership development and is a next vital step -- from the introductory growth garnered from their recruiters, to the discipline instilled upon stepping on the yellow footprints, to the education through the entry level training pipeline to the limited experience earned at their first duty station. This Seminar fills the gaps, accelerates and identifies priority areas, and where to invest time and energy, so when it is time for Leading Marines, success is guaranteed.

You have been chosen because of your demonstrated abilities and enduring trust qualities, I applaud your selection. I expect you to share your insights and experiences; into your hands we place the future leaders of our Corps.

Always Faithful,

[Signature]

Micheal P. Barrett
Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps
Seminar Leader’s Guide Overview

This guide is the tool for leaders to facilitate an effective Lance Corporals Leadership and Ethics Seminar. Below is an overview of what each element provides:

Introduction and Seminar Outcomes. This section provides a brief rationale regarding development of this seminar, as well as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes a student should demonstrate during (Learning Outcome) and after (Program Outcome) completing the program. Seminar staff must ensure that these objectives are considered when planning and conducting the seminar. Additionally, this section provides general information regarding time, methods, and personnel requirements.

Instructional Methods & Techniques. This section provides information on delivery methods and strategies seminar staff will use during the seminar. These instructional methods are based on adult learning theories currently used at SNCOAs.

Appendices. The appendices in this guide provide seminar staff with guidance regarding the questioning techniques for small group discussion and questions to be completed before the professional development.
Introduction

“We must ensure that our newest Marines fully understand and appreciate what the Marine Corps represents and that, by becoming members of the world's fighting elite, they uphold the sacred trust we have with our great nation and with each other.”

MCRP 6-11D Sustaining the Transformation, Page 2-7

The Lance Corporal Leadership and Ethics Seminar is designed to bridge the gap between the initial training pipeline and resident Professional Military Education. The seminar provides a resident-like experience, in which lance corporals discuss and explore a wide range of leadership concepts led by NCOs in their unit. Seminar topics are founded on Marine Corps leadership doctrine using themes and ideas from resources such as Leading Marines, Sustaining the Transformation, and Marine Corps Values: A Users Guide for Discussion Leaders. Discussions during the seminar address topics such as ethos, followership responsibilities, and ethical behavior expected of all Marines.

The seminar uses a seminar-workshop model in which curriculum is delivered in large groups and seminar leaders facilitate interactive small group discussions and activities. These methods provide lance corporals with an opportunity to take ownership of their own learning and enhance their educational experience while meeting the seminar’s outcomes.

Seminar Outcomes

Program Outcome

Develop lance corporals to serve as ethical leaders, educated in the philosophies and doctrinal publications that provide the basis for Marine Corps organizational values and ethics, foundations of leadership, personal conduct, and total fitness to sustain the transformation throughout the Marine Corps.

Learning Outcome

Discuss the leadership concepts illustrated in MCWP 6-11 Leading Marines, MCRP 6-11D Sustaining the Transformation, and MCRP 6-11B Marine Corps Values: A User’s Guide for Discussion Leaders that focus on the personal and professional development of the individual Marine.

Course Methods and Time Overview

<table>
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<td>Graduation and Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Instruction Time</td>
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Seminar Instructional Methods and Techniques

The objective of the seminar is to develop lance corporals to take action as ethical leaders. Therefore, the seminar employs instructional methods that actively engage lance corporals in the learning process. The methods are designed to give Marines more autonomy in identifying problems, formulating solutions, and making decisions that support Marine Corps values and ethics. For these methods and techniques to be effective, seminar leaders must recognize and perform their role in the learning process.

Role of the Seminar Leader

Seminar leader roles distinctly vary from the instructor-centered methods used in Marine Corps training centers in which students expect instructors to transmit all knowledge and dictate learning. However, as a facilitator, seminar leaders must promote learning by encouraging students to share their ideas, participate in activities, and influence their own seminar experience. Instructors stand, walk, and provide facts directly to the students. In contrast, seminar leaders sit with their group, provide direction for activities, ask questions about ideas and material, listen to others’ ideas, and connect conversations with the material. Seminar leaders use methods that encourage seminar attendees to take a more active role in their learning and guide learning based on the personal and professional development of the Marines in their group.

In fact, the instructional material provided in this seminar guide is designed to aid seminar leaders in their role as facilitators. This material incorporates active learning strategies that rely heavily on student participation to help seminar leaders guide learning mainly through the use of questioning and summarizing techniques.

Responsibilities of the Seminar Leader

Establish and Maintain a Positive Learning Environment. In order for students to actively participate in their learning, they have to overcome obstacles typically present in the classroom. Challenges may include social anxiety due to the new environment, personal prejudices and stereotypes, lack of knowledge or experience, and fear of criticism or ridicule. As a facilitator, seminar leaders can minimize these obstacles by:

- Beginning the seminar with an icebreaker activity. This activity provides the seminar attendees an opportunity to work together and get to know each other. The following is an example icebreaker:
  - Divide the lance corporals into pairs.
  - Allow them five minutes to interview each other.
  - Each interviewer has to find interesting facts about their partner that does not include Marine Corps life and work. The Marines should focus on where they came from, families, hobbies, and other information that makes them unique.
  - Bring everyone back to together and ask everyone to present the information they discovered about their partner to the rest of the group.
  - Each brief should take about one minute a piece.
  - Watch the time on this activity and keep it moving for the sake of time.

- Establish and enforce ground rules. Seminar leaders must establish rules of conduct for the seminar small group sessions. The rules should be developed with the learning process in mind, and not with common policies or standards already established outside the classroom such as no chewing gum in uniform. Seminar leaders should limit the list to five to seven rules because a long list of rules usually becomes a distraction. Seminar leaders should remind students daily...
about these rules and post them in the small group areas. The following are common rules implemented in student-centered seminar classrooms:

- **Participate in All Seminar Activities.** In a classroom that depends on student participation for learning to occur, this turns out to be a very important rule. All members of the group should participate during discussions and activities, and it is up to the seminar leader to facilitate such environment.

- **Come to the Seminar Prepared.** Again, the type of methods used in this seminar relies on peer input to be successful. Poor student input due to not reading the material negatively effects the learning process and the ability to meet the seminar objectives.

- **Listen and Be Respectful of Others’ Input.** In order for students to effectively engage another student in a discussion or problem-based scenario, they must sincerely listen to the other’s point of view.

- **Attack the Problem, Not the Individual.** If group members disagree with a person’s point of view, it is important for them to concentrate on the point of view and not be critical of the individual. The individual might simply lack the knowledge or have misconstrued information on the subject, especially in situations dealing with values and ethics. An aggressive approach by peers against the individual, instead of the perspective, disrespects the individual and creates a negative learning environment.

- **Support Your Argument.** Students should provide a rationale with their argument such as facts, doctrine, or previous personal experiences that articulate their position.

**Know the Material.** A proficient level of knowledge on the seminar material is an important part of the facilitating process. It allows seminar leaders to effectively guide students by asking the right questions to clear up misconceptions during the learning process and ensures they are meeting seminar objectives. Therefore, read all the discussion guides, articles, and references that support the discussions and activities.

**Look Professional.** Seminar leaders who do not meet the organizational standards regarding military and personal appearance standards will have a difficult time facilitating discussions during the seminar. To build trust and credibility with their students, seminar leaders must demonstrate their support for the organization’s values, regulations, and policies through enforcement and adherence.

**Participate, Don’t Dominate.** As a leader, it is normal to take charge and provide input and solutions to problems or tasks. Seminar leaders should avoid taking this approach, and allow students to work through the process. This does not mean the seminar leader should be inattentive during the process. They should participate by asking questions, elaborating, and providing students with feedback throughout the sessions.

**Provide Constructive Feedback.** A good way to motivate students is by providing them with continuous feedback during the learning process. As a facilitator, seminar leaders should provide feedback that is constructive, non-controlling and informative, thus enhancing student desire to continue learning and improve. For example, feedback like “that was dumb” or “I wouldn’t have done it that way” discourages participation while “that’s a great idea” or “I wouldn’t have thought of that” encourage Marines to contribute.

**Model Behavior.** “Lead by example.” Facilitators cannot expect seminar attendees to not interrupt, be respectful, or use professional language, if they frequently interrupt, are disrespectful, or regularly curse during seminar sessions. An important part of this seminar is the professional impact seminar leaders have on lance corporals, and this includes modeling professional military behavior. It is important to note that, as the seminar leader assumes the role of facilitator, facilitation does not eliminate their role in teaching, coaching, and mentoring lance corporals during the seminar. There are plenty of
opportunities throughout the event for seminar leaders to share professional experience and knowledge in order to assist lance corporals in learning about the culture and values of the organization.

**Seminar Instructional Methods**

The seminar uses small group discussions, scenarios, and peer-teaching strategies to help lance corporals improve their higher-order thinking abilities and problem solving skills. The seminar uses small group discussion as the primary facilitation method because it provides an environment in which members communicate and test their ideas or understanding on a particular topic, while receiving honest and constructive feedback from their peers. It also helps individuals improve their communication skills, an important aspect in leadership. Scenarios and peer-teaching activities expand students’ knowledge on a subject by allowing them to explore topics and collaboratively come up with solutions to real-life situations. In order for seminar leaders to implement these teaching methods effectively, they must become familiar with their proper facilitation.

*Facilitating Small Group Discussions*

**What are small group discussions?**

Small group discussions are critical conversations about a particular topic or range of topics. The seminar groups are no larger than 10 members. Members of the group are allowed the opportunity to participate in the conversation by expressing their ideas or opinion freely, finishing out their thoughts without interruption or ridicule from other group members or the facilitator. The benefit of this method is that members receive honest and constructive feedback about their ideas from other members, while generating dialogue intended to expand knowledge among the group.

**How does a seminar leader facilitate small group discussions?**

During small group discussions, the seminar leader serves as a facilitator guiding the discussion to its objective through questioning and feedback techniques. This is something seminar leaders must do with great skill, as their involvement throughout the process must not undermine the democratic aspect of the discussion. Nonetheless, the seminar leader is responsible for leading the small group discussion with the purpose of maintaining a safe and productive learning environment for everyone in the process.

**What are some tips for facilitating small group discussions?**

In order to lead this activity successfully, seminar leaders must take the following action for each stage in the process:

**Before**

- Become knowledgeable with the topic and objectives of the discussion.
- Prepare the area for a small group discussion. This includes setting a seating arrangement conducive to small group discussion like the examples illustrated at the end of these tips.
- Make sure everyone gets any necessary information, such as pre-read material and worksheets, beforehand.
- Have all materials including notes, possible questions, articles, dry erase boards, and turn charts ready for the discussion.

**During**

- Start by briefly reminding participants of the rules and expectations established at the beginning of the seminar.
Start and sustain the discussion by asking questions. The seminar’s discussion guides provide sample questions designed to lead the discussion toward the objective. Seminar leaders are encouraged to use the information in appendix A to develop their own questions that will invoke discussion that meets the objectives. Avoid dominating the conversation or becoming the center of attention during the discussion. If a group member makes a comment or asks a question, seminar leaders should redirect it back to the group. This will help remove focus from the seminar leader, and push members to engage each other’s ideas.

Refrain from interjecting personal points of view. Often, individuals leading discussions are quick to share their point of view, without realizing they change the dynamics of the conversation. Such actions may cause group members to abandon their point of view or decline participation to avoid conflict with the seminar leader. It is best to redirect questions and comments to the group, guiding them to come up with a rational response.

Take notes throughout the process. It allows seminar leaders to track comments or questions during the discussion. Notes also help keep track of participation, which allows you to balance interaction throughout the group.

Encourage participants to analyze their solution such as factors to consider and create a detailed course of action. This can be achieved by asking the participants to clarify and justify their ideas using the questioning techniques in appendix A.

Use silence as a tool. Silence normally follows a question as group members think and gather their thoughts for a response. Don’t be afraid of uncomfortable silence. A group member will eventually share an idea, thereby prompting other members to participate.

Provide continuous feedback to group members’ input. Seminar leaders should use verbal and non-verbal communication such as eye contact and head-nods to welcome student input into the conversation. This is done by acknowledging each comment or question, such as “That’s a good observation, what do you think about Lance Corporal Smith’s point of view?” or “Good observation on the promotion system, but I want us to talk more about our responsibilities in upholding physical standards.”

Make sure to address inappropriate comments that do no support Marine Corps policy and ethical standards. These include distasteful, off-color, and personal attack remarks. Often asking a group member to clarify a comment will get them thinking about its appropriateness as well as the relevance it has to the subject. Group members can have their own ideas and thoughts, but they must demonstrate adherence to professional standards of the institution and be held accountable for them.

Provide a recap if restarting discussions after a break. This will provide group members a point of reference to resume discussing the topic.

Remember to close the discussion by providing a summary. The summary should cover the most important discussion points as well as their relationship to Marine Corps policy and doctrine. This is an extremely important part of guided discussion as it helps the seminar leader to connect group members’ ideas to the objective.

After

Reflect on the discussion and consider areas for improvement such as questioning techniques, promoting better student participation, and effectiveness in meeting objectives.

Ensure to comeback and address areas of confusion. During the discussion, some ideas may cause confusion among group members. Seminar leaders should research these issues and provide group members with accurate information.
Address lack of participation. Seminar leaders should have one-on-one conversations with group members that either fail to or barely participate during discussions. These individuals should be reminded of their responsibilities and expectations when attending the seminar as well as the consequences for not adhering to them.

What seating arrangements support small group discussions?

Proper seating arrangements help seminar leaders establish a learning environment conducive to communication and collaboration among group members. Circular and conference style seating are popular in small group discussions.

Circular seating like the picture on the left fosters a discussion environment where group members are more likely to engage each other vice directing the conversation at the seminar leader. The seating arrangement emphasizes communication among group members, as individuals are able to see the each other, register facial expression, gestures, and other nonverbal communication cues. This is the most ideal discussion seating arrangement.

Conference style seating, like circular seating, provides group members the opportunity to see each other and read nonverbal communication that boost discussion. In contrast to circular seating, the location of the seminar leader’s seat is important. For example, if the seminar leader chooses to sit in the opening of the U-Shape, then group members are more likely to focus the conversation in the seminar leader’s direction. As depicted on the right, it is important that the seminar leader remain as part of the group, unless the lesson calls for an alternative seating arrangement.

Facilitating Scenarios

What are scenarios?

Scenarios are scenes or stories that feature characters facing decisions during complex or serious situations. In some cases, the characters in the story might be the seminar participants themselves or someone they personally know. Scenarios help students apply new or prior knowledge to situations that require them to use a decision-making process; a process that consists of identifying the problem, coming up with possible solutions, and assessing effects of their decision. The decision assessments occur through the synthesis of relevant criteria, such as organizational policies, traditional core values, and personal experiences.

How does a seminar leader facilitate a scenario discussion?

Seminar leader will generally begin the scenario discussions by introducing the scenario and the objectives. The seminar leader will then divide small groups evenly, typically in pairs or triads, to promote student participation and ideas. Next, seminar leaders will set the stage by providing groups with clear instructions on the activity. Once students begin working on the scenario, seminar leaders should remain active and move around the room addressing students questions, clarifying any confusion, keeping student on tasks, and reminding students of the objectives throughout the process.

What are some tips for facilitating a scenario discussion?

o Up front, state the scenario and objective that students will pursue to resolve it.
o Guide students through the process; advise them to first gather information and identify the problem before coming up with solutions.

o Keep students on the objective by asking questions and clarifying misconceptions.

o Encourage students to analyze their solution (i.e., factors to consider), and create a detailed course of action.

o Ensure enough time is available for groups to present their recommendation. If students are not able to show their work or ideas, they might not put much effort next time.

o Allow peers to inquire about each other’s decisions. Remind students this is not a competition, but a way to learn from each other to enhance their decision making process.

o Remember to summarize at the end, explaining how the objective was met by their decisions.

Facilitating Peer-Teaching Activities

What is peer-teaching?

Peer-teaching, or cooperative learning, is an educational method that has students take on limited instructional responsibilities, sharing new or prior knowledge with other students. One popular peer-teaching activity is student-led instruction, in which a student or group of students are assigned a topic, conduct research on it, and present the information to their peers. The presentation is followed by a discussion, allowing peers to ask questions to clarify and assess information.

How does a seminar leader facilitate peer-teaching activities?

This method relies entirely on student performance. Therefore, seminar leaders must provide the Marines specific guidance on the material they will present and how it will be presented to their peers. Additionally, individuals should be given enough time to prepare material (depending on scope and detail) for their presentation.

The seminar leader should have an active role throughout the entire process. This includes checking progress, previewing material, and providing feedback that helps students align material to seminar’s goals. Once students begin their presentation, the seminar leader will move into a supporting role and only interjecting to provide clarification or keep group members on the objective.

Are there tips for facilitating peer-teaching activities?

o Provide individual(s) with specific instructions on the material they will cover and methods of delivery.

o Provide enough time for individual(s) to research and practice before peer-teaching activity.

o Ask individual(s) to be creative in the process; this is to effectively engage peers during presentations (e.g., ask them to put material in their own words).

o Check individual(s) progress during their preparation time. This is the most important part in facilitating this method, since the quality of the material presented depends entirely on the student.

o Ask for a rough outline to ensure objectives are being met.

o Before presentations, prepare the learning environment by reminding students of the seminar rules.

o Take a support role during presentations; allow presenter(s) to answer questions and address misunderstandings. Only interject when individual(s) are off the objective or time is an issue.
Reinforcing Seminar Goals and Expectations

A technique used in educational environments consists of using visual tools to reinforce positive behavior in all participants. These visual tools could highlight seminar goals and expectations, or emphasize importance of seminar topics to the overall mission. Some visual reinforcing techniques include posting the seminar mission statement, rules and expectations of seminar attendees, core values, leadership principles and traits, and pictures of the unit accomplishing their mission. Below are the minimum requirements for the seminar.

**Seminar Mission Statement.** Posted at the seminar entrance or lobby: “Provide a quality seminar experience for every lance corporal in the Marine Corps, in order to empower them as guardians of our Marine ethos and better prepare them for success as intellectually, physically, and morally fit leaders within the NCO Corps.”

**Rules for Seminar Discussion Groups. Posted in each small discussion room:**

- Participate in all seminar activities.
- Come to the seminar prepared.
- Listen and be respectful of others.
- Attack the problem, not the individual.
- Support your argument with facts or experience.
Appendices

The following appendices supplement guidance on the planning and implementation of the seminar. These items will be available for download in The Lance Corporals Leadership and Ethics Seminar website.

Appendix A: Questioning Techniques for Small Group Discussion
Appendix B: Seminar Leaders’ Professional Development Discussion Guide
Appendix A: Questioning Techniques for Small Group Discussion

In order to enhance seminar’s participants learning and critical thinking, it is recommended seminar leaders incorporate two educational concepts into their questioning techniques: Bloom’s Taxonomy and the Socratic Questioning.

Bloom’s Taxonomy

Bloom’s taxonomy is an educational concept that has guided instructional process for almost half a century by identifying six levels of learning through which students navigate as they develop higher-order thinking. The six progressive levels, listed in ascending order of complexity, are:

- Knowledge – Focuses on whether the learner can recall, recognize, or identify specific information.
- Comprehension – Focuses on whether the learner understands the meaning of a content area.
- Application – Focuses on whether the learner can apply a content area.
- Analysis – Focuses on whether the learner can see patterns in the material/objects/ideas/problems presented and can separate the material into constituent parts to find evidence to support generalization.
- Synthesis – Focuses on whether the learner can establish new relationships, compiling component ideas into whole new or proposed alternative solutions.
- Evaluation – Focuses whether the learner can access alternative or suggested relationships and arrive at an appropriate solution based on a reasoned assessment of the situation.

The first three levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy – knowledge, comprehension, application – are considered lower-order learning, but they provide an important foundation for learners before moving to higher-order levels – analysis, synthesis, evaluation – which enhance critical thinking. Seminar leaders can use bloom’s taxonomy by developing questions in a manner that take their discussion through each of level, ensuring that learners have the required knowledge and understanding before they engage in higher-level thinking.

Example of Questions using Bloom’s Taxonomy

**Knowledge:** “What is our Marine Corps Ethos?” *(Recall previously learned information)*

**Comprehension:** “Why is our ethos important?” *(Demonstrate understanding of the facts)*

**Application:** “So while in garrison, how do you demonstrate living by this ethos?” *(Apply knowledge to actual situation)*

**Analysis:** “Do you think most of your peers are living by our ethos? What is the problem?” *(Break down problem/objects/ideas into simpler parts and find evidence to support generalization)*

**Synthesis:** “What can we do in order to fix this? Be specific” *(Compile component ideas into a new whole or propose alternative solutions.)*

**Evaluation:** “Why do you think this is the best solution? Are there any implications in taking such actions?” *(Make and defend judgments based on evidence or established criteria.)*
Socratic Questioning

Named after Socrates, the classic Greek philosopher/teacher, Socratic questioning is based on the practice of disciplined, rigorously thoughtful dialogue. In this approach, the facilitator or teacher starts by asking a question, prompting a student response, and when an answer is provided the facilitator, challenges it through Socratic questioning techniques. This approach encourages students to examine ideas, correct misconceptions, and stimulate critical thinking that leads students toward a reasoned conclusion or idea.

Clarifying – Questions designed to probe the concepts or facts behind an individual’s argument that require learners to explain the tangible influences that led to the original message.

Probing Assumptions – Questions that require individuals to think about the foundational beliefs framing their ideas and opinions challenge learners to consider if their personal beliefs are valid.

Probing Rationale, Reason, and Evidence – Questions that cause individuals to dig into the reasoning and logic rather than assuming the conclusion is based on facts ensure learners assess the evidence used to support their argument.

Questioning Viewpoints – Questions considering a position from an alternate point of view enable the learner to identify alternate possibilities and develop a clearer understanding of the factors framing a topic, situation, or opposing perspective.

Probe Implications and Consequences – Questions explore an individual’s argument by asking them to consider the desirability, logical implications, and consequences of the position.

Question about a question – Questions addressing specific aspects of a learner’s question help a facilitator simplify the factors leading to the individual’s question to ensure the concern is appropriately addressed.

Seminar leaders use Socratic questioning techniques during small group discussion, challenging lance corporals’ answers or comments to get clarification, question viewpoints or inquiries, and probe assumptions, rationale, and implications.

Examples of Socratic Questions

Clarifying: Why are you saying that? Could you explain further? What exactly does this mean? How does this relate to what we have been talking about? What do we already know about this? Can you give me an example? So are you saying ... or...? Can you rephrase that, please

Probing Assumptions: What else could we assume? You seem to be assuming...? How did you come to that assumption? Please explain why/how...? How can you verify or disprove that assumption? Do you agree or disagree with...

Probing Rationale, Reason, and Evidence: How do you know this? Show me...? Are these reasons good enough? How can I be sure of what you are saying? Why is ... happening? What evidence is there to support what you are saying? On what authority are you basing your argument?

Questioning Viewpoints: What is the difference between... and...? Why is it better than...? What are the strengths and weaknesses of...? How are ... and ... similar? What if you compared ...and...? Did anybody see it any other way? Another way of looking at this is ..., does this seem reasonable? Why?

Probe Implications and Consequences: Then what would happen? What are the consequences of that assumption? What are the implications of...? How does...affect...? How does...fit with what we learned before? Why is...important? What is the best...? Why?

Question about a Question: Why do you ask that question? What was the point of asking that question? What do you think? What does that mean?
Appendix B: Seminar Leaders Professional Development Discussion Questions

Discussion Questions

Read the Seminar Leaders’ Guide, answer the following questions, and bring the completed worksheet to Professional Development Session One.

1. Explain the difference between an instructor-centered and a facilitator approach?

2. During the seminar, what are your responsibilities as a seminar leader?

3. After reading the material, do you foresee any problems playing the role of a seminar leader?

4. Although the Lance Corporals Leadership and Ethics Seminar requires seminar leaders to take the role of facilitators, do you feel that there might be times you have to take a more direct approach during learning? Explain.

5. Seminar leaders are responsible for their small breakout area. What are some of your responsibilities in preparing your assigned area?
Resources


