

Worden Team Excellence System

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Worden Team Excellence System

This article provides an overview of a team building approach I've developed and then refined over the last year while through hiking the Appalachian Trail. I call it the Worden team Excellence system. The approach is named for my uncle SFC Richard Worden because it was learning about his life that led me to find the purpose and passion of mine. Richard passed away April 4, 1974 in Bad Tolz Germany from to injuries sustained in an unfortunate accident. He was a Green Beret and proudly served as a member of 10th Special Forces Group Airborne. He was a Vietnam War Veteran service 4 tours of duty during the war. During his military service he earned two Meritorious Service Medals, The Bronze Star for Valor, a Purple Heart, the National Defense Ribbon, The Presidential Unit Citation, a Meritorious Unit Award, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, three awards for Good Conduct, The Parachutist Badge, The Combat Infantryman Badge, and a Commendation Medal. I share this list humbly to say he was a good soldier, served with distinction, excelled as an individual but more importantly excelled as part of his team. During my time researching his life I was able to learn that he was a good person, had a great sense of humor and was liked and respected by everyone. I admired him and loved spending time with him when I was a kid.



I began this search out of curiosity because our family knew very little of his life or his time in Germany. The only thing we knew was that after his death the Army named the camp where he was stationed **Camp Worden** in his honor. Beyond the name we knew almost nothing about the Camp or what took place there. As luck would have it my job took me to Germany in 2015 and I decided to take some time to learn more about his life, visit the town where he lived and try to see the base where he died. Unfortunately, as I learned, the base closed in 1991 so I was unable to visit. Undeterred I continued my research about his life. Thanks to the connected nature of the world today I was able to use Google search, Facebook, join discussion groups, blogs, and I was able to write the Military for information. I was fortunate that many people were willing to help and share their experiences with me. I learned that the training that took place at Camp Worden was called "Platoon Confidence Training." One common theme I discovered is that people speak highly of their time at Camp Worden. Typically, people said they learned a lot, had a positive experience and the training was extremely difficult. The way training should be I thought!

Thank you to all those who shared their stories with me, it was your passion and insights that kept me inspired. On this journey one thing was certain, the more I learned the more I wanted to learn, I became fascinated by the military and their training method. I wanted to understand how they develop people like my uncle and everyone I've met and read about. I began to study everything I could find about military leadership and special forces training. This effort opened my eyes and helped shape my thinking about what I wanted to do going forward.



On a side note...

Through this work I have developed a deeper appreciation and understanding of the truly great people serve our country and their sacrifice. I have learned that the Military develops great people, great leaders and exceptional teams. Teams that outperform expectations under the most difficult conditions time and time again. Thank you all for your service and your time.

This journey of discovery collided with my lifelong passion for leadership and team development and opened my eyes to my purpose and new thinking about great teams. I want to help teams and businesses achieve unexpected levels of performance. I believe that watching a team accomplish something challenging, a challenge they perhaps, did not know was possible, is what great leaders live for. I took what I learned in my research integrated my personal experiences and designed what I call the Worden Team Excellence System. It was learning about my uncle Richard that led to my insights and discoveries, so I named the system after him.



“Platoon Confidence Training,” (PTC) as I interpret it, is an approach for taking highly trained, highly skilled individuals and helping them become a high performing team. Military Basic Training and special forces training produce elite individuals. They then take the critical next step and train these elite individuals to be an elite unit. From my years in large and small organizations I know that the ability to build exceptional teams is lacking at best and absent at worst. We take good people, put them on teams and provide basic skills for teamwork. Frankly, the performance management systems are not built to develop great teams. The bottom line: we work closely with individuals but do little to teach teams to be exceptional. We rate people on teamwork but over 80% of performance management systems are typically focused on individual results. Though this research I made these conclusions and observations about exceptional teams:

- Teams that achieve greatness and excellence are made up of confident people but more importantly they have developed “team confidence.” Make no mistake, a confident team is different than a group of confident individuals.
- Team confidence has 3 dimensions all required and interdependent. The dimensions of team confidence are (1) Self-Confidence, (2) Interpersonal confidence, and (3) Leadership Confidence.
- Confident teams outperform talented teams nearly every time. A talented team, weak in any or all dimensions of confidence will not achieve excellence.
- Team confidence begins and ends with trust. To create the kind of confidence I am talking about requires a deep and multi-dimensional foundation of trust. People must trust their peers, the leader and the plan to even have a chance at team confidence.

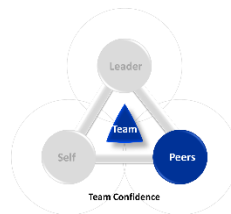
On a personal note: It was hearing the stories, learning how special forces training challenges people to new levels of performance and the love of the outdoors instilled in me by my uncle that led in part to my decision to through hike the Appalachian Trail. I wanted to challenge myself, to learn something about pushing myself to my limits and learn to overcome adversity unlike any I had experienced. It helped shape the thinking compiled in this system and personally changed me in many ways. You can read

more of my personal journey and watch some of my videos at www.headwatersglobal.com in the AT Hike area of the site.

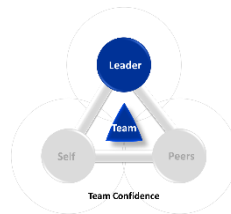
To provide an overview of the approach lets define and explore each of the dimensions of team confidence in a little more detail:



Self Confidence: We believe that team confidence begins with self-confidence. Self-confidence is defined a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment. Well trained people with the needed tools and processes to perform their jobs well can develop trust in their own ability. This basic belief creates the needed self confidence to build team confidence.



Interpersonal Confidence: This is confidence between team members. For team confidence to exist the next step is confidence in and trust of our peers and other team members. If we build our team from confident people, we work to make sure each person has a clearly defined role on the team and that their team members trust that the know their role and will perform it well peer confidence can be cultivated. Clear definition of roles and people doing their tasks with excellence is essential for this dimension of confidence.



Leadership Confidence: The third dimension is confidence in the leader and belief in the plan. dimension. This consists of two elements. The team must trust the leader, and they must believe in the plan. The members of the team must believe in and trust the leader for team confidence to be created. The team must know that the leader is credible, capable, and trustworthy to earn the right to lead them.

The Worden Team Excellence System is designed to work on the three dimensions of confidence to help you build truly confident teams. The confidence of your team provides the foundation of differentiated performance in your business or organization. At Headwaters we have tools, training and workshops designed to help you create and enhance your confidence and the confidence your teams. We help clarify your strategic plan, with a goal to achieve comprehensive buy in and engagement. We then help you identify strategic priorities, define critical roles, then clarify individual and group responsibilities. We work closely with you and your people to create individual and leadership development plans. These plans provide the pathway for building the critical elements necessary for team confidence.

This is not just team building; this is team **confidence** building!