

Enhancing Expert Infantry Badge Testing Success

Andrew Deunger - SME (Analysis, Storyboarding, and Development)

Donald Petrie - (Design, Implementation, and Evaluation)

Department of Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation, Syracuse University

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Dr. Tiffany A. Koszalka

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Abstract

This project describes a U.S. Army Expert Infantry Badge (EIB) Testing performance problem and provides a prototype of an instructional solution for this problem. The performance problem is that EIB candidates are experiencing difficulty in completing the requirements for awarding of the EIB at the established standard level. EIB candidates seem to lack the knowledge required for successful completion of EIB assessments and have skill deficiencies regarding the equipment utilized during EIB assessments. Further, the identified performance gap does not seem to fall solely on the EIB candidates, but rather exemplifies a deficiency in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of EIB candidate leadership and EIB assessment graders. Leadership seems to lack the knowledge regarding proper scheduling and content of training required at the organizational level to best prepare EIB candidates for testing while EIB graders seem to lack the skills and attitudes required to evaluate EIB candidate performance in accordance with established standards, in an objective manner. The proposed instructional solution includes a three-part 150-minute session with an introductory presentation covering EIB instruction and evaluation standards, a demonstration of EIB grading, scheduling, and training requirements with practical application, and a debrief session to share lessons learned and provide feedback. Learning resources are included in the lesson storyboards for procurement ahead of lessons. Implementation and evaluation plans are included to provide suggestions regarding the assurance instructional quality, coordination of lesson support activities, and the acquisition of lesson materials and resources. Holistically, the goal of this training is to enhance EIB testing success rates by increasing the knowledge and skill levels of EIB candidate leadership and EIB graders while simultaneously shaping the proper attitudes of both regarding EIB candidate preparation and assessment.

Table of Contents

Instructional Analysis: Performance Statement.....	5
Problem Statement.....	5
Competent Performance.....	5
Performance Problem.....	5
Analysis: Audience & Work/Learning Environments.....	6
Audience Profile.....	6
Learning and Working Environments.....	6
Content Analysis.....	7
Content Analysis Hierarchy.....	8
Design: Content, Instructional Goals, Objectives, Assessments.....	8
Summary of Relationships among Performance and Content.....	8
Instructional Goals.....	8
Learning Objectives.....	9
Summary of Relationships among Goals, Objectives, and Assessments.....	9
Development: Storyboard Set.....	10
Narrative.....	10
Flowchart.....	11
Introductory Presentation.....	12
Instruction and Evaluation Standards Presentation.....	12
Demonstration of Grading Standards.....	13
Demonstration of Training Calendar Alignment.....	13
Debrief from Learners on Lesson Content.....	14

ENHANCING EXPERT INFANTRY BADGE TESTING SUCCESS	4
Implementation: Dissemination Plan.....	14
Organizational Approval.....	14
Organizational Dissemination.....	15
Instructional Delivery.....	15
Evaluation: Formative and Summative Evaluation Plan, Cost Benefit.....	16
Formative Evaluation.....	16
Summative Evaluation.....	17
Cost-Benefit Analysis.....	17
References.....	18
Appendices.....	19
Final Report Checklist.....	20

Instructional Analysis: Performance Statement

Problem Statement

Soldiers are unable to complete the requirements for awarding of the Expert Infantry Badge (EIB).

Competent Performance

The expectation is that EIB candidates are able to accomplish all EIB testing requirements, to standard. These tests consist of basic infantry skills and knowledge. All EIB candidates should be physically fit, skilled, and knowledgeable regarding infantry tactics, techniques, and procedures, and highly motivated to succeed as EIB candidates (Department of the Army, 2020).

Performance Problem

EIB candidates are unable to meet the basic requirements for awarding of the EIB during EIB testing. EIB candidates fail EIB testing at a rate of 74% with failures occurring during all phases of evaluation (Department of the Army, 2020). EIB candidates do not completely understand the proper procedures required for successful completion of EIB assessments. The EIB awarding process is supposed to be rigorous, but with the possession of the EIB weighing heavily during promotion consideration, it is imperative to raise the rates of EIB awarded Soldiers (Department of the Army, 2017). Further, we must not reduce the standards required by candidates for EIB awarding. Currently, only 26% of Soldiers who attempt to obtain the EIB are successful (Department of the Army, 2020). For further EIB statistical analysis, see Appendix A.

Analysis: Audience & Work/Learning Environments

Audience Profile

EIB candidates are soldiers from Infantry military occupational series (MOS) positions. Candidates are, at a minimum, high school (or equivalent) graduates, Basic Combat Training (BCT) trained, MOS specific school trained (Department of the Army, 2020). Soldiers of all ranks are eligible as candidates, but candidacy pools are usually composed of junior soldiers with 1-6 years of Army experience. The U.S. Army conducts EIB evaluations at various installations, meaning that geographical location is not a factor. The EIB evaluation focuses on the skills obtained by candidates in the aforementioned training schools (Department of the Army, 2020).

Learning and Working Environments

The **evaluation environment** for EIB candidates is dynamic and includes the Army Physical Fitness Test where candidates must score 270 of 300 possible points. They must also obtain expert-level rifle qualification. Candidate assessment includes 40 different tasks covering tactical and technical proficiency and knowledge assessments. EIB testing evaluations span all infantry skills, including land navigation, various weapons systems (domestic and foreign) knowledge, medical response tactics, casualty care, patrol tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), and ground combat TTPs. Candidates must also complete a 12-mile foot march carrying a 35-pound pack in under 3 hours (Department of the Army, 2020). This environment can be austere and rigorous.

The **learning environment** where candidates receive training prior to EIB evaluation is dynamic as well and includes classroom, field, and simulation training focused on the combat TTPs required of infantry soldiers (Department of the Army, 2016). Candidates receive one week of EIB task training, given by actual EIB graders, at the testing site. This provides the

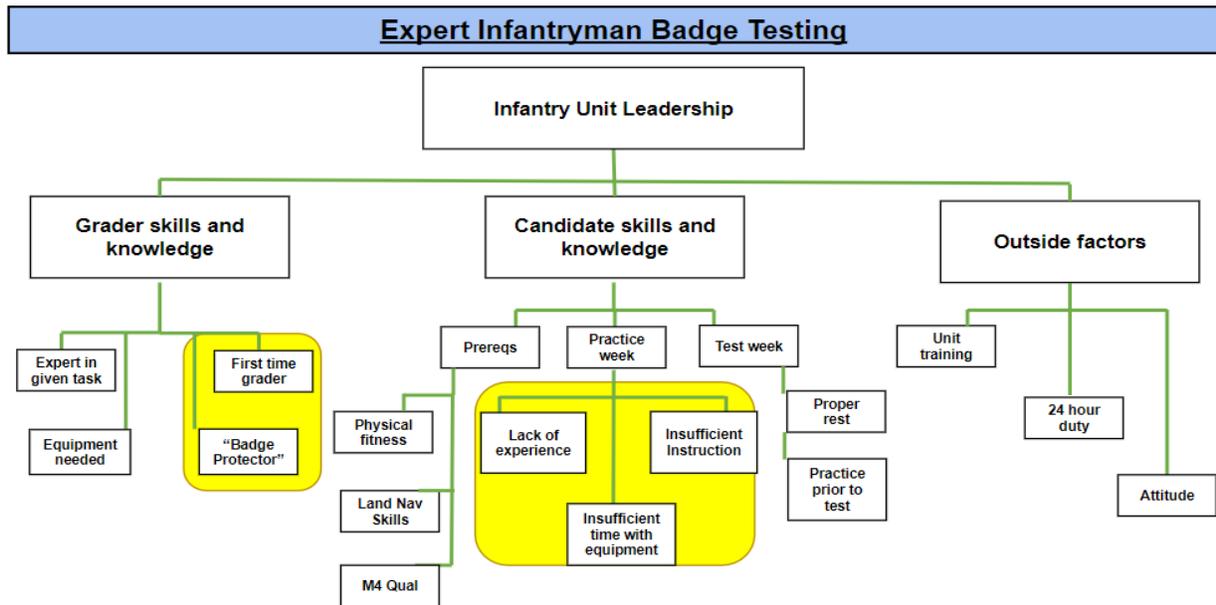
candidates with hands-on training, from the subject matter experts, in the testing environment prior to test week (Department of the Army, 2019).

Content Analysis

EIB candidates must pass 40 graded events to for awarding of the EIB. These events cover a wide array of Infantry skills including, but not limited to, assembly/disassembly of the M249 squad automatic weapon, malfunctions check of an M4 carbine, applying a tourniquet, donning a protective mask, employing a claymore mine, and several other Infantry focused skills. Prior to EIB testing, Soldiers must first pass several prerequisite requirements including both day and night land navigation courses, expert qualification with an M4 carbine, and they must pass the Army Physical Fitness Test with a minimum of 80 points in each event. Finally, candidates must complete a 12-mile foot march in under three hours while carrying a 35-pound pack and a rifle (Department of the Army, 2020).

EIB testing is a three-week process. During the first week, the Soldiers, whom will serve as graders during the actual EIB test, receive training and evaluation from the Army EIB team to ensure proficiency and competence. During the second week, EIB candidates receive training on all 40 tasks, which are broken down into three lanes (medical lane, weapons lane, and patrol lane). Administrators divide the candidates into three groups, with each group rotating through one lane per day. During the last two days, the candidates can utilize whichever lanes and stations they choose, for additional practice. During the third and final week, administrators again divide candidates into three groups for testing through one lane each day. On the final day, candidates must complete the 12-mile foot march in the prescribed time (Department of the Army, 2020).

Content Analysis Hierarchy



Design: Content, Instructional Goals, Objectives, Assessments

Summary of Relationships among Performance and Content

Performance	Content
Appropriately and fairly grade EIB testing <i>Lower order thinking</i> - Understanding grading criteria, applying standardized metric <i>Higher order thinking</i> – assessing and evaluating performance	Using provided standardized test material and assessment feedback forms, administer EIB testing to EIB candidates in an objective fashion while maintaining standards and fairness for all candidates.
Properly train and equip EIB candidates, at unit level, prior to attendance at EIB testing. <i>Higher order thinking</i> - Evaluate Soldiers, identify potential EIB candidates, create training plans, evaluate performance.	Utilizing published EIB testing standards, conduct thorough and rigorous EIB-centric training programs for prospective EIB candidates.

Instructional Goals

- To facilitate graders in developing the knowledge and skills required to assess and evaluate EIB candidate performance during testing, while ensuring objectivity and fairness in all grading practices.
- To facilitate Army leaders in the creation, establishment, implementation, and continued evaluation of EIB candidate training and equipping plans at the organizational level.

Learning Objectives

- Learners (graders) will be able to assess, objectively, EIB candidates by applying uniform grading standards and practices during each EIB assessment.
- Learners (Army leadership) will be able to establish an effective EIB training and equipping plan, at the organizational level, in congruence with published EIB testing standards.

Summarize Relationships among Goals, Objectives, and Assessments

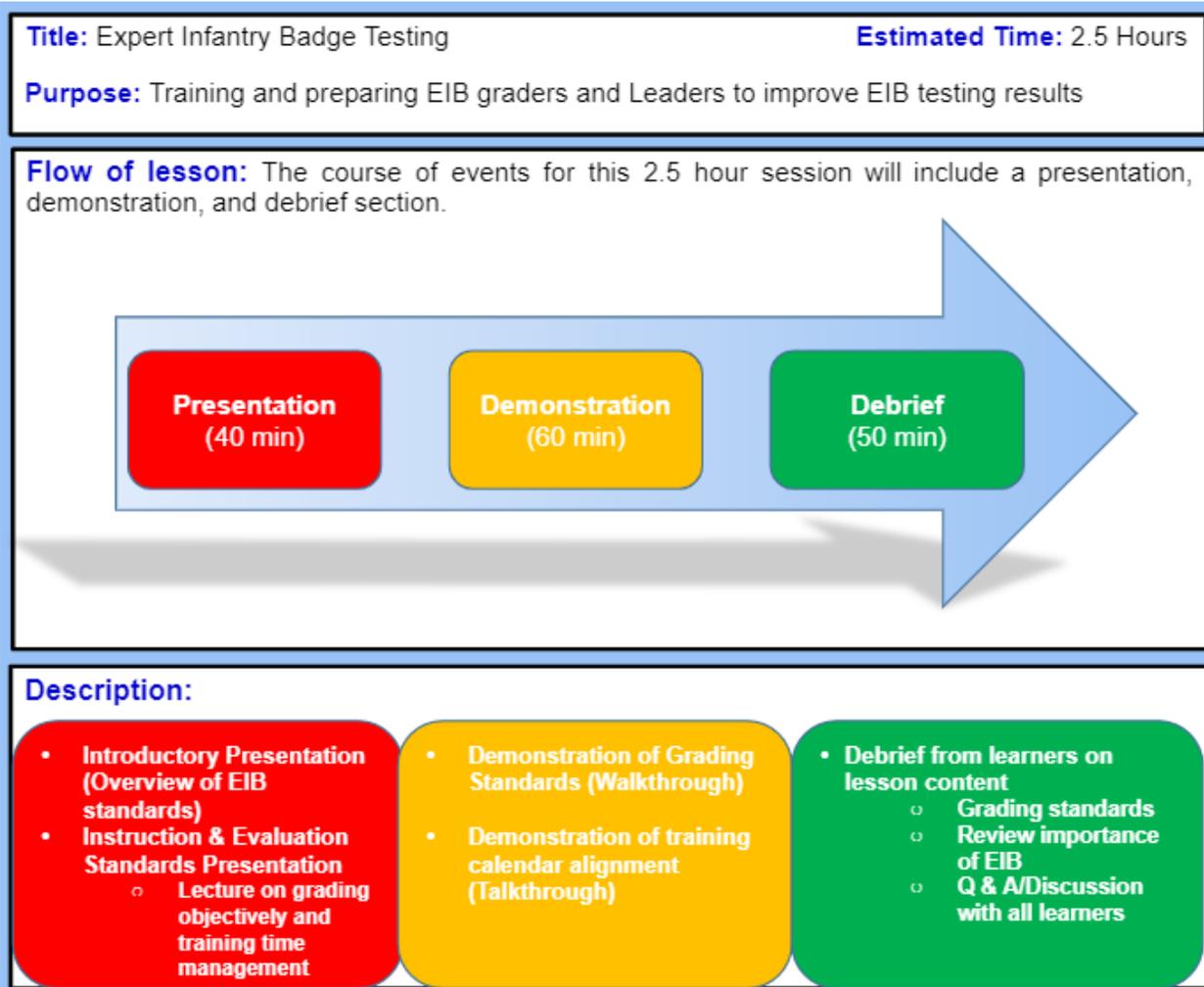
Instructional Goal	Learning Objectives	Learning Assessment
To facilitate learners (graders) in developing the knowledge and skills required to assess, objectively, EIB testing.	Learners (graders) will be able to apply standardized grading procedures to all EIB assessments, 100% of the time, in an objective manner.	Given multiple EIB assessment stations, and mock candidates, graders will apply proper assessment standards and grading criteria, with objectivity.
To facilitate learners (Army leaders) in developing the knowledge and skills required to properly prepare EIB candidates for testing.	Learners (Army leaders) will be able to align organizational training plans with EIB testing requirements, increasing candidate success by 40%.	Given a simulated unit demographic and training schedule, Army leaders will create appropriate and effective EIB training management plans.

Development: Storyboard Set

Narrative

Title: Expert Infantry Badge Testing	Estimated Time: 2.5 Hours
Purpose: Training and preparing EIB graders and Leaders to improve EIB testing results	
Context: This is a training session for EIB graders and Army leaders. It will assist the graders, first time or experienced, in becoming Subject Matter Experts and to grade objectively. It will also train Army leaders to better align unit training with upcoming EIB testing.	
<p>Overview: This Storyboard presents the course of events that will occur during the 2.5 hour session. This training session is intended to enhance grader and leader knowledge, ultimately improving EIB testing success. This session will consist of Presentation, Demonstration, and Debrief sections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Presentation will describe what is expected of the graders and the unit leaders. • The Demonstration will consist of an EIB task grading checklist for the graders, followed by an example of a unit training calendar for upcoming EIB testing. • The Debrief will serve to conclude the the presentation and the demonstration sections. <p>Expected outcomes/objectives: Learners will be able to describe processes and demonstrate proficiency when creating and aligning training plans with EIB testing standards. Additionally, unit leadership will be able to certify EIB graders as subject-matter experts on the training and grading of EIB candidates, on all EIB tasks, as learners will gain proficiency regarding EIB assessment protocols.</p>	
Resources: Facilitator will provide grading checklist, equipment for demonstrations, and notes to guide discussions. Audience will bring note taking material.	
Facilities: Classroom for 75-100 Soldiers equipped with computer projection capability.	
Stakeholders: Facilitators- <u>Senior EIB grader</u> to train EIB graders and <u>Senior Staff NCO</u> to provide training schedule alignment instruction; Audience- <u>EIB Graders</u> and <u>unit leadership</u> .	

Flowchart



Introductory Presentation

Course title: Expert Infantry Badge Testing	
Activity Title: Introductory Presentation (Overview of EIB Standards)	Estimated Time: 10 mins
	Instructional Activity Description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on grading to established standards, maintaining objectivity, and the importance of training schedule management prior to EIB testing Overview of published EIB standards handbook Review of learning outcomes for session
	Activity Deliverables/Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners taking notes All learners actively participating in discussions
	Resources Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation with examples of testing and grading standards EIB handbooks
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create short motivational video (attention grabber) to remind learners of importance of EIB Begin presentation on grader competency, grading objectively, and the importance of aligning training calendars with EIB Add questions about learner's prior experiences with graders and lessons learned from good/poor graders 	Key learning objectives/sub-objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can describe the importance of the EIB for Soldiers and organizations Learners demonstrate purpose of established EIB standards Learners can discuss importance of training schedule and time management in preparation for EIB testing
	Key Content Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIB testing and grading standards Training ahead for EIB testing Statistics on EIB emphasis during promotion consideration

Instruction and Evaluation Standards Presentation

Course title: Expert Infantry Badge Testing	
Activity Title: Instruction & Evaluation Standards Presentation	Estimated Time: 30 mins
	Instructional Activity Description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on proper instruction in accordance with standardized testing procedures Overview of published EIB standards hand book Review of learning outcomes for session
	Activity Deliverables/Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners taking notes All learners actively participating in discussions
	Resources Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIB handbooks
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on importance of proper instruction Cover the step-by- step lessons from the EIB handbook; task walkthroughs for EIB candidates Facilitator will ask questions to ascertain levels of learner's subject-matter expertise 	Key learning objectives/sub-objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can describe the importance of proper EIB task instruction Learners demonstrate the importance of certification and subject-matter expertise regarding graders
	Key Content Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of EIB testing standards with unit training and instruction Examples of proper instruction

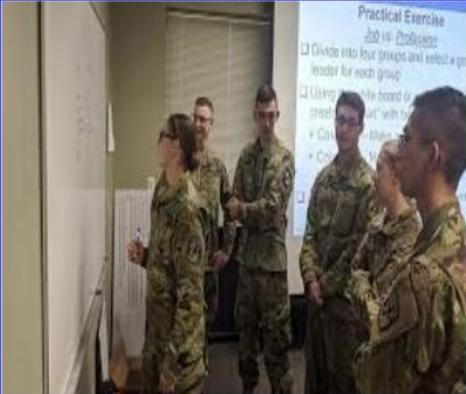
Demonstration of Grading Standards

Course title: Expert Infantry Badge Testing	
Activity Title: Demonstration of Grading Standards (Walkthrough)	Estimated Time: 30 mins
	Instructional Activity Description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on grading to standard, with objectivity Demonstration of grading, to EIB standard, using the published EIB handbook Review of learning outcomes for session
	Activity Deliverables/Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners taking notes All learners actively participating in discussions during demonstrations
	Resources Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock EIB testing station with proper equipment EIB handbooks
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on grading to standard, objectively Provide demonstration of grading to standard with objectivity Provide demonstration of failure to grade to standard with subjectivity 	Key learning objectives/sub-objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can describe proper grading standards Learners demonstrate implementation of established EIB standards during grading
	Key Content Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIB standards Grading standards

Demonstration of Training Calendar Alignment

Course title: Expert Infantry Badge Testing	
Activity Title: Demonstration of Training Calendar Alignment (Talkthrough)	Estimated Time: 30 min
	Instructional Activity Description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on the importance of training schedule management prior to EIB testing Overview of published EIB standards for individual tasks land navigation, and 12-mile foot march Review of learning outcomes for session
	Activity Deliverables/Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners taking notes All learners actively participating in discussions Rifle qualification, land navigation and build-up foot marches on tentative schedule
	Resources Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock training calendar EIB handbooks
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin presentation on importance of aligning training calendar with EIB testing Brief statistics on EIB emphasis during promotion consideration (with badge vs. without) Ask questions on best practices for training management Emphasize importance of reserving qualification ranges and land navigation courses 	Key learning objectives/sub-objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can demonstrate EIB planning Learners can describe EIB testing/training synchronization Learners can create mock EIB training plan
	Key Content Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement of various EIB tasks on training calendar Training ahead for EIB testing Statistics on EIB emphasis during promotion consideration

Debrief from Learners on Lesson Content

Course title: Expert Infantry Badge Testing	
Activity Title: Debrief from Learners on Lesson Content	Estimated Time: 50 mins
	Instructional Activity Description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator shapes discussion focused on all previous activities and lessons All learners exchange thoughts and share experiences of best practices regarding grading and training management Facilitator provides feedback to learners
	Activity Deliverables/Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners taking notes All learners actively participating in discussions during demonstrations
	Resources Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock EIB testing station with proper equipment Mock training calendar EIB handbooks
	Key learning objectives/sub-objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can describe EIB testing/training synchronization Learners can demonstrate objectivity while grading EIB tasks to standard
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners perform grading of task at mock EIB task station Learners schedule key tasks on mock training calendar Facilitator guides discussion on, and provides answers to any questions presented during debrief 	Key Content Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EIB standards and grading standards Reemphasize the importance of the EIB

Implementation: Dissemination Plan

Organizational Approval

The Instructional team will meet with the 1st Armored Division (1AD) Command Sergeant Major (CSM) for a briefing covering the instructional plan. During this briefing, the instructional team will:

- Brief instruction plan
- Receive feedback
- Discuss questions and concerns
- Gain approval
- Ensure organizational support

Organizational Dissemination

The Instructional team will assist the 1AD operations team in drafting an operations order that will direct resourcing, attendance, and support of training event. This operations order will include:

- Date, time, and location of training as decided upon through coordination between instructional team and 1AD operations team
- Reservation of 1AD classroom for 125 learners
- Tasking to 1AD communications (G6) for audio/visual support-projector
- Tasking to 1AD G3 training section for procurement of training equipment from Fort Bliss Training Support Center (TSC)
- Tasking to 1AD G3 training section for purchase of 125 EIB handbooks (\$7,500.00)
- Tasking to all Infantry units to provide 1 operations officer and 1 EIB subject-matter expert (SME) noncommissioned officer (NCO) each for training event, as learners, who will serve as EIB graders and schedulers for their respective units upon completion of training
- Tasking to 1AD G3 operations section to receive names of students to attend training no later than one week prior to training event
- Tasking to 1AD leadership aide office to coordinate for introductory brief and attendance during debrief session from 1AD Commanding General and CSM.

Instructional Delivery

Two representatives (one operations officer and one EIB SME NCO) from each infantry unit belonging to 1AD, totaling approximately 125 learners, will receive the

instruction. Once trained, these learners will serve as facilitators for their own units; therefore, this instruction will serve as a “train the trainer” session. Learners will depart this training session with the curriculum required to deliver this instruction to their units.

The design team responsible for the creation of this instruction, Andrew Deunger and Donald Petrie, will facilitate this session of instruction. Both team members are currently serving U.S. Army Soldiers with a combined total of over 40 years of Army experience. Andrew Deunger will serve as the subject matter expert and primary facilitator as he has possessed his EIB for 22 years. Further, Andrew has graded eight iterations of EIB testing, and has served as a board member during EIB testing including one term as board president during the 2018 test at Fort Stewart, Georgia, evaluating over 800 candidates. Donald Petrie has nearly 10 years of operational-planning experience and will serve as the secondary facilitator.

Evaluation: Formative and Summative Evaluation Plan, Cost Benefit

Formative Evaluation

Component of Instruction	Evaluation Questions	Instrument/Protocol	Stakeholders Providing Data
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are learners engaged? • Is the introduction of the topic welcomed / appreciated? • Are learners expressing interest in the topic? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • Discussion • Question and answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners • Instructors
Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are learners actively engaged in the practical demonstrations? • Are learners providing feedback to presented content? • Are learners gaining knowledge and perspective from demonstrations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation • Discussion • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners • Instructors
Debrief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have learners' opinions on the importance of content changed? • Are learners motivated to place lessons learned into action? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Question and answer • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners • Instructors • Command Team

Summative Evaluation

Type of Evaluation	Evaluation Questions	Instruments/Protocols	Uses
Effect on Performance Gap	Have EIB success rates in 1AD increased?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue instruction?
Value of Content	Has the instruction enhanced EIB training and evaluation proficiencies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of course survey Survey of future EIB candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future enhancements Curriculum adjustment
Impact on Operational Capability	Has instruction increased unit infantry proficiencies or led to higher promotion rates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation Unit command survey Promotion analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future enhancements Curriculum adjustment Report of successes Continue instruction?

Cost-benefit Analysis

Costs associated with implementation (personnel, facilities, equipment, financial, resources, quantitative and qualitative)	Benefits associated with implementation (financial, resources, quantitative and qualitative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit loss of operations officer and EIB SME NCO for three hours Loss of use of 1AD classroom for three hours 125 EIB handbooks (\$7,500.00) Adjustment of unit level training schedules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase of EIB testing success rates Increase in Soldier promotions Increased morale amongst junior Soldiers Enhancement of Infantry skill proficiencies Gaining of training calendar and scheduling efficiencies Increases in unit-level training capabilities

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Appendix A: 2020 EIB Testing Statistics

EIBs Earned in 2020

Unit	EIBs Earned		
	Tested	Gos	Go Rate
A	282	224	79%
B	457	141	31%
C	136	29	21%
D	249	39	16%
E	826	109	13%
F	585	85	15%
G	524	43	8%
Total	3059	670	-
Averages	437	96	26%

(Unit designations removed for public release)

EIB Testing Statistics 2020

EPFA			Day Navigation			Night Navigation		
Tested	Gos	Go Rate	Tested	Gos	Go Rate	Tested	Gos	Go Rate
268	257	96%	257	252	98%	240	233	97%
457	451	99%	410	375	91%	376	355	94%
129	69	53%	69	52	75%	52	51	98%
249	184	74%	183	128	70%	124	94	76%
826	483	58%	496	353	71%	338	271	80%
519	288	55%	146	137	94%	145	140	97%
524	393	75%	388	289	74%	287	239	83%
2972	2125	-	1949	1586	-	1562	1383	-
425	304	73%	278	227	82%	223	198	89%

EIB Testing Statistics 2020 (continued)

Testing Stations			12-Mile Foot March			Final Event		
Tested	Gos	Go Rate	Tested	Gos	Go Rate	Tested	Gos	Go Rate
253	226	89%	226	224	99%	224	224	100%
351	166	47%	166	141	85%	142	141	99%
51	31	61%	31	29	94%	29	29	100%
87	36	41%	40	39	98%	39	39	100%
251	116	46%	116	109	94%	109	109	100%
281	91	32%	88	85	97%	85	85	100%
225	63	28%	64	43	67%	45	45	100%
1499	729	-	731	670	-	673	672	-
214	104	49%	104	96	90%	96	96	100%

Final Report Checklist

Final Report Checklist	
Front Matter (2 pages)	<input type="checkbox"/> Title page and Table of Content present <input type="checkbox"/> Effective Abstract (good grammar, spell checked)
Analysis (½ page)	<input type="checkbox"/> Required components present (problem statement, content analysis) <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting graphics, charts, clear and accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Section conforms to length guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar, spelling, format check
Design (2 pages)	<input type="checkbox"/> Required components present (instr. strategies, resources, assessments) <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting graphics, charts, clear and accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Section conforms to length guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Goals, objectives, activities, assessments align and address identified gap <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar, spelling, format check
Development (4 pages)	<input type="checkbox"/> Required components present <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting graphics, charts, clear and accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Prototype clearly demonstrates design of instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Section conforms to length guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar, spelling, format check
Implementation (1 page)	<input type="checkbox"/> Required components present (dissemination plan) <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting graphics, charts, clear and accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Section conforms to length guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar, spelling, format check
Evaluation (1 page)	<input type="checkbox"/> All required components are present (formative/summative; cost/benefit) <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting graphics, charts, clear and accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Section conforms to length guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar, spelling, format check
Appendices (End matter)	<input type="checkbox"/> References section is BEFORE appendix A, in APA style <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental Appendixes referenced in body of report <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting graphics, charts, clear and accurate in Appendixes <input type="checkbox"/> Grammar, spelling, format check <input type="checkbox"/> Final checklist attached after LAST appendix
Formatting Overall	<input type="checkbox"/> All sections are written in a professional manner <input type="checkbox"/> 12 pt. Times New Roman font is used in main text, (tables can be 10pt) <input type="checkbox"/> APA formatting is followed in citations <input type="checkbox"/> Graphics and/or diagrams are used effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Report is formatted into one file (pdf)
Overall Report Content	<input type="checkbox"/> Performance problem is clearly described <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis supports recommendation for instructional solution <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Design solutions address gaps identified in Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Development plan addresses Design specification <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation plan aligns with Analysis and Design plan <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation plan aligns with instruction and performance problem <input type="checkbox"/> Flow of messages among sections and performance problem are clear