

## MORALE



### INTRODUCTION

1. The efficiency of a group or organisation can be directly related to the morale of the individuals within it. Building and maintaining a high level of morale is one of the main responsibilities of the leader at all levels. Without morale the group will achieve less and less, and may eventually disband.

2. Morale can be defined as a person's attitude towards being part of a group or organisation. It reflects the satisfaction and sense of achievement that they get from being part of the group. High morale means a lack of interest in being part of the group and a possible desire to do something else.

3. An individual can belong to more than one group, they may have loyalties to their Flight, Squadron, Wing, Region or to the Corps itself. It is possible for an individual to be fed up with their Flight if it doesn't achieve much but still be happy to be part of the Squadron.

### FACTORS AFFECTING MORALE

4. Morale is affected by many causes that all inter-react so it is not normally one single factor which affects morale. The causes can be grouped into two broad classes, Material Factors and Intangible Factors.

5. Material Factors. Material factors include such things as the standard of accommodation, uniform availability, personal comfort and the type of activities available. Material factors do not always affect morale as much as Intangible ones. The following points show this:

- a. Low material standards can bind a group together and cause high group morale.
- b. Complaints about material standards are an indication of low morale but not necessarily the cause. Increasing material standards may only raise morale for a short time because the new standards will soon be taken for granted.
- c. People tend to compare their own material standards with those of others. They often become an issue only if they are lower or it is felt that no one cares about the material conditions.

6. Intangible Factors Affecting Morale. The intangible factors may be split into three kinds: Leadership, Group and Task.

- Leadership Factors. Leadership at every level affects morale. At the top level leadership gives a sense of purpose, at the immediate level it gives a sense of belonging. A SNCO is able to promote good morale by:
  - Providing a sense of purpose by setting and communication standards and aims.
  - Providing a sense of belonging by acknowledgement of ability and giving praise.
  - The firm but fair application of discipline.
  - Keeping the group informed on what is happening.
  - Being concerned about the welfare of the individual and team.
  - Setting a good personal example.
- Group Factors. Group Factors affecting the level of morale include:
  - A sense of common aims that everyone can relate to.
  - A sense of belonging and identification with the group through symbols and badges emphasising team membership.
  - Traditions to live up to.
  - Prestige of success and status.
  - Stability of the group membership.

- Task Factors. If there is a high standard of leadership and strong group ties then morale will be high, providing the tasks and activities of the group members are rewarding and worthwhile. Task factors which affect morale are:
  - Performing tasks which contribute to the overall aims of the group and being kept busy in a useful way, for example working towards the Best Flight award.
  - Having a sense of achievement through knowledge of progress and results.
  - Performing varied activities that are interesting and fit the abilities of the individual while allowing scope for further growth in knowledge and ability.
  - Performing activities that have an element of prestige, responsibility and require the use of initiative.

## **INDICATORS OF MORALE**

7. The level of cadet's morale may be indicated by many symptoms, some of these are described below:

- Falling attendance rates of individuals or the Squadron overall.
- Attention of the cadets to maintaining standards of tidiness and cleanliness of the Squadron premises.
- Standards of turnout, alertness and cheerfulness of cadets.
- Difficulty in getting cadets to attend Squadron activities outside normal parade nights.
- A lowering of discipline and increased "answering back" by cadets.
- A fall in cadet's achievement levels.

## **SUMMARY**

8. The key to morale is good leadership by attention to all the Functional Needs and a firm but fair application of discipline., It is better to maintain good morale than it is, to-restore it after it has been damaged. Morale is one means of aiding the recruitment and retention of probationer cadets.