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### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHOOSING A METHODOLOGY FOR THE WORK OF AN INSTRUCTOR IN TRAINING PERSONNEL OF SPECIAL FORCES UNITS FOR OPERATIONS IN MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN

*The article considers recommendations for the special-forces instructor on selecting a single methodology in order to prepare the units of special forces units for mountain operations. The methodology is supposed to be conducive to training the special-forces personnel of the National Guard of Ukraine for discharging their missions in mountainous terrain. The proposed recommendations allow for a common interpretation of the training process and thus ensure better practices and a higher level of coherence in the actions of special forces units when operating in the mountains.*

**Keywords:** mountaineering, mountainous terrain, qualification levels, movement techniques, mountain training, climbing.

**Statement of the problem.** As part of the National Guard of Ukraine, special forces units perform specific service and combat tasks, including missions in mountainous terrain [1]. They are related to the ability to properly and safely overcome mountain obstacles using the knowledge of applying appropriate movement and safety techniques in the mountains and skills acquired during mountaineering (high-altitude) training.

After creating the conditions for the liberation of the Crimean peninsula, the military authorities of our country [2] intend to consider the issue of conducting combat operations in mountainous and forest-based areas. However, combat operations in the mountains are of a specific nature and their success is primarily dependent on the factors of heightened activity, manoeuvrability and strong mobility of units and their endurance. Taking note of this, training for mountaineering missions, i.e. climb and descend operations, is of crucial importance.

At the current juncture, mountaineering practices encompass a vast variety of teaching forms, methods and techniques of movement in terms of mountain warfare. Recommendations for their application are laid out in [15]. There is a need to develop a unified methodology for the instructors who provide mountain operations training for the special-forces personnel. Above and beyond all other consideration, the methodology must be expedient and rational so that it ensures the most effective learning experiences for the trainees.

According to the functions outlined in the Law [1], combat missions can be discharged by engaging several of special forces units. Therefore, all servicemen who are to perform their tasks in mountainous areas must be equally trained. In view of this, it is necessary to develop a unified training structure, as well as recommendations for a unified methodology of training in mountaineering so that all servicemen of the special forces units of the National Guard of Ukraine are equally prepared to conduct mountain operations.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The problem of training methods in mountaineering is quite fully covered in the works of O. O. Riepko [3, 5], D. Allen-Collinson [6] and in scientific, methodological and informational materials by I. A. Martynov [7]. With the rapid development of mountaineering around the world (mainly due to modern equipment), many new mountain movement and belaying techniques come to use and thus the existing forms and methods of mountaineering training need improvement. In their works, the authors grouped and systematized the forms and methods for teaching mountain climbing and safety techniques. However, the problem of giving preference to a single method was not finally solved since everyone relied on their own practical experience.

The most substantiated study of this problem is found in the works of S. Rauch [8] and the outstanding German mountaineer, H. Khuber [9]. They proposed a comprehensive programme on generalising the existing methodology for teaching movement and safety techniques in the mountains, but the issue of systematising common forms and methods of training is not fully addressed in their works. The issues of training for movement and belaying and using a unified methodology in terms of mountaineering training and actions in the mountainous terrain have been fully investigated in the works [11–15], but also without proper systematisation of the forms and methods of training.

There is a need to generalise and systematise the procedure of selecting and applying a unified methodology for teaching movement and safety techniques in the mountains as part of special forces units of preparation for conducting combat missions in mountainous terrain.

**The purpose of the article** is to develop recommendations for a common interpretation of the single methodology for training the special forces units in mountaineering and preparing them for conducting combat missions in mountainous terrain.

**Summary of the main material.** The professional activity of a mountaineering instructor in the system of training the personnel for actions in mountainous terrain is characterized by specific aspects. At any moment, the instructor combines a bunch of roles acting as an organiser, educator, mentor and supervisor. The content of these professional functions changes significantly depending on the contingent the instructor is working with. When dealing with beginner climbers, the organisational and educational functions are to be activated. However, at the level of sportsmanship the instructor mainly performs the role of a supervisor and educator. It should be noted that years of practice with climbers at different qualification levels – including the sportsmanship level – have proven the importance of the instructor's educational role.

Since young instructors tend to experience particular "role" problems, let us turn to the professional routine of instructor-methodologists and analyze the nature of their work on the example of a squad leader who provides training at the beginner level. It is worth noting that many of the points for consideration are also relevant for other qualification levels.

We recommend the following work content for the instructor-methodologist.

### **1. Organisational functions.**

1.1 Organise *yourself*, be an example for others in everything, from your appearance to life principles, attitudes to mountaineering, etc.

1.2. As an instructor, organize *your work routine*, i.e. prepare carefully for lectures, classes and climbing sessions; arrange competitions and game activities to increase the interest among your trainees; think on the effective way of delivering content through oral, audio and visual channels – where to stay, how to speak, how to show something, etc.

1.3 Organise the daily routine for *the trainees* on account of the training facility – bivouac, camping, climbing, i.e. decide on the what-how-who strategy and distribute the tasks between the trainees focusing on what they should carry, what they should be dressed in, arrange their accommodation in tents by assigning berths by names and take care of positive environment.

1.4. Organise *the trainees for active work*: outline tasks and explain the trainees how to succeed in their work, set them up for success.

1.5 Organise *the work process* (lectures, classes, climbing sessions, instructor's feedback and corrective actions). All participants must be actively involved in the work process under the constant supervision of the instructor. The work environment should be trusting, businesslike, and calm; communication should be carried out in a polite and careful manner. *Place focus on safe actions and deeds.*

1.6. Organise *a group pastime*. Give a sense to breaks between training sessions: either in a hike, or on a bivouac, or at the training base, gather trainees more often, have conversations on various topics and invite interesting people.

**2. Educational management functions** (*a summary of the group commander's work routine developed by A. Martynov and I. Popova [13]*).

2.1 Getting ready for a training session:

- decide on the organisational forms of training;
- develop a lesson plan placing *the focus on safety, methodology, and techniques*;
- think on what to say at the beginning and during the session;
- consider educational possibilities of training.

2.2. Preparation of the unit (or supervision of preparation) for training:

- arrange topic-related pre-activities (a game could be an option);
- discuss the equipment needed for the activity;
- distribute responsibilities among the trainees;
- check the overall preparedness before departure.

2.3. Preparation (preparation control) of training places (*safety measures!*).

2.4. Conducting a training session:

- clearly set objectives;
- set up learning environment;
- demonstrate techniques;
- arrange proper allocation of trainees;
- ensure control and feedback on the work and actions performed by the trainees on the route;
- constantly keep all trainees in sight, actively intervene in case of potentially dangerous situations;
- develop the constructive mindset that enables trainees to perceive something safe as good and something dangerous as bad.

2.5. Making preparations and conducting a training session addressing each trainee with specific, reasoned facts, appeals and recommendations.

2.6. Implementing the educational objectives set for the training session (during the training process and when providing post-implementation reviews).

Training for climbing should be prepared and carried out in the same way.

What should an instructor teach? As part of the "Mountaineering Training Plan", the section of "Mountaineering Training Programme and Requirements" [12] provides the List of Knowledge and Skills for each qualification level. As has been revealed, reasonable adherence to the requirements for each qualification level yields fairly high training results. And our common problem today is that at training bases and in training centres, instructors do not understand the essence of the requirements of the qualification levels and therefore do not implement them in practice as a criterion for the quality of climber training.

Another important aspect in the content of the instructor-methodologist's work should be represented by *educational functions*. Young specialists (and sometimes even experienced instructors) may question the need for educational influence on trainees, forgetting that learning by its nature and pedagogical methods is not much different from the generally accepted methods of the education system [15]. The system features the idea of education as edification that implies the most important and necessary component of learning, i.e. *discipline*. The point is that when we embark on the career path of instructor, we become educators regardless of our wishes. And the sooner instructors understand the need for an educational function, realise the importance of educating a climber, agree on building the educational process around the idea of solving certain problems, the sooner they notice a positive effect of their work: the climbers they have trained will act competently and safely in the mountains. An analysis of accidents involving climbers shows that casualties were mainly caused not only by ignorance of certain mountain-climbing and movement techniques or safety measures, but also by the lack of need to apply the entire knowledge arsenal in practice. It is this need that should be fostered. So let us get back to the educational content.

### **3. Educational-nurturing functions.**

3.1. The system of individual educational tasks at different qualification levels of climbing training. We offer a list of specific educational tasks the instructor should place focus on when providing training for climbers at different qualification levels.

*For the Amateur Level (AL):*

- a) building motivation for mountaineering:
  - the importance of mountaineering in the personality development (what mountaineering gives me personally);
  - aesthetic education;
  - arousal of interest in people around them and environment: the main task is to transfer cognitive experience by the instructor, through which a person begins to feel part of nature, joining it not as a "conqueror", but as its component;
- b) showing the ability to be part of a team:
  - treating fellow trainees with due respect and showing care for them;
  - being tolerant of other people and their shortcomings;
  - showing readiness to sacrifice personal interests in favour of your team's interests (only through collective action can personal interests be realised);

c) demonstrating safe behaviour in the mountains:

- never creating dangerous situations, either for the team, or for yourself;
- showing respect and following the rules and norms of behaviour in the mountains.

*For the Professional Level (PL):*

a) adhering to the rules of mountaineering:

- understanding the documents;
- building negative attitude towards violators in the group;
- forming awareness and strong assurance over the need to work within the rules of mountaineering;

b) setting up for safe work:

- building a negative attitude towards "dangerous work" in mountaineering in the team;
- forming awareness and strong assurance over the need to use safe techniques in the mountains;

c) nurturing the "fighting personality" by building the following skills:

- self-organisation;
- resilience;
- independence;

d) creating a positive psychological climate and work environment through self-management in a team:

- resolving conflict situations (the concepts of productive and destructive conflict);
- developing a sense of mutual responsibility in team.

*For the Advancement Level (SAL) and the Sportsmanship Level (SML):*

a) encouraging constantly to use only safe techniques when working in terrain (during training sessions and climbs);

b) fostering the belief in the need for mutual control and mutual responsibility of team members;

c) building the leader of the climbing event.

### 3.2. Methodology of the educational process.

In their work, instructors often have to correct the behaviour of trainees, develop the necessary personality qualities and character traits, and overcome shortcomings. In these cases, the instructor-educator can use various methods of pedagogical influence and pedagogical tools. The use of these techniques is based on the observance of five pedagogical principles.

1. Pedagogical optimism. The instructor should inspire trainees to believe in themselves so that they strive for achieve and fight their place a team.

2. Respect for the trainee. This is especially important because it inspires trust, sincerity, and receptivity to advice and suggestions. Otherwise, a situation arises where the trainee is offended, angry, and may stop responding even to the instructor's fair demands.

3. Understanding the trainee's state of mind. The instructor should strive to learn about the peculiarities of the trainee's personality and gain his or her trust with sincere attention.

4. Disclosure of motives and external circumstances of actions. Actions (good, noble, bad, unchangeable) are evaluated by the instructor, comrades, and the environment. To properly evaluate an act, it is necessary to find out its motives, i.e. the internal reasons that led to the act. This is not easy, because motives often do not lie on the surface of relationships and situations. External circumstances should be distinguished from motives, i.e. specific objective life conditions, situations that determine an act in the absence of a corresponding motive. Understanding the motives and external circumstances of an act will help the instructor to prevent wrong decisions.

5. Interest in the fate of the trainee (responsibility for his/her life).

When a climber decides to become an instructor, he or she must analyze his or her desire to work with people, to give them time, energy, and warmth. If such willingness exists, then a sincere interest in the fate of the trainee is possible. It is implemented through the knowledge of many data about a person: what brought him/her to mountaineering, what is his/her motivation; whether he/she has fighting qualities and reliability that are important for a climber; how he/she treats comrades, the team, who is a friend, who is a dislike; what is his/her health condition, what are his/her hobbies besides mountaineering, what does he/she read, marital status, financial situation, etc.

**Forms of the educational process.** In the process of education, the instructor uses generally accepted forms of pedagogical influence: collective, group and individual. However, it should be remembered that encouragement, praise, and rewards in a team or group should be given more often than punishment, and should be given only face-to-face, individually.

### ***Methods of the educational process***

*Visual.* The main role is played by the instructor: his appearance, manners, behavior, life and climbing credo are important. He is the best visual example. You should use any visual example of positive influence on the trainees.

*Verbal.* It is known that a word can inspire a person, set him or her up for a great deed, or it can destroy everything good. Therefore, words should be used carefully and deliberately in the process of education.

*Practical.* The implementation of educational tasks, as noted, is the easiest in the process of practical work with the group (department) in classes, meetings.

***Methods of pedagogical influence in the process of education.*** In pedagogy, there are some techniques that promote education on the basis of positive feelings, such as creative techniques, while others help in education by awakening mainly negative feelings. An experienced instructor is skillfully able to combine them.

*Creative techniques include the following.*

1. Showing consideration, kindness, and care. It is important them to be sincere and dictated by interest in the fate of the trainee.

2. Encouragement. Promotes positive behavior in a person who has done a good deed. At the same time, encouraging actions are a standard of behavior for others. Almost every person needs encouragement, so an experienced instructor always looks for and finds something good in a student that is worthy of it. Encouragement should be combined with higher requirements that develop the individual.

3. Persuasion, which is the explanation and proof of the correctness or necessity of certain behavior or the inadmissibility of any act. Persuasion is the most common method of education, but in order to persuade, you need to believe in it yourself.

4. Involvement in collective activities. This is necessary for low-communicative, insecure individuals. The method allows the trainee to show his or her best side, gives rise to self-confidence, and helps to establish close contacts with other members of the group.

5. Exercises on moral education. This technique is successfully used in educational work. Its essence lies in the instructor's organization of circumstances that require the trainee to do the right thing. It is important that the exercise looks natural and that the whole group is interested in it. A well-done exercise can be reinforced with rewards.

6. Moral support and strengthening of self-confidence. This technique is useful for the formation of the learner's personality when he or she does not have or has lost authority and respect in the group for one reason.

7. Improvement of success in mountaineering. Success in an activity inspires, increases interest, motivation, and vice versa, difficulties and failures upset, disappoint, and give rise to new failures.

8. Expectation of the best results. The instructor expresses confidence in the possibility of achieving the best results through his/her attitude and actions, and the participant, together with the instructor, believes in this perspective, starts to act with more perseverance and achieves success. This changes the learner's low self-esteem.

*Hampering techniques are as follows.*

1. Statement of the act. Without resorting to condemnation or lecturing, the instructor directs the student to analyze the act.

2. Condemnation. It is most effective when supported by fellow group members. Condemnation must be fair. This is a sharp weapon in the hands of the tutor, it reduces the authority of the student, and therefore it should be used with extreme caution.

3. Punishment. It should be preceded by an analysis and condemnation of the act. Experienced instructors rarely resort to punishment. A large number of punishments, their severity are often the signs of instructor helplessness.

4. Order. It is expressed in the categorical requirement of the instructor. In this way, the instructor subordinates the student to his or her will. However, it is impossible to educate with orders alone. Their abuse is harmful, weak-willed participants lose their independence, initiative, strong-willed people become angry, stubborn, and react negatively to an order. If an order has been given, it is necessary to control its implementation, otherwise there is a danger that the instructor will lose control of the group and the instructor's

authority will be reduced.

5. Warning. It consists in disclosing the negative consequences of a particular action of the trainee. The instructor should remember that neglecting a warning will lead to undesirable consequences in the group. A warning is a clear pressure on the individual and, if the warning is not followed by a "punishing" situation, the participant will stop responding to the instructor's words.

6. Indignation. It is conveyed by intonation, facial expressions, and emotionality of communication. However, indignation should not be used to show distrust of the learner or to insult the person.

These examples of pedagogical influence are far from exhaustive.

#### **4. Control functions.**

If the training and educational functions of the instructor with the transition from a lower qualification level to a higher one are weakened, then the duties of control increase and the level of further skill become dominant.

The challenge is to implement a culture of control: at levels of further skill acquisition, it is necessary to analyze and monitor the activities of trained climbers; those who have a great deal of experience cannot be ignored and must be respected. Therefore, it is worth looking for such forms of relationships in which control will necessarily be exercised, but in combination with great tact and respect. It should not be assumed that the culture of control at the qualification levels of further mastery can be lower. At these levels, it is easier to build control relationships "the instructor is the one who learns", because there is the authority of the instructor in this concept, other functions are undeniable. Many years of experienced working with a permanent team of climbers and observations give grounds for asserting that the weakening of control by the instructor in the groups of levels of further skill acquisition over time leads to undesirable results both in terms of the requirements of the technical plan and moral and ethical norms.

Therefore, the organic combination of all functions in the practice of a methodical climbing instructor is obvious. Any neglect by the instructor of at least one of them causes undesirable and sometimes tragic consequences.

#### ***Peculiarities of the mountaineering instructor work – squad commander***

In the process of the instructor's work as a group commander, there is often an imperceptible (regarding targeted training) transition to the activities of a squad commander. And an inexperienced head of a complex division has a very vague idea of the content of his/her new job. It is good when a former commander was as a good example. As in the case of the group commander, it is worth referring to the scheme of the content of the squad commander work, developed by A. Martynov and I. Popova [13].

*There is an approximate content of the work of the mountaineering instructor – squad commander.*

##### 1. Prepare for class:

- think over organizational forms of classes;
- think about the needs to be said (in the introductory conversation, in the demonstration process, in a conversation with the instructors, some appeals to those who studies etc.);
- choose places, taking into account the proposals of instructors – group commanders;
- think through the educational moments and possibilities of this activity.

##### 2. Work with group commanders:

###### a) discuss with the group commanders the purpose and content of the sessions:

- scheme of session structure;
- content of each topic, its features, possible mistakes of a trainee;
- develop uniformity of terms, techniques, methods;
- time schedule;
- check the plan prepared by squad commanders;

b) choose training area, briefly explaining to the group commander the features of the facilities: belaying issues, any dangerous areas, etc. (*emphasis: safety and technique*);

c) group commander supervision, help him/her to achieve success in educational activities (*emphasis: safety and methodology*);

d) in case of security breach and inappropriate group commander's action, interfering in the work of the personnel (without undermining the authority of the commander).

3. Conduct the introductory interview.

4. Organize, prepare, conduct, and comment on the demonstration (*emphasis: safety and technology*).

5. Carry out an analysis of the group commander's group (to build a joint opinion), not forgetting to encourage the competent and safe activity of the group commander; to carry out a debriefing in a squad (or attend debriefings in groups).

*Emphasis: discussion, analysis of mistakes and ways to eliminate them.*

6. Teach interns to work:

– create and control the "group commander – intern" relationship;

– help the intern to demonstrate his or her independence and best qualities through the assignment system (assignments are given by group commander).

7. Plan, organize and carry out a cycle of ascents:

– select objects for climbing taking into account the qualification and pedagogical skills of the group commander;

– develop the system of initial instructions that can be applied in the place of climbing (*emphasis: safety and methodology*);

– create the plan for the high-altitude climbing zone, discuss it with group commanders, and confirm it in the educational planning department;

– organize and control the entry into the urban area; groups with an instructor, without instructor etc.;

– ensure an atmosphere of mutual understanding and mutual assistance between the group and commander;

– coordinate the climbing and connection;

– carry out an analysis of the group commander's work and group itself (*emphasis: discussing, decision analysis, safety, methodology, technology*);

– maintain the documentation;

8. Plan the qualification climbing of the group commanders and assist in their implementation.

Thus, the section commander performs the same four functions as the group commander: organizational, educational, functions of discipline and control. He passes on his skills to the group commanders, and the way he acts demonstrates the image, of what kind of instructor he will be. It is known that in properly trained young instructor who wants to work, an unscrupulous bad squad commander can repel the desire for pedagogical activity. However, the instructor can be proud of his first squad commander throughout his entire career as an instructor. And this is precisely the criterion for evaluating the activity of the squad commander.

### **Conclusions**

Well, there is a need for recommendations regarding the selection of a single methodology for the work of an instructor within special purpose units training for operations in mountainous terrain.

The given recommendations make it possible to uniformly apply a single methodology, which will ensure better training and a higher level of coordination of the actions of special-purpose units during the execution of tasks in the mountains.

The direction of further research is the development of a systematic analysis of the mountaineering activity of the instructor for the training of the special purpose units for actions in mountainous terrain based on the submitted recommendations.

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**РЕКОМЕНДАЦІЇ ЩОДО ВИБОРУ МЕТОДИКИ РОБОТИ ІНСТРУКТОРА З ПІДГОТОВКИ  
ОСОВОГО СКЛАДУ ПІДРОЗДІЛІВ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОГО ПРИЗНАЧЕННЯ  
ДО ДІЙ У ГІРСЬКІЙ МІСЦЕВОСТІ**

*Розглянуто рекомендації щодо вибору єдиної методики роботи інструктора з підготовки особового складу підрозділів спеціального призначення до дій у гірській місцевості, яка допомогатиме в підготовці особового складу підрозділів спеціального призначення Національної гвардії України до дій у горах.*

*Запропоновані рекомендації дають можливість одноманітного розуміння процесу навчання, що забезпечуватиме якіснішу підготовку і більш високий рівень злагоженості дій підрозділів спеціального призначення під час виконання завдань у горах.*

*На сучасному етапі у практиці альпінізму застосовується широкий спектр форм і методів навчання прийомам пересування гірським рельєфом різних форм. Існує потреба в розробленні єдиної методики роботи інструктора з підготовки особового складу підрозділів спеціального призначення до дій у гірській місцевості. Важливо, аби вона була доцільною й раціональною і давала добрий результат для якісного засвоєння навчального матеріалу тими, хто навчається.*

**Ключові слова:** альпінізм, гірська місцевість, кваліфікаційні рівні, методика, гірська підготовка, сходження.

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