



By BG Ross Coffman

Defining success as a major in a succinct manner is difficult. Leaders typically serve at this rank for seven years and transition from position to position. Each of these positions require

different learning objectives and keys to success. The journeyman years of field grade life enable success in battalion command and beyond. They provide depth and breadth to the leader's skill set. Let's explore a few learning objectives and measures of success during each phase of your Field Grade Journey:

The Promotion Ceremony

Learning Objectives

1. It's not about You- Your Family, Soldiers, and NCOs enabled this promotion
2. You are being promoted because of your potential not your performance
3. Keep the speech short and just serve cake and punch

Measures of Success

1. You thanked your Family
2. Your peers and Soldiers actually showed up

CGSC/ILE

Learning Objectives

1. May not be the best personal year of your life
2. You are there to become an expert on warfighting and the Joint/Army Systems
3. Leave with an understanding of your tactical weaknesses and a plan to overcome

Measures of Success

1. Your Family unit is strong
2. Your professional reputation is intact as a reliable team player
3. Best shape of your life

Division Staff Officer

Learning Objectives

1. You need other leaders involved to fix complex problems
2. Nobody cares about your branch or uniform accoutrements. Divisions need staff officers that can solve complex problem and track them to completion
3. Writing with clarity and briefing well are a required skill

Measures of Success

1. You keep getting hard and complex problems to solve
2. Brigade/Battalion Commanders ask for you to serve in their unit
3. Your learn how to listen to the question and give a short well informed answer

Battalion Staff Officer

Learning Objectives

1. There is only a Brigade Fight - Help Solve Brigade problems

2. You must train everyone around you constantly as the expert
3. Nobody wants to work for a Jerk - Make staff time enjoyable

Measures of Success

1. Company Commanders and XOs seek your counsel
2. The Battalion has efficient systems for everything
3. Your subordinate staff officers see you as a mentor and stay in touch

Brigade Staff Officer

Learning Objectives

1. Division just wants you to solve complex problems
2. Every problem is a four-hour fix
3. [“Plan to Plan”](#) and system accountability will enable freedom

Measures of Success

1. The Division magically adopts your products
2. Majors on Division Staff want to be in your Unit
3. The Staff can plan analog, Mission Command digitally (M&M, Fires, Intel, Sustainment), and communicate

Joint Staff Officer

Learning Objectives

1. We fight as a Joint Force and all involved bring important skills/assets to war
2. Their culture isn't wrong - It's different
3. You are likely the only one that knows how to plan and wargame

Measures of Success

1. Depart with expert knowledge of Joint Capabilities
2. Leave with a great contact list - You are going to need this when we go to war
3. Those around you better understand what our nation's Army brings to the fight

LTC and Battalion Command Boards

Learning Objectives

1. The system is fair
2. Your file is being measured not your actual strengths
3. Success is defined by you not a board — Family and Friends more important than anything else.

Measures of Success

1. Be humble if you make it
2. Call those on the alternate list first
3. Only one true goal - Don't Leave the Army bitter

Brigadier General Ross Coffman is the Deputy Command General (Maneuver) of 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. He is also the creator and author of [ProDev2Go](#), a military leadership blog.

We hope you enjoyed field grade week on the site. If you missed any of it, download the .pdf below with hyperlinks to the entire series.

[The Field Grade Series](#)

Share this:

- [Email](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Google](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Pinterest](#)