

COMMUNION IN CONFLICT

THE MARINE ADVISOR



DECEMBER 1975

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THE MARINE ADVISOR

Volume II

Goals, Problems,
and Recommendations

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Preface

This report is one of two volumes on the Marine Advisory Unit, Naval Advisory Group, Saigon, RVN. Volume II presents the verbatim responses of a sample of Marine Corps officers to questions involving their goals as advisors, their accomplishments and difficulties, and their recommendations with regard to the future role of advisory or other cross-cultural missions. Volume I of the study includes: comparative personality assessment, attitude measurement, differential concept formation, and personal and national aspirations and concerns.

The purpose of this research project was to gain insight into the problems and effectiveness of advisory missions and to make recommendations based on the responses of experienced advisors for the development of training programs designed to enhance preparedness. Furthermore, the results of the study will help to establish firm organizational goals for advisory programs and other cross-cultural operations.

The Marine officers surveyed served with the Vietnamese Marine Corps during the closing phase of American involvement in the Vietnam conflict. Their period of duty is significant since those who responded participated in the conflict during the Easter Invasion of 1972 and witnessed what was essentially a test of the Vietnamization program prior to United States disengagement from the war.

The program of research was conducted in Vietnam during 1972 and 1973. To ensure authenticity of reply, the responses of the advisors were anonymous and voluntary.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sincere thanks is expressed to the Marine advisors who volunteered their time and effort to complete a very involved and lengthy questionnaire battery. Their individual support of this project attests to the importance they place on bringing together the judgments of experienced men in a systematic attempt to guide future advisory efforts.

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	iii
Acknowledgement	v
Introduction	1
Rationale	5
Procedure	6
Population Characteristics	7
Code	9
Goals and Accomplishments	11
Question 1. What goals did you hope to accomplish as an advisor during your tour?	
Question 2. What did you actually accomplish during your tour?	
Problems and Suggestions	23
Question 3. What problems did you encounter which made your goals difficult to accomplish?	
Question 4. What suggestions could you make which would improve advisory mission or advisor-counterpart relations?	
Counterpart Characteristics	35
Question 5. What characteristics about the Vietnamese do you admire or like the most?	
Question 6. What characteristics about the Vietnamese do you find most difficult to understand or like the least?	
Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities . .	45
Question 7. How do the organization and priorities of the Vietnamese military differ from the American military?	
Question 8. What personal characteristics, abilities, or skills do you feel are most important for an advisor to possess?	

	<u>Page</u>
Recommendations	59
Question 9. Based on your experience, what courses of instruction or training methods would you emphasize in order to prepare advisors for duty in Vietnam or elsewhere overseas?	
Question 10. With regard to your specialty, what particular situations have you encountered, the understanding of which would be helpful in training a replacement?	

Tables

1. U.S. Marine Advisor Population Characteristics	9
2. Goals Sought and Goals Accomplished by USMC Advisors	21
3. Problems Encountered by USMC Advisors	33
4. Suggestions for Improvement by USMC Advisors	34
5. Vietnamese Characteristics Most Admired by USMC Advisors	43
6. Vietnamese Characteristics Most Difficult to Understand by USMC Advisors	44
7. Differences Between Vietnamese and American Organization and Priorities by USMC Advisors	56
8. Personal Qualities Considered Important for Advisory Duty by USMC Advisors	57
9. Recommended Training for Advisory Duty by USMC Advisors	70
10. Areas of Understanding Considered to be of Particular Value to Military Specialty	71

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

On March 30, 1972, three divisions of the North Vietnamese Army crossed the DMZ and engaged South Vietnamese troops in conventional warfare in what was to be the ultimate test of the Vietnamization program. The initial onslaught of the Easter Invasion involved enemy troops, heavy tanks, long-range artillery, missiles, and other weapons supplied by Russia and China in numbers the South Vietnamese had not seen before.

In the beginning, the situation looked grave and the future of South Vietnam was in doubt. Massive attacks and indiscriminate artillery barrages by the North Vietnamese forced thousands of refugees to flee southward in panic. Military unity and discipline were lost as the 3rd ARVN Division staff and their U.S. advisors were evacuated from Quang Tri City on May 1, 1972. In apparent rout, the 3rd ARVN Division retreated from Quang Tri City, and along with thousands of civilians, were slaughtered as they moved south on Highway 1 toward Hue. On May 2, 1972, Quang Tri City was proclaimed the Southern Provincial Capital of the Democratic Republic of North Vietnam.

Amidst the carnage, while most of the South Vietnamese troops in the area could not be accounted for, some units, including the Vietnamese Marine brigades along with their American advisors, were able to cohere and hold under the initial force of attack. The Marines maintained organization, functioned as a rear guard in the final retreat, and reestablished a viable line of defense at the My Chanh River, south of Quang Tri City.

The Vietnamese Marines eventually launched counteroffensives by land, sea, and air, regaining most of what was previously lost and surrounding Quang Tri City. On September 16, 1972, after seven weeks of fierce fighting and fanatical resistance by the enemy, the South Vietnamese Marines, in testimony of their courage and determination, raised their nation's flag over Quang Tri City. The Citadel was again secure.

According to Lt. Col. G.H. Turley and Capt. M.R. Wells, two Marine advisors who witnessed the entire event, the recapture of Quang Tri City by the Republic of Vietnam Marines "gave witness to the world that the South Vietnamese could more than stop the aggressors, they could soundly defeat them" and their success "may have pre-destined the end of the war."¹

For their performance during the eventful days of the Easter Invasion, the South Vietnamese Marines won the respect and admiration of their nation and the free world, and they deserve full credit for withstanding the ultimate test of their ability. No small measure of achievement also belongs to the U.S. Marine advisors who were involved in the final months of U.S. participation, and to their predecessors, whose efforts precipitated the success of the Vietnamization program.

During the uncertain days of the Easter Invasion, the U.S. Marine advisors rejected an opportunity for evacuation and remained with their counterparts throughout the holocaust, providing support for their comrades and validating the spirit and loyalty which exemplifies the

¹A detailed account of the action which occurred during the Easter Invasion is given by Lt. Col. G.H. Turley and Capt. M.R. Wells in Easter Invasion 1972, Marine Corps Gazette, March 1973, 18-29.

Marine Corps. Together, the U.S. Marine advisors and the Vietnamese Marines displayed a communion in conflict and valor not uncommon to their heritage.

Rationale

For many years prior to and during the Vietnam War, social scientists and government officials have attempted to develop programs designed to improve cross-cultural operations and increase effectiveness of advisory efforts. Recommendations for training and orientation programs and procedures for involvement with foreign allies have been based on empirical findings as well as expert guidance. However, not only have many of the programs designed proved insufficient or failed to produce the desired results, but most evaluation reports reveal that conclusions and recommendations were not supported by validation based on an acceptable criterion of success.

Since the efforts of the Marine Advisory Unit, especially under the severe conditions of the Easter Invasion, represent valid operational criteria of success, clues to the reasons behind their effectiveness may be induced through systematic and comprehensive study of the advisors and their counterparts.

Under what conditions did the Marine advisors and their counterparts function best? What personal characteristics were most important in fostering cooperation and cohesion under stress? What were the priorities and goals, and what factors either inhibited or facilitated cooperative performance? What were the major aspirations and concerns

which motivated advisors and counterparts toward a unified effort? These are some of the questions which can be asked, and the answers could conceivably lead to the development of programs designed to enhance advisor preparedness and to the formulation of organizational goals for future advisory and other cross-cultural missions.

Procedure

In an attempt to provide answers to the aforementioned questions which would reveal the significant factors that contributed to the success of the Marine advisory effort, a program of research was launched in Vietnam in 1972 during the Easter Invasion. A battery of questionnaires was administered to a sample of Marine advisors and Vietnamese counterparts who participated in the conflict. The areas of investigation included: background information, personality characteristics, differential leadership concepts, personal and national aspirations and concerns, and direct questions related to advisory goals, problems, and recommendations based on individual experience. In order to ensure authenticity of reply and freedom of response, questionnaires were completed on an anonymous and voluntary basis.

While attempting to quantify into coded categories the advisors' responses to the direct, open-ended questions, it became apparent that much of the quality and insights of the advisors would be lost in the process. Therefore, since the information contained in the written replies was considered pertinent and useful in its entirety, it was decided to produce the responses, as they were given, in the hope that

the more detailed information would add richness to the final analysis and would be used as an aid to program developers responsible for providing curricula for advisory instruction.

Volume II presents the verbatim replies given by the 35 Marine advisors who responded to the following questions:

1. What goals did you hope to accomplish as an advisor during your tour?
2. What did you actually accomplish during your tour?
3. What problems did you encounter which made your goals difficult to accomplish?
4. What suggestions could you make which would improve advisory missions or advisor-counterpart relations?
5. What characteristics about the Vietnamese do you admire or like the most?
6. What characteristics about the Vietnamese do you find most difficult to understand or like the least?
7. How do the organization and priorities of the Vietnamese military differ from the American military?
8. What personal characteristics, abilities, or skills do you feel are most important for an advisor to possess?
9. Based on your experience, what courses of instruction or training method would you emphasize in order to prepare advisors for duty in Vietnam or elsewhere overseas?
10. With regard to your specialty, what particular situations have you encountered, the understanding of which would be helpful in training a replacement?

Population Statistics

The Marine officers surveyed served as advisors to the Vietnamese Marine Corps during the closing phase of American involvement in the

Vietnam conflict. Their period of duty was significant since they participated in the conflict during the Easter Invasion of 1972 and witnessed what was essentially a test of the Vietnamization program prior to United States disengagement from the war.

All of the 35 Marine participants were career-oriented and were members of the Marine Corps for at least 4 years, 6 months, but not more than 23 years, 5 months. The average time in service for the Marines was 12 years, 10 months at the time of data collection (March 1973). Half of the Marines who responded held the rank of major, while 44% were captains. Two lieutenant colonels also participated in the study.

As shown in Table 1, the average age of the Marine advisors was 33.4 years. And, their educational level ranged from 12 years to more than 18 years of formal schooling with a mean of 16.2 years. Only two of the advisors did not hold a college degree. Concerning marital and family status, 85.3% of the advisors were married and only 7 had no children.

Most of the Marines were on their second tour in Vietnam, while two were on their third tour. One advisor had no prior experience in country. Only four of the Marines indicated they did not directly volunteer for their present tour of duty in Vietnam. The majority (88%) were volunteers for combat duty.

Although most of the Marine advisors were volunteers, the number of volunteers far exceeded the demand for available billets during this period. Therefore, the Marines in this study represent a highly select group who were chosen on the basis of superior fitness reports, commendable prior experience in Vietnam, significant accomplishments as

Table 1
 U.S. Marine Advisor
 Population Characteristics
 (N = 35)

<u>Age:</u>		<u>Marital Status:</u>	
Range	26-42 yrs	Now married	85.3%
Average	33.4 yrs	Never married	11.8%
		Widowed	-
		Divorced	2.9%
<u>Education:</u>			
Range	12-18+ yrs		
Average	16.2 yrs		

career military officers, and other special skills. Generally, the group was comprised of what the Marine Corps considers its outstanding category of officers.

With regard to cross-cultural or advisory training, twelve of the advisors attended the 6-week MATA course at Fort Bragg, five participated in the 16-week Marine Advisor Course at Quantico Marine Base, and one went to the Navy DLICWB (language) course conducted at the Navy Post Graduate School in Monterey, California. Almost half of the Marines (47.1%) had no special training for their assignments.

Code

Each of the chapters which follow presents the verbatim responses of the Marine advisors to two related questions. The code to the left of each response denotes the following information:

- M026 Identifying code (Marine Officer No. 26)
- MT04 Advisor Training/Military Rank
- MT - Military Assistance Training Advisor (MATA) course, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina (6 weeks)
 - MA - Marine Advisor Course (MAC), Quantico, Virginia (16 weeks)
 - DL - Defense Language Institute (DLIWC), North Vietnamese Language Course, Monterey, California (47 weeks)
 - 05 - Lieutenant Colonel
 - 04 - Major
 - 03 - Captain
- 1202 Total years/months in service as of date of data collection (12 years, 2 months)
- 0108 Total years/months served in Vietnam (1 year, 8 months)

GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goals and Accomplishments

1. WHAT GOALS DID YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AS AN ADVISOR DURING YOUR TOUR?

2. WHAT DID YOU ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH DURING YOUR TOUR?

M023
05
2305
0205
Acceptance as an individual and professional soldier. Better understanding of Orientals. Hopefully to provide some assistance in advancing the VNMC's posture as a fighting unit.

All of No. 1 plus.

M013
05
1709
0201
A singular goal...to be capable of contributing to the advisory effort (it was my understanding that the advisory effort was geared towards providing the VNMC the tools necessary to be self-sufficient within the constraints of their manpower and economy).

I believe that the VNMC was significantly more adept at managing their own Marine Corps and that I contributed to this characteristic.

M009
04
2103
0203
Help the Vietnamese. Further my career. Learn about another culture.

All of No. 1.

M004
MA04
1802
0202
a. Application of combat knowledge to save friendly lives while inflicting maximum damage on the enemy.
b. An attempt to discover and understand other standards/people.
c. To form a personal evaluation of the tactics of the Asian/Vietnamese.
d. An opportunity to see a different part of Vietnam.
e. Gain combat experience.

a, b, c, and e.

I did not fully accomplish d since my first tour as a company commander, I was as far "south" as Camp Evans. This tour I was as far "south" as My Chanh operationally.

M014
MT04
1700
0200
Improve overall competence of the Marine brigade I was assigned to. Aid my counterpart in any way possible. Utilize what

Stopped the NVA invasion on the My Chanh -- not by myself, of course, but if our advisor team was not present to direct U.S.

Goals and Accomplishments

	little expertise I possessed to make our unit a better fighting force.	assets, it could have been a different war.
M036 MT04 1509 0200	To gain a better understanding of military tactics and their application. To assist a country in stopping a communist take-over. To make acquaintances and better understand another race of people. To improve my position in the USMC.	Gained a better understanding of military tactics. Rewarding feeling in regard to assisting the VNMC in their role to push back the NVA. Made a lot of good friends which I hope I will maintain over the years. Improved my position in the USMC by broadening my background and receiving decorations.
M024 MT04 1509 0108	The primary goal was one established by higher authority, i.e., to assure that U.S. assets, when given to the Vietnamese, were properly utilized. The second goal was established by me after having been in the billet for approximately 4 months, and was to <u>convince</u> my counterpart that the American presence was, in the near future, going to leave Vietnam and that the Vietnamese would have to carry on without that presence -- in other words, the goal was to reorient my counterpart's thinking to the end of the American presence and what he would do then -- <u>never</u> was the goal "to work myself out of a job," because I knew my billet could be deleted with the stroke of a pen!	I underwent a learning process about the people, country, politics, etc. I feel I functioned effectively as an interface between the U.S. staff and the Vietnamese.
M033 04 1509 0109	Gain more combat experience.	Got some additional combat experience.
M010 MT04 1502 0200	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To come back alive.2. To help the VNMC become stronger or more competent in	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Came back alive.2. Scrounged about \$1 million worth of gear for the Training

Goals and Accomplishments

any way I could.

Center and VNMC.

3. If it wasn't for the VNMC, Danang would have fallen within 10 days of the beginning of the Easter Offensive. Without the USMC advisors, the VNMC couldn't have done the job.

M016
MT04
1501
0105

Same as any USMC billet --discharging, in fullest measure, all responsibilities associated with the position to which assigned.

Considerable understanding of the Vietnamese people and definite appreciation of counterpart talents, virtues, and shortcomings.

M028
MT04
1306
0104

I hoped to work myself out of a job.

(67-68) I believe I went a long way toward accomplishing this; not because of any outstanding effort on my part, rather my infantry battalion was exposed to many situations (combat) where I was able to influence action and provide assistance -- and my Viet counterparts rapidly picked up any particular expertise I may have demonstrated. By 1969 Viet Marine battalions did not need advisors -- that the advisors were retained until the cease-fire is inconceivable to me.

(1972) Strictly a coordination of U.S. supporting arms and/or a liaison officer. The word advisor was a misnomer at brigade/battalion levels at this time.

M037
MT04
1206
0110

Initially I had no grandiose plans for things to accomplish. I felt that all of the many advisors preceding me had approached the various artillery problems and had offered advice in solving these. I chose to make an observation of my particular unit, assess the problem areas, if any,

I felt that more attention was being directed towards those areas mentioned in question 1 and I could see some improvement, and so I feel this was somewhat of an accomplishment.

Goals and Accomplishments

and then offer help at the appropriate time. Fortunately, my counterpart was an extremely capable individual and so my efforts became directed to better his supply, logistics, and maintenance operations. One other area, pertaining to artillery itself, was better firing battery procedures and ways to improve on them, i.e., storage and care of ammunition, safety around weapons.

M001
MA04
1109
0201

- a. Greater understanding of Vietnamese people and military.
- b. Share some of my knowledge of military matters with the VNMC.
- c. Expose Viets to a "representative" American to promote better understanding of us to them.
- d. Improve my knowledge of the Vietnamese language.

- a. Some insight into the Viet and his society.
- b. Improved my Vietnamese language.
- c. Learned a few items of military interest.

M039
MT04
1109
0110

To improve the combat effectiveness of Vietnamese Marine infantry battalions and brigades.

Provided a link between the VNMC commander and U.S. supporting arms (air and NGF); i.e., fire support coordination.

M031
04
1109
0108

Lend support and expertise wherever possible to accomplish the mission of the unit being advised.

Some advice rendered was helpful.

M019
04
1109
0105

- a. Personal goals -- to demonstrate to myself that I could function in a totally different environment (without the trappings of modern society as we normally (in the USMC) go to war with).
- b. Professional -- to see to the "punching" of my "ticket."

- a. The "punching" of my "ticket" was accomplished.
- b. The personal goal was not totally gained because of the war ending (for the U.S.) three months after I arrived in the country.

Goals and Accomplishments

M027 04 1106 0202	Establish functional/austere management systems. Foster the USA as a <u>true</u> ally. Acquaint myself with all ramifications of the RVN situation.	Established good rapport with my counterparts. Built T/O and E's for amphibious support battalion and AMTRAC company. Became more familiar with the RVN problems.
M029 04 1009 0200	Based upon past experience, I did not attempt to set unrealistic goals for the short advisory tour that I had. I wanted to observe the VNMC in action, to assist in any way I could in their victory, and I hoped to be with them when they retook Quang Tri City.	Except for the fact that I was wounded and removed from the action prior to the seizure of Quang Tri, I accomplished what I wanted during my tour.
M011 MT04 1009 0105	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Improve myself professionally.Assist the Vietnamese to become a viable military force.Assist in any way possible in an honorable peace in Vietnam.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Matured through association with another culture.Was able to lend professional assistance in tactics and logistical support.Established school (informal) in English.
M017 MA03 1809 0201	To gain additional combat experience. To help the VNMC. To learn a new language and culture.	I helped save some VNMC lives in certain situations. A viable training program for the VNMC was instituted.
M012 MA03 1409 0403	<ol style="list-style-type: none">To accept and accomplish whatever assignment was given.To be successful in the eyes of my fellow Marines.To have the Vietnamese know I did my best for them.	I feel I accomplished Nos. 2 and 3. No. 1 was difficult because I did accept whatever job was given, but no single advisor can say, "I made the VNMC what it is." All advisors do their best to teach what they know, then pass on to their next assignment.
M008 03 1308 0200	Try to help my counterparts to my best ability and also my fellow advisors, not only in my MOS but in any area of which I could be of some help.	Basically what I hoped to in paragraph 1.

Goals and Accomplishments

<p>M005 DL03 1300 0106</p>	<p>My goals were entirely selfish in that I wanted to gain more combat experience in order to increase my own tactical proficiency.</p>	<p>1972 was a good year to be in RVN. I certainly accomplished my goal.</p>
<p>M026 03 1300 0200</p>	<p>Perfect VN language. Improve VNMC communications. Learn about VN people.</p>	<p>All of question 1.</p>
<p>M041 MT03 1006 0110</p>	<p>Further my own professional knowledge. Aid the Vietnamese Marines in the accomplishment of their mission. Learn about Vietnamese, their culture, country, government, etc. Further good professional and personal relations between the U.S. and VN peoples.</p>	<p>I felt that I accomplished all I set out to do, except that when the war "ended," I felt that I wanted to stay, although this reaction was more personal than professionally motivated.</p>
<p>M020 03 0702 0204</p>	<p><u>MAU</u>: My job was to provide Bn commander with air and NGF, not to advise per se. The goal was to provide Bn commander with information on availability of support and best use, which is similar to a position in a U.S. unit.</p> <p><u>RD Cadre Advisor</u>: Assist in meeting the development plan for the year -- provide information on progress to superiors.</p>	<p><u>MAU</u>: Provided Bn commander with information as required -- trained VN officer to call in air strikes and NGF.</p> <p><u>RD Cadre Advisor</u>: Very little. Did ensure adequate logistic support. Provided required information to superiors.</p>
<p>M018 MA03 0609 0200</p>	<p>I did not establish any goals per se prior to my arrival in Vietnam. At that time, November 1970, one (VNMC) brigade was in Cambodia (less advisors), one battalion at Cau Mau, two battalions in Saigon (STANDDOWN), and one brigade in Mai Loc (I Corps). I fully expected to be assigned to a battalion, however, that was not expected until just prior to Lam Son 719 (Laos oper-</p>	<p>a. Established friendly and lasting friendships with a number of the VNMC officers and men.</p> <p>b. Established, and watched function, a good plan for the control and proper utilization of supporting arms. Coordination was extremely difficult in early 1972 due to the tactical situation and lack of understanding by the VNMC.</p>

Goals and Accomplishments

ation w/o advisors). Upon the units' return to Vietnam, I was assigned as ASIT-G-3 advisor. Thus, it was almost impossible to set goals as such. However, I personally desired to see the VNMC increase its capability to fight conventional warfare as they were already fairly adept at guerrilla operations.

M030
03
0605
0202

To aid the South Vietnamese and aid at a critical time, Easter Invasion, in Vietnamization (90-day augmentation program). A conventional war was taking place in northern I Corps; the opportunity and experience would be invaluable. Also to gain experience in coordinating supporting arms, liaison, etc.

Got medivaced! Also support available and type of ordnance directed against enemy in visual contact was instrumental in aiding the South Vietnamese Marines recapture Quang Tri City. Also, new insight for Vietnamese not gained in my first tour.

M006
MT03
0602
0109

Learn about RVN and Vietnamese, i.e., language, customs, culture, etc.

Increased my ability to conduct and coordinate all types of supporting arms, gained confidence in anti-armor operations and a limited understanding of the Vietnamese people.

M007
03
0509
0103

To some way assist the Vietnamese Marines in forcing the NVA out of South Vietnam. Also to sharpen my skills in the use of supporting arms.

I sharpened my own skills.

M021
03
0509
0200

I hoped to offer constructive criticism to the Vietnamese in order to improve their methods of operation; also to point out areas where they may need to work on, which hadn't occurred to them. To help them in any way possible.

The Vietnamese were pretty well versed in "fighting the Indians." Some of their poor practices were those picked up from U.S. forces, and it was a little late in the game to tell them it was wrong. Significant accomplishments were helping to improve their day-to-day existence (hygiene, care for the troops, etc.). I was able to procure materials otherwise unavailable to them (bluntly

Goals and Accomplishments

called scrounging). Biggest area of assistance was procuring and coordinating American assets, such as NGF, air, and artillery.

M015
03
0409
0103

I felt I would not be an "advisor" but rather a "coordinator" of U.S. assets and felt that this would be the limit of my goals. Sort of provide reassurance by being there and also control assets that the Vietnamese would have a difficult time controlling (U.S. Air and Naval Gunfire).

I developed some skills as a coordinator and I gained some good Vietnamese friends which could help both our countries at a later date.

M022
03
0409
0010

Assist the VNMC in calling in their own air/NGF missions.

Partial success in part I goal.

M038
MT03
0406
0006

Accomplish the mission.

Accomplished the mission.

M002

My basic intentions were to learn as much about the Vietnamese as I could, work closely with them, attempt to dispel the "ugly American" view that many foreign nationals have of us. I secondarily wanted to impart any tactical knowledge that I felt the VNMC might need, but I truly did not expect they would need much.

I think there were many small accomplishments. I became very friendly with the officers and troops in my battalion, and, I hope, helped them in understanding our motivations and actions. Practically, I accomplished a great deal in teaching the Vietnamese the proper use of the helicopter, both tactically and administratively, and I taught most of the officers to control U.S. air assets in English and improve their control over VN close air support.

Table 2
Goals Sought and Goals Accomplished
by USMC Advisors

Goals	Percent Response	
	Sought	Accomplished
Assist the VNMC, perform advisory duty	70	70
Improve understanding of Vietnamese culture, problems, language, etc.	30	30
Gain combat experience, improve military skill	26	23
Improve professional military career status	23	11
Perform professional duty, defeat the enemy	20	6
Help the Vietnamese better understand Americans	11	6
Evaluate VNMC proficiency	9	3
Return alive	3	3
Establish lasting friendship with the Vietnamese	0	14

PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

Problems and Suggestions

3. WHAT PROBLEMS DID YOU ENCOUNTER WHICH MADE YOUR GOALS DIFFICULT TO ACCOMPLISH?

4. WHAT SUGGESTIONS COULD YOU MAKE WHICH WOULD IMPROVE ADVISORY MISSIONS OR ADVISOR-COUNTERPART RELATIONS?

M023
05
2305
0205

An open mind with a flexible approach to accomplishing the advisory tasks is more important than being a truly outstanding professional.

M013
05
1709
0201

Primarily that the controls imposed and necessary to operate a foreign service (VNMC), within the guidance normally associated with a U.S. service, were not necessarily compatible to the differences between the modus operandi of the two nations.

The constraints and controls imposed must be within the environment which the country/counterpart can historically operate.

M009
04
2103
0203

a. Lack of understanding of each other's customs and language.
b. Lack of a willingness to try to understand.
c. The mission of the advisor and his uses were unclear. Some advisors actually commanded, others did very little. The individual advisor's results were directly proportional to his rapport with his Vietnamese counterpart.

Anything related to rapport.

a. Careful selection of advisors. It's not only necessary that a man be a good Marine in every sense of the word, but he should be psychologically tested to determine if he would be suitable for such an assignment. Too many people were trying to get their "ticket punched."

b. Language training is a must.
c. Prior advisory duty could assist.

M004
MA04
1802
0202

Language barrier -- word "problem" not in vocabulary.

a. Language proficiency.
b. Accept standards of counterpart as your own (temporarily).
c. Live with counterpart while in field.
d. Extend tour of duty (12 months is too short). 15-18 months would be better.

Problems and Suggestions

e. Develop mutual professional respect.

f. Rapport is normally established only after the first fire fight.

g. Detailed autobiography of counterpart to advisor and advisor to counterpart.

M014 Working for an inept, cowardly
MT04 Army advisory team -- once the
1700 war really started they ran,
0200 solving our difficulties.

Stress professionalism and never use the term "establish rapport with your counterpart." He needs you, not vice versa as taught in our schools. There's no reason to bend to meet counterparts halfway. All we do is advise -- he can take it or leave it.

M036 The lack of my ability to speak
MT04 Vietnamese. Inability to under-
1509 stand the oriental philosophy.
0200

Require advisors to take a language course and continue language instruction during tour when possible.

M024 The U.S. Forces and advisors
MT04 tended to assume organizational
1509 set-ups that were traditional
0108 with U.S. Armed Forces, and they tended to function as a U.S. staff functioned rather than fully integrating themselves into the VN system as a member of that system.

(This is two questions!)

a. Advisory missions must have predetermined, specific, and viable goals which are capable of being reached and most important are goals which are mutually held by the advised. Then, adequate resources (which include enough trained people) must be allocated, and a specific plan implemented which will attain those goals.

b. Advisor/counterpart relationships are based on so many variables that a suggestion to improve them could take any form; for example, get good advisors with proper training.

Problems and Suggestions

M033 04 1509 0109	The VNMC was in a defensive posture and advisors were kept to the rear.	We were pretty well phased out the time I was an advisor. Tactical advisors were not needed and were only supporting arms providers. Logistical advisors were useful. Best improvement be be able to speak language.
M010 MT04 1502 0200	My biggest problem was not being able to speak the language well. No matter how professionally competent an advisor is, a poor knowledge of the language is a great handicap.	A thorough knowledge of the language.
M016 MT04 1501 0105	No problems of any magnitude. The biggest hurdle involved surmounting the language barrier.	<u>Never</u> send any officer to be an advisor unless he is <u>well trained</u> in the language of the people he has to advise. The best advisors during my tour (as viewed by the Vietnamese) were those that could speak fluent Vietnamese or near fluent!
M028 MT04 1306 0104	Language barrier -- although got limited training at MATA -- not enough to <u>really</u> communicate with counterparts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Be selective in assigning individuals to advisory units (latter stages in SVN, there were many "ticket punchers" who had no compassion or understanding of the Vietnamese).2. Provide adequate language training to people assigned.3. See numerous data published at Marine Advisory Unit on this subject.
M037 MT04 1206 0110	Nothing that I'd consider major.	Try to know and understand your counterpart as fully as possible. Accept him for what he is and don't try to have him run his unit as you'd want.

Problems and Suggestions

M001
MA04
1109
0201

I am firmly convinced that my counterpart did not, for some reason or another, have any use for Americans. As a result of this attitude, I and my assistant, plus our three immediate predecessors, were excluded from really participating fully as members of his battalion.

Ensure at the outset of an advisory effort that both parties to the agreement understand that the advisor-counterpart relationship is a relationship of professional soldiers. That is, an advisor should not be forced upon an officer who does not desire one and an advisor has the rights of another professional and must be accorded those rights, in that he must have redress of grievances within his system.

M039
MT04
1109
0110

1. VNMC commanders were reasonably competent and neither required or desired advice.
2. Time spent with each counterpart (two weeks) was not long enough to gain their confidence.
3. Continuous heavy combat situation made implementation of new ideas difficult.
4. Insufficient command of the Vietnamese language.

1. Under normal conditions, assign the advisor to one counterpart for his entire tour.
2. Increase the language proficiency of advisors before coming in country. (I received 2 weeks language training -- entirely insufficient.)

M031
04
1109
0108

Senior members of another service who were out to feather their own nests with little regard for the desires of the Vietnamese.

The most competent professional officers do not necessarily make the best advisors. A thorough screening of the personality of the officer is necessary before being assigned duty as an advisor.

M019
04
1109
0105

- a. Language -- I had no Vietnamese language training.
- b. The utter fixation on the part of the senior U.S. Marine advisors with "two up and one back" and their extreme reluctance to deal with any problem not associated with tactics (and not include strategy).

- a. Increase language training.
- b. Do not allow a totally "G-3" oriented group of individuals to set total U.S. advisory policy.

Problems and Suggestions

M027 04 1106 0202	The language barrier at times. Tour length too short. Lack of more qualified technical advisors.	Lengthen tour to 18 months or 2 years. Place more emphasis on technical advice, tactical advice. Install financial advisor team.
M029 04 1009 0200	I ran into personal characteristics on the part of perhaps two VNMC officers that offered a challenge in establishing the kind of professional relationship I felt necessary for me to do my job. The problem made things more difficult, but certainly not impossible.	Basically, I found that the advice given me, to keep my eyes and ears open and my mouth shut, to make certain I understood why anything was done prior to suggesting a change, and to give advice only when asked, all proved valid.
M011 MT04 1009 0105	a. Initial language difficulty -- couldn't talk to civilians and enlisted men. b. Culture is not receptive to rapid change. c. Cultural pride precluded counterpart from being completely receptive to efforts.	a. Complete and detailed language training. b. Live as a part of the culture: eat the food; do what the people do; learn the 'whys' of the culture -- not only speak the language -- at least try; don't patronize counterpart.
M017 MA03 1809 0201	Many Vietnamese resent U.S. advice. We are perhaps too "result-oriented" for the Vietnamese.	Every advisor should be <u>fluent</u> in the host country language.
M012 MA03 1409 0403	I was on and off depending on the need for field advisors, the G-2/Recon advisor. This field had never had an advisor before and thus no rapport or, more important, working relationship existed, plus the VNMC has a <u>NOFORN</u> stamp like we do, so I was never able to know what my counterpart really knew.	1. Downplay the term "rapport" -- a professional working relationship is all that is required. 2. Assign advisors who are flexible types, not "perfect Marines" who cannot bend.
M008 03 1308 0200	A natural distrust of my counterparts towards Americans.	1. Pick personnel who truly want to be advisors and understand the people whom they will be advising (language, history, etc.).

Problems and Suggestions

2. Live as your counterparts do (food, recreation, etc.).

M005
DL03
1300
0106

None.

I think the primary consideration is to have a small number of advisors who are entirely dependent upon their counterparts for support. As I compare the MAU with the MACV Team 155 (3rd ARVN Div), I see that they (155) had an unnecessarily large unit, most of whom had nothing to do with the ARVN. I would suggest ONLY U.S. Mail and necessary medical support be provided to a mission. See answers 8, 9, and 10.

M026
03
1300
0200

Slowness of Vietnamese to accept advice.

1. Live with counterparts. Eat with counterparts. Socialize with counterparts.
2. Have patience and understanding.
3. A two-year tour instead of one.
4. Better knowledge of customs, religion, government, and politics.

M041
MT03
1006
0110

Obtaining the trust and confidence of the Vietnamese I came in contact with.

More extensive language and cultural information training prior to going into country. Ensure that those who are to be advisors know what is expected and are willing to bridge the culture and language barriers actively.

M020
03
0702
0204

Language (though with MAU dealing in a straight military situation, problem is not too significant). The RD Cadre job was paramilitary/civil-action oriented, and lack of language was a considerable barrier.

Better knowledge of customs, religion, government, and politics.

Problems and Suggestions

Also, lack of knowledge of the politics and interests of various groups made it extremely difficult to determine why or what prompted the actions taken by the groups.

M018
MA03
0609
0200

Lack of knowledge of conventional warfare initially. Lack of organic medium and heavy Arty.

a. Tact and sincerity are an absolute must for any advisor. He must understand he is working in an environment and culture that was created by his predecessors, as well as many years of history over which he has no control.

b. The unit which is being advised belongs to the unit commander, and that is that.

M030
03
0605
0202

Adapting to the food.

Close screening by a board and a detailed medical checkup.

M006
MT03
0602
0109

The NVA Spring Offensive switched the emphasis from Vietnamization to survival.

An advisor must live with his counterpart (as the MAU did). Advisor should be a volunteer and must be fluent in the language for optimum results. By "optimum" I mean a minimum of 15 weeks, preferably 30 weeks of language training.

M007
03
0509
0103

I don't speak Vietnamese.

Teach them (advisors) the required language so that they are able to easily understand and speak.

Tell advisors to stand on their own two feet and use every possible means of persuasion when they know they are right. Tact is important, but not as important as tactics.

Problems and Suggestions

M021 03 0509 0200	Like any people, they (Vietnamese) are set in their ways. If they have been doing something for years and you tell them they're wrong, it usually isn't appreciated. Another problem was the short one-year tour for advisors. They come and go but the Vietnamese stay. Just when the advisor finds his niche, he leaves. The Vietnamese looked with a cynical eye upon the new man with his "gung ho" attitude. Example: "That's great, but you've only got a year before you leave." To me, this is an understandable attitude.	Longer tours. Better screening of advisors -- most were excellent, but it takes only a few to foul things up. There is no need to be servile to your counterpart, but some advisors were plain rude. I had language training which helped. No matter how <u>bad</u> you are, the Vietnamese appreciate you at least giving their language a try. Advisors should be taught what subjects are particularly sensitive to "the natives" and avoid these topics.
M015 03 0409 0103	Personality clashes and some poor advisors who preceded me.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do not switch advisors between battalions.2. Insure advisors have a "solid" knowledge of the language.3. Screen advisors to insure they have the proper attitude, i.e., "want to help."
M022 03 0605 0202	No real problems, except the MAU policy of moving advisors around instead of leaving them with one unit for long periods.	Screen out the one or two advisors I saw who thought they were there to tell some ignorant VN Bn Cmdr how to run his battalion.
M038 MT03 0406 0006	No problems.	Study the language and be patient.
M002	I think the biggest problem was the language barrier. I worked very hard to learn Vietnamese so I could talk <u>their</u> language, but I had only three weeks of language training before going in country and it was difficult.	At least one year of language and cultural training on the country into which an advisor is going should be required, and each advisor should be screened as to his personal feelings about the people of the country to which he is being assigned.

Table 3
Problems Encountered
by USMC Advisors

Problem	Percent Response
Language barrier	37
Culture not receptive to change; inflexibility of Vietnamese; advice not accepted	29
Lack of cultural understanding	14
Mission unclear, tactics inappropriate	14
Tour of duty too short	9
Counterparts and advisors not integrated	6
Combat situation interfered with advisory mission	6
U.S. Army mission inadequate	6
Personality clashes with other advisors	6
Other*	9

*Other problems included: Too much moving around of advisors between VNMC battalion; lack of technical ability of advisors; and difficulty adapting to the food.

Table 4
 Suggestions for Improvement
 by USMC Advisors

Suggestion	Percent Response
Increase language training	51
Be flexible, accepting, respectful, understanding; learn the culture	31
Screen advisors for assignment	20
Integrate with counterpart; live with and depend on counterpart for support	17
Lengthen advisory tour beyond 12 months	11
Don't force advisors on counterparts; give advice only when asked, don't take charge or patronize counterpart	11
Stress professional relationship between advisor and counterpart	9
Necessary personal qualities: sincerity, tact, patience, experience	9
Other*	20

*Other suggestions included: don't switch advisors around; improve advisory training; establish realistic advisory goals; emphasize technical advice; limit number of advisors; make advisory duty voluntary.

COUNTERPART CHARACTERISTICS

Counterpart Characteristics

5. WHAT CHARACTERISTICS ABOUT THE VIETNAMESE DO YOU ADMIRE OR LIKE THE MOST?

M023
05
2305
0205

Gentleness. Personal cleanliness.

M013
05
1709
0201

Patience, loyalty, ingenuity.

M009
04
2103
0203

a. Endurance.
b. Forbearance.
c. Intelligence.

M004
MA04
1802
0202

In general, industriousness. Officer/troops -- friendly.

M014
MT04
1700
0200

Well-mannered, respect elders, love of their country.

M036
MT04
1509
0200

Their respect for the family as a unit and to the parents. Basic friendliness. Their gracefulness (especially the women).

M024
MT04
1509
0108

They are polite, sincere, and possess a great deal of patience.

6. WHAT CHARACTERISTICS ABOUT THE VIETNAMESE DO YOU FIND MOST DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND OR LIKE THE LEAST?

Sometimes it appeared that face saving was the paramount consideration. Then perhaps it was simply because we Occidentals didn't understand.

Honesty, value of life, correctional methods.

a. Greed.
b. I believe that most Vietnamese I met did not like Americans and vice versa.

Seeming disregard of WIA's. Under extreme stress small unit leadership breaks down to non-existent.

Must go too high up the chain to make a decision. Never question a disapproval from higher headquarters even if it is flagrantly in error.

Sluggish attitude and general lack of initiative. Concern with saving face and prestige.

They seem to lack initiative. Once an individual has completed some action (sent in a requisition, etc.), he never checks it. Also, they are politically motivated and carry into the military their class standing and personal loyalty to country or organization.

Counterpart Characteristics

M033 04 1509 0109	A lot of good-looking women. The VNMC officers were pretty good guys when you got to know them.	The inability to be decisive and forceful. Their inability to apply the right tactics even though they know what to do.
M010 MT04 1502 0200	Their perseverance.	Dishonesty and unreliability.
M016 MT04 1501 0105	Their patient and gracious manner.	Their indifference, or lazy manner. This is distinct from patience. All too often they would have to be prodded to do a task that they recognized as being important.
M028 MT04 1306 0104	Adaptability.	Master/servant relationship between officer and enlisted, and "haves" and "have nots."
M037 MT04 1206 0110	This is very hard to pinpoint, but I thought their sincere, hardworking determination to achieve whatever goals were set forth.	As far as command relationships were concerned, it was frustrating when it came to the hesitancy of some commanders to follow up on orders or instructions issued. I guess it was all linked to the "saving of face" syndrome.
M001 MA04 1109 0201	Perseverance and single-mindedness of purpose.	Dual standard of conduct vis-a-vis natives and foreigners.
M039 MT04 1109 0110	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ability to endure hardships.2. Order in society.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Overemphasis on the leader as a person, as to the office of the leader (e.g., if the Cdr is killed, the Bn XO cannot fight the battalion effectively).2. What appears a lack of drive to get the job done "now."

Counterpart Characteristics

3. Inability of VNUMC, ARVN, and airborne units to work efficiently together under a common commander towards a single goal.

M031 04 1109 0108	Tact, respect for elders.	Lack of conscience about appropriating things that don't belong to them.
M019 04 1109 0105	Willingness to persevere in the face of long odds over an extended period of time.	Unwillingness to act rapidly in a situation (to my Western eyes) that requires rapid action.
M027 04 1106 0202	Courage!! Dedication. Loyalty to family. Tenacity. Ability to survive.	I understood most problems, I think. Perhaps their ability to react quickly to rapidly changing situations needs improvement, but even that must be kept in context.
M029 04 1009 0200	"National characteristics" of any people are difficult to define, since any nation is composed of many individuals, and each human individual is unique. With this in mind, characteristics I have admired in the Vietnamese include an ability to persevere under deprivation, and perhaps more rarely, an exceptional loyalty to friends, a deep abiding sense of individual integrity.	Again, keeping in mind the first sentence in paragraph 5, I find that many Vietnamese can exhibit an intense cruelty towards both people and animals, and many Vietnamese are apparently dishonest in their dealings with foreigners.
M011 MT04 1009 0105	a. Basic friendliness. b. Ability to improvise. c. They always attempt to make the best of any situation.	a. Greed. b. Ability to rationalize or make excuses. c. Self-centeredness.

Counterpart Characteristics

M017 MA03 1809 0201	Generally they were cleaner, body-wise, than U.S. troops.	The male officers were quite immature. There was a definite lack of "leading by example."
M012 MA03 1409 0403	Their warmth (if they like you or respect you). Their courage in the face of heavy odds. Their resourcefulness. Their resistance to accept the U.S. military bureaucratic, unresponsive, and duplicating ideas we attempted to force on them.	A lack of respect by the authorities (government officials, some officers, etc.) for the safety, lives, or feelings of people under them.
M008 03 1308 0200	Their treatment of children and parents.	Their treatment or feeling towards us, that we were really not trying to help them and only looking forward to leaving and going home.
M005 DL03 1300 0106	They are happy and friendly. Once a good friendship is established, a Vietnamese will go to great lengths to insure your welfare, safety, and comfort. They are patient.	They are hesitant to commit themselves to a specific course of action; slow to make decisions. In the military, juniors are afraid to make decisions that may be questioned by their seniors. They <u>never</u> question their superiors.
M026 03 1300 0200	Endurance, patience.	Slowness to react. Political appointees in military.
M041 MT03 1006 0110	Respect for others. Self-discipline, tenacity, perseverance (if at first unsuccessful, to keep at it until the goal is attained). Their word was always good, their ability to be flexible in each situation was remarkable.	At times they would follow orders of a superior regardless of correctness and the potential crisis that could occur. When another solution exists and should be suggested, it wouldn't be because of a strict traditionalist attitude. They have a reluctance to change the <u>system</u> , even when a problem was evident, if that problem could not be tolerated.

Counterpart Characteristics

<p>M020 03 0702 0204</p>	<p>General friendliness, courage in difficult circumstances (not necessarily the battlefield), love of family.</p>	<p>Lack of national spirit, greed, corruption of officials.</p>
<p>M018 MA03 0609 0200</p>	<p>Their ability to do things that seemed impossible with few material assets.</p>	<p>The characteristic I liked least about the Vietnamese was the feeling we could get anything they wanted whenever it was desired. (Example: helicopter support, fixed-wing support, Naval gunfire, building materials for the unit base camp.)</p>
<p>M030 03 0605 0202</p>	<p>Patience.</p>	<p>Oriental reaction to foreigners, either totally ignoring a person or belittling.</p>
<p>M006 MT03 0602 0109</p>	<p>a. Stoicism. b. Endurance. c. Politeness. d. Organizational ability.</p>	<p>a. Fatalism. b. Acceptance of authority, indecisiveness. c. False pride, i.e., actually a weak world power, but think they are a great world force. d. Childlike faith in the U.S.</p>
<p>M007 03 0509 0103</p>	<p>They are generous.</p>	<p>They don't seem to trust us and take for granted that we voluntarily risk our lives to help them, and that our country is freely giving great support to theirs.</p>
<p>M021 03 0509 0200</p>	<p>They are gussy in a fight. I would go anywhere with a VNMC unit. They have pride and can be counted on to give their best when they have to.</p>	<p>Rarely act with a sense of urgency -- only when actually threatened. An attitude of "wait 'til tomorrow" -- probably attributed to fighting for 10 years solid. Would often agree to a suggestion and not follow up on it, probably agreeing only to be polite to the advisor. This was not always</p>

Counterpart Characteristics

true; sometimes they would give their reasons for not wanting to do something. Sometimes after making a suggestion, nothing would happen for 3 or 4 days, and then the suggestion was acted upon. It was like they wanted to show that they had all of a sudden thought of it. A matter of pride, which I can sympathize with.

M015 Ability to continue to live
03 under some extreme pressures
0409 (war, poverty, etc.).
0103

Evasiveness -- talking around the central problem but never really mentioning the problem.

M022 Outstanding sense of humor and
03 a good nature, to have been
0409 fighting a war in their own
0010 country for most of their lives.
Professionalism and competency.

None, in particular.

M038 Patience.
MT03
0406
0006

None.

M002 I think the bravery of the
officers and troops was the
most admirable characteristic.

I think the characteristic I least admired was the inability of the officers to allow any initiative at all on the part of their juniors.

Table 5
 Vietnamese Characteristics
 Most Admired by USMC Advisors

Characteristic	Percent Response
<u>Interpersonal</u>	
Politeness, respect, gracefulness, sincerity, warmth, tact, gentleness	34
Patience	20
Friendliness	17
Loyalty to family and friends	14
Integrity	6
Humor, happiness	6
Generosity	3
<u>Efficiency</u>	
Determination, ability to endure/survive, tenacity, perseverance, dedication, stoicism, self-discipline	54
Industriousness, ingenuity, improvisation, resourcefulness, competency, professionalism	20
Organizational ability, social order	6
Adaptability, flexibility	6
Intelligence	3

Table 6
 Vietnamese Characteristics Most Difficult
 to Understand by USMC Advisors

Characteristic	Percent Response
<u>Leadership Qualities</u>	
Decision-making process faulty	
Slow in making and reacting to decisions	
No leading by example	
Emphasis on personality of leader, not office	46
Weak small unit leadership	
Immature officers	
No allowance for junior officers to make decisions	
Relationship between officer and enlisted master-servant	
<u>Efficiency</u>	
Hesitancy	
Lack of initiative and drive	
Indifference	34
Laziness	
Forcefulness	
Unreliability	
<u>Interpersonal</u>	
Low value toward life	
Cruelty, harsh discipline and correctional methods	17
Lack of empathy for subordinates	
Stealing, dishonesty	14
Class standing above loyalty to country or organization	6
None	6

**VIETNAMESE ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES
AND ADVISOR CAPABILITIES**

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

7. HOW DO THE ORGANIZATION AND PRIORITIES OF THE VIETNAMESE MILITARY DIFFER FROM THE AMERICAN MILITARY?

M023
05
2305
0205
Organization is similar. Priorities vary because of the basic difference in philosophy. Lord knows which (ours or theirs) is correct.

M013
05
1709
0201
The organization of the VNMC is quite similar to that of the USMC -- even so far as to emulate our boot training. I do not consider that their priorities differ greatly from those of the USMC in like times.

M009
04
2103
0203
a. Less concentration on big staffs and supporting elements.
b. More emphasis on people vs. equipment.

M004
MA04
1802
0202
a. Command relationship, Bn Commander to C in C.
b. Command is dependent on ability to financially handle assignment.

M014
MT04
1700
0200
We place more emphasis on small unit leadership.

8. WHAT PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, ABILITIES, OR SKILLS DO YOU FEEL ARE MOST IMPORTANT FOR AN ADVISOR TO POSSESS?

Language. Patience. Ability. Understanding. Flexibility.

Communication, coupled with military proficiency and patience.

Integrity. Knowledge. Courage. Experience (combat). Endurance. Flexibility. Sense of humor. Positive attitude. Language. Complete understanding of supporting arms.

Sense of humor. Stability. Mature. Tactful. Professionally competent. Language ability. Brave. Ability to get along by himself. Ability to understand customs of host country. Ability to eat host country food. Reasonable. Ability to relate. Intelligent.

Professionally competent and a gentleman.

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

M036 MT04 1509 0200	The priorities of the Vietnamese military are almost 180° out compared to USMC priorities. I feel this is caused by their overemphasis on prestige and saving face. The priorities are show (having fancy looking gates, flagpoles, etc., before they have adequate barracks for the enlisted man), and maintaining the different standards for officers and leaders (a fancy officer's club will be built before a much needed barracks is built).	Speak the language. Be in good physical condition and appearance (not fat, etc.). Be friendly, but have a strong character.
M024 MT04 1509 0108	Vietnamese organization appears to be somewhat like U.S. forces in line (combat) outfits, and French in logistics areas. I was never sure what their priorities were. Perhaps it was to stockpile as much arms and equipment as possible.	Endurance, honesty, tact, empathy, WITH PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE.
M033 04 1509 0109	Face and form are more important than results. They are afraid to risk or do anything innovative.	Patience and understanding of human nature.
M010 MT04 1502 0200	There is a much greater gulf between officer and enlisted. The Bn commander is second only to God and everything revolves around his well-being, comfort, and financial interest.	Integrity, professional knowledge, excellent physical condition, and language fluency.
M016 MT04 1501 0105	There is direct alignment with culture and tradition. Respect for elders/seniors and associated matters attendant to prestige give rise to construction of flagpoles, gates, officer's clubs, etc., before mess halls, billeting areas, bunkers, etc.	Must have patience and an open mind with no preconceived notions. Flexibility is the watchword.

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

M028
MT04
1306
0104

Biggest difference is that we were only there for a year and wanted to accomplish everything. Vietnamese, however, are there long after and must continue to buck the law of averages (survival). Thus, U.S. military and Viet military priorities, or lack of, always clashed. We were used to doing things quickly; the Vietnamese had been fighting for years.

Language. Knowledge of and appreciation for culture/history of country. Must not be ethnocentric.

M037
MT04
1206
0110

As far as the VNMC goes, I don't think the organization differs too greatly from the USMC. What I know about the ARVN infantry and artillery would lead me to make the same conclusion.

Priorities sometimes had a way of getting out of synch with what were the problems at hand, but this was during the period when no fighting was taking place.

From the commencement of the Easter Offensive until I completed my tour, there seemed to be no mistaking in what came first and that was getting the job done.

Flexibility, patience, thorough knowledge of his specialty, understanding of the individuals he's working with, compassion, and respect.

An advisor cannot have tunnel vision, expect to mold his counterpart and unit into his own image, or be unable to adjust his views on many areas without jeopardizing his mission.

M001
MA04
1109
0201

In the main, we are goal-oriented and place a high priority on time ("efficiency").

I believe the Viet is basically goal-oriented, but his method is "roundabout" in our eyes. His decision-making process is much more culture influenced than ours and we have a hard time understanding this.

1. High professional competency in the field.

2. Knowledge of culture, person, and organization to be advised.

3. Knowledge of language of the host.

4. Empathy for the people and cause of host country.

5. Be considered by his peers to be an "all-around" person. A good officer or NCO with a well-adjusted personality.

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

M039 MT04 1109 0110	<p>1. Command relationships depend on the personalities of the individuals. For example, the division commander will choose loyal Bn commanders and leave them in those jobs, rather than initiate a rotational system to develop a fully qualified commander.</p> <p>2. VNMC obviously had an awareness that, for them, the war did not end in 12 months as for Americans. Thus, their tactics were often directed toward what they perceived to be long-term survival rather than taking an objective quickly. In my opinion, this proved to be a "false economy" at Quang Tri, since the drawn-out battle probably was more costly than a short, violent one would have been.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Patience.2. Language.3. Professional competence.
M031 04 1109 0108		Empathy and patience.
M019 04 1109 0105	I saw no real difference.	Patience; personal skills needed to demonstrate your general fitness (in your particular MOS); language.
M027 04 1106 0202	More emphasis and importance on birthright and social stature than on ability, in some cases.	Patience. Willingness to understand their ways. Technical knowledge.
M029 04 1009 0200	<p>I can only relate organization and priorities seen at the brigade and battalion level functioning.</p> <p>a. The VNMC operates an "Alpha and Bravo" Group structure in which the CO controls the action from the Alpha Group while the XO</p>	An advisor must be physically capable of withstanding the unsanitary (by American standards) conditions under which his unit will exist. He must have sufficient self-discipline to present an absolutely calm appearance under fire. He must

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

directs the fighting from the Bravo Group.

b. Staff functioning appears far less developed in the VNMC than the USMC, particularly in terms of S-1, S-2, and S-4 functioning.

c. Administrative procedures and reports are much simpler in the VNMC than USMC.

be capable of accepting the cultural differences he will encounter. He must genuinely like people and seek the good points in his counterparts.

M011
MT04
1009
0105

a. Primary priority is avoiding confrontation, if possible.

b. Vietnamese tend to use supporting arms to accomplish the mission of the infantry.

c. Operations are based on support availability rather than mission or scheme or maneuver.

d. Logistical support is "feast or famine," not planned.

e. Major end-item oriented rather than repair and/or maintenance programs.

a. Complete and detailed professional skills background.

b. Understanding of cultural differences.

c. Excellent physical condition.

d. Patience!

e. Understanding that any change will be slow and involved.

M017
MA03
1809
0201

Organization -- about the same as U.S. We put more emphasis on results than the VN's do.

Patience. Objectivity.
Command of the language.

M012
MA03
1409
0403

The Vietnamese do not try to hide the fact that each unit or commander (I am generalizing; there are exceptions) attempts to "feather his nest," e.g., gain more equipment, more rank, etc., than we do.

Flexibility, initiative, and old-fashioned "common sense."

M008
03
1308
0200

I think they hesitate too long before taking action; we might not always be right, but we always do something, or take an action, right or wrong.

Tact. Loyalty. Knowledge.
Understanding. Unselfishness.
Enthusiasm.

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

M005
DL03
1300
0106

Organization is very similar to U.S. Priorities are tempered by VN patience. The VN commanders have been fighting for a long time and they would rather be cautious (hesitant), so that they and their troops may live to fight another day.

High degree of proficiency in control and coordination of supporting arms. Understanding of limitations and capabilities of support arms.

Advisor must be patient, polite, and calm. Must be willing to live exactly as counterpart lives, i.e., eat VN food, drink what and when (only when) counterpart does.

Never forget military courtesy. Here is something for you to try to quantify: My opinion, which is shared by some VNMC commanders, is that "a good Marine is not always a good advisor; however, a good advisor is ALWAYS a good Marine." What I'm getting at is: A good Marine officer is confident, aggressive, and normally egocentric. An advisor MUST be able to restrain these characteristics so that he does not "come on too strongly."

The problem is that a good Marine is a leader, and an advisor has absolutely NO authority. Many advisors insulted or embarrassed their counterparts by displaying these "hard charging" qualities.

M026
03
1300
0200

Basically the same.

Patience. Knowledge. Understanding.

M041
MT03
1006
0110

The organization of the VN military seemed similar to that of the U.S. from what I saw. Additionally, on a small unit level, I think that the priorities and values were the same as an equivalent U.S. unit. I don't feel qualified to render an opinion

Fluent capability in the native language and actively use it. Knowledge of the culture and assimilation to it but not to the point of loss of identity. Empathy for the people and country. The desire to work yourself "out of a job" by

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

on higher units.

training the local officers in your job. Look for ways to improve lateral and subordinate-to-superior communications in problem areas.

M020
03
0702
0204
Lack of initiative and leadership of junior officers and NCO level. Military involved in civilian affairs and government. Promotion and assignments not necessarily based on merit or qualification.

Patience, well-qualified in MOS, open-minded, knowledgeable about the people, customs, traditions, etc., and interested in others, and language.

M018
MA03
0609
0200
VN organization: Very little with the exception that it is a small force. VN priorities: Difficult to say because they were constantly changing. The one major exception is training. There is a feeling in the VNMC that small unit training, as well as most other, is not required once the unit has been combat-tested. They did not like to train during STAND DOWN (in Saigon) or when the unit had local security missions and contact with the enemy was remote.

a. Personal characteristics: calm, soldierly bearing, with the ability to adapt to inconveniences that are not normal in the U.S. Forces. The ability to adapt to customs and the food of the local population. An advisor must be able to endure extended periods of isolation from other Americans.

b. Abilities: Thorough knowledge and/or basic experience at the level to which an advisor is assigned, e.g., captain and major at Bn, Lt. Col. at brigade.

c. Skills: Thorough knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of all supporting arms employed or possibly employed. The ability to provide for one's own existence.

M030
03
0605
0202
Chain of command, discipline, and delegated authority is non-existent. Usually Bn commander is strong, but a large number of subordinate officers were inadequate. Also, each Bn commander would not be responsive to brigade commanders, only to the commandant.

Sound professional background, know how to utilize supporting arms, and self-confidence.

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

M006 MT03 0602 0109	Their organization is basically the same. Priorities seem to be different in that they are more concerned about casualties than mission accomplishment.	Patience. Intuition. Courage (moral and physical). Physical endurance and strength. Competence (supporting arms, communications, tactics).
M007 03 0509 0103	1st priority (U.S.) -- Destroy the enemy. 1st Priority (VN) -- ensure that the CP (Command Post) is secure.	The ability to speak the language, teach in that language, and skillfully employ U.S. assets in support of the counterpart. He (advisor) should be persuasive and yet appear always to be in control.
M021 03 0509 0200	The VNMC, to the extent of what they have, is a mirror of the USMC. I think the ARVN units are along the lines of the USA. VNMC is basically infantry and artillery with some supporting units, such as communication and MT.	Being able to get along with people and showing them you know what you're doing.
M015 03 0409 0103	1. After 10-15 years of war, VN CO's and officers tend to think more of personal comfort than military necessity. 2. The "XO as a commander" concept was hard to understand at first, but now I appreciate it more.	Language. Personal bravery which the VN respect. Physically fit to an extraordinary degree.
M022 03 0409 0010	Operate much more basically at all levels than U.S., i.e., Bn Cmdr runs his Bn much like a U.S. Co Cmdr runs a company. The more removed status of officers. The lack of senior NCO's. The minimal use of mortars. Their use of the Alpha and Bravo command groups.	Must be competent in <u>all</u> military skills. Should be the type of person who easily adapts to different cultures and ways of operating. Must be able to occupy his own mind if he ends up with a counterpart who ignores him and be tactful enough to breach the difference without looking pushy about it.

Vietnamese Organizational Priorities and Advisor Capabilities

M038
MT03
0406
0006

Patience.

Knowledge. Patience.

M002

I don't think that they differ greatly in the long run except that it appears that the welfare of the individual trooper is their very lowest priority.

A tolerance for other points of view, the ability to adjust to the situation of serving with people who react differently than we do in different situations. I also feel that possession of the highest degree of professional skills is necessary.

Table 7
Differences Between Vietnamese and American
Organization and Priorities by USMC Advisors

Category	Percent Response
<u>Command Relationship</u>	
Large gap between officer and enlisted Leadership depends on personalities Poor chain of command delegation of authority Leadership below battalion commander inadequate Decision-making process faulty Welfare of trooper lowest priority	54
<u>Tactical</u>	
Less emphasis on supporting elements Minimal use of mortars More concern over casualties than mission accomplishment; emphasis on security over enemy kill Over-use of supporting arms Operations based on support over tactics Avoidance of risk confrontation Emphasis on people vs. equipment Staff functions less developed Logistics not planned Less emphasis on small unit leadership Use up equipment without PM	43
<u>Mission Orientation</u>	
U.S. short-term oriented Vietnamese long-term oriented U.S. result or goal oriented	17
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	
Administration more simple in VN; XO as commander concept; no training during stand-down or during security duty; military involved in government and civilian affairs; priorities not related to problem	14
Organization not different	34
Priorities not different	11
Priorities different	6
Don't know	3

Table 8
 Personal Qualities Considered Important
 for Advisory Duty by USMC Advisors

Characteristic	Percent Response
Professional/military competence	74
Cultural understanding, empathy	54
Patience	51
Language, communication skill	46
Flexibility, adaptability	26
Well-adjusted, self-confident, controlled	17
Bravery/courage	17
Physical condition/stamina	17
Tact	14
Integrity	11
Independence (ability to function alone)	11
Friendliness and interest in others	11
Initiative, motivation	9

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

9. BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT COURSES OF INSTRUCTION OR TRAINING METHODS WOULD YOU EMPHASIZE IN ORDER TO PREPARE ADVISORS FOR DUTY IN VIETNAM OR ELSEWHERE OVERSEAS?
10. WITH REGARD TO YOUR SPECIALTY, WHAT PARTICULAR SITUATIONS HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED, THE UNDERSTANDING OF WHICH WOULD BE HELPFUL IN TRAINING A REPLACEMENT?

M023 Language. Cultural studies.
05
2305
0205

M013 A basic ability to communicate
05 in the language of the country
1709 being advised. Courses which
0201 prepare a person to be a manager.

In my particular case, I overlapped with my replacement for a period of four (4) months, so I cannot answer with validity.

M009 1. Language.
04 2. Customs of area to be
2103 assigned.
0203 3. Physical fitness.
4. Supporting arms.
5. Professionalism.

1. A complete knowledge of the language and customs would have assisted me greatly. Many times I would hear the counterpart talk on the radio and I wouldn't understand what he said.
2. I also had an embarrassing situation occur over a lack of knowledge on my part regarding VN customs.

M004 1. Language -- 16-20 weeks.
MA04 2. Customs -- 2 weeks.
1802 3. Supporting arms (all) -- 4
0202 weeks.
4. Area brief -- 1 week.

Employment of supporting arms.

M014 If the officer possesses the
MT04 above characteristics (professionally competent and a
1700 gentleman), no specific schooling is required, except perhaps
0200 language training. If he doesn't possess the above, he'll do more harm than good.

Learn to use chopsticks and be prepared to eat a lot of rice and be thankful you had something to eat. Be prepared to face periods of slow boredom followed by moments of absolute chaos. Be flexible.

Recommendations

M036 MT04 1509 0200	Course similar to MATA where customs, traditions, and, most important, language are taught.	Complete understanding of the use of supporting arms. Good physical condition where the replacement is prepared to march long distances under hot, humid conditions.
M024 MT04 1509 0108	The subject areas should be: 1. Area study. 2. Organization and mission of Area Team. Customs and traditions (lessons learned, dos and don'ts), and language (subject fluency -- fluency). Also, face-to-face seminar with host country nationals would be effective.	If my replacement is to advise the same counterpart, then he should be told all that is known about the personal traits of that individual. In any advisory program, the advisor should have the option of relief without penalty, i.e., if he is not effective, he should be able to go to his boss, let him know, and get reassigned.
M033 04 1509 0109	1. Language training. 2. Culture and history of the area (a distant second).	The main problem I encountered was getting the Bn and Brigade commanders to employ night tactics. They knew the correct tactics to employ, and they knew I knew, but they wouldn't use them. They "piecemeal" their assets and bleed themselves to death.
M010 MT04 1502 0200	Language -- this is a must! -- and not just a 3-week course, but the full intensive course of a language institute.	A thorough knowledge of supporting arms, their capability, and how to care for them.
M016 MT04 1501 0105	Language and more language -- particularly in technical areas.	I was G-4 advisor to the VNMC and can say that, despite staff officers (VNMC) being versed in English, logistic progress over the years could have been greater if USMC staff officers could have spoken Vietnamese. Nearly every USMC staff officer was totally inadequate when it came to speaking Vietnamese. Technical areas are difficult

Recommendations

enough to understand when both parties are of the same ethnic background "let alone" two different cultures. For some reason, most USMC staff officers never attended a Vietnamese language course. This deficiency was a major impediment to progress.

M028
MT04
1306
0104

I spent six weeks MATA and three months PsyOps at Ft. Bragg. I would have preferred to spend the entire time in language training mixed with some history/culture/economics/politics.

Whatever country an American is advising in, he must be aware of the traditions and customs of that country.

Advisor-counterpart relationships are a two-way street. An advisor must not kowtow to his counterpart and/or his customs; the advisor should adhere to basic principles of his own country. Mutual respect and furthering of relationships is gained if advisor and counterpart react according to their principles -- tempered with some flexibility/adaptability by each.

M037
MT04
1206
0110

I felt I would have benefited from more language training. Although I learned quite a bit in three weeks, twice that would have been much better. Some advisors were being sent in country with no language training which was entirely unsatisfactory.

I think the answer to this lies in the "old" advisor being able to have about a week's overlap with the replacement in order to properly brief him.

I also feel the "old" advisor should keep notes of critical situations so that he can bring these to light when effecting the relief.

I believe advising is an individual, unique experience brought about by the interaction of the advisor and his counterpart; therefore, situations arising will vary, and what I may have found doesn't necessarily hold for others.

Recommendations

M001
MA04
1109
0201

1. Language training.
2. History of country (fairly deep).
3. History of conflict (detailed).
4. Political history of country (detailed).
5. If possible, knowledge of counterpart.

None. In my experience, the only thing my relief had to know that I didn't realize for a long time was that the counterpart didn't want an advisor -- much less an American one.

Our own system should have granted his desires. All the MAU people were well-qualified and trained for their jobs, and this is one thing you aren't prepared for.

M039
MT04
1109
0110

1. Language.
2. Understanding of customs and traditions at the working level -- as opposed to just the broad-brush treatment of the culture and of the society as a whole. Or instruction on levels of society different from that in the military.

M031
04
1109
0108

In addition to a brush-up on the area of work they would be advising (i.e., logistics for a logistics advisor or tactics for a field advisor), a thorough course on the attitudes, politics, religions, military organizations, etc., of the country to be advised is most important.

M019
04
1109
0105

1. Language.
2. Language.
3. Language.

None. I was assigned to the logistics area and was active as an advisor for only three months. It takes somewhat longer to gain a grasp of what is happening logistically (the tour should be at least 2-3 years for a G-4 advisor -- you'll have to live with the problems you start).

Recommendations

M027 04 1106 0202	Language is not a severe handicap. The importance of being right all the time should be understated. More emphasis on technical ability in commodity areas, management, etc.	Always "suggest" a "better" way when you are <u>alone</u> with your counterpart -- never when you are with <u>his</u> peers or subordinates.
M029 04 1009 0200	I found my language skills (47 weeks of South Vietnamese dialect at DLIWC, Monterey) to be of great value, if not indispensable. Language training is urged. Any training involving history, traditions, tactics, organization, and analysis of leadership within the service to be advised would be of value.	During my short tour, I primarily called air strikes for VNMC troops in contact. Other than that I attempted to analyze and counteract enemy artillery efforts. The major weakness I saw in the VNMC functioning at battalion level was in logistics and personnel management.
M011 MT04 1009 0105	a. Language b. Cultural training. c. Physical training. d. Review of all skills regardless of MOS.	MOS notwithstanding, as frequently repeated above, a complete understanding of the culture and cultural implications can and usually does preclude unfavorable situations from occurring.
M017 MA03 1809 0201	The MAC course at Quantico was good. Perhaps more on attitudes, culture, and <u>much</u> more language would be called for.	
M012 MA03 1409 0403	Emphasis on the local language and plenty of opportunity to talk to prior advisors <u>PLUS</u> an evaluation (honest, hopefully) by those being advised as to what they feel advisors should do, what made some good, and why some went sour.	I worked in intelligence, a diverse field at best. I would tell any advisory unit to start early in an effort for this area. In my case, I found 10 years of neglect hiding behind a NOFORN stamp and was unable to get anywhere.
M008 03 1308 0200	1. History and country concerned. 2. Language. 3. Be technically proficient! 4. Be in the top 5 percent of your peers.	Technical knowledge and language.

Recommendations

M005 DL03 1300 0106	<p>I did not attend the MATA course. Language is very useful, at least 6 months should be required (I attended the 47-week course in North Vietnamese (study).</p> <p>I recommend a supporting arms course covering all supporting arms and also a short subcourse on enemy weapons, capabilities, and employment.</p>	<p>I felt I needed more knowledge about supporting arms and enemy weapons. Also, some <u>basic</u> knowledge about customs, i.e., a U.S. Marine often is "proud" to be dirty and unshaven when in the field, while a VN washes his entire body daily and washes his clothes frequently. In Vietnam it is considered rude to bathe nude. The VN usually wear shorts while bathing in a stream. Much of the "nitty-gritty" things MUST be taught to new advisors by old advisors in country. Many peculiar customs and tactical considerations do not lend themselves to "formal school" presentation. I'd recommend any future advisory mission have a thorough indoctrination program. The MAU had a fair program until the Easter Offensive began.</p>
M026 03 1300 0200	<p>VN history and culture. Short VN language course.</p>	<p>None. Each advisor must stand on his own merits but must understand that patience and mutual trust are essential for a good working relationship.</p>
M041 MT03 1006 0110	<p>Extensive language and cultural training by indigenous personnel to include an indoctrination on food. Psychological testing to make a determination as to whether or not the potential advisor is suitable for the job. Professional training and <u>testing</u>, involving control of supporting arms, staff organization, communications, embarkation.</p>	<p>The necessity of coordinating artillery, NGF, and air strikes simultaneously in support of attacking troops. Various problems in supply procedures and acquisition of proper communications gear.</p>
M020 03 0702 0204	<p>Would vary depending on assignment. Requirements for an advisor in a combat or straight military assignment are different from those for a paramilitary, political, civil action</p>	<p>In the MAU, no particular problem, due, in large measure, to previous experience with Vietnamese. An advisor should be well informed as to the abilities of the unit and just what</p>

Recommendations

type assignment. Basically, a knowledge of people and customs, military organization, political organization, and a knowledge of the various status levels and power sources in the organization.

his role should be. My impression of the VNMC was that they were quite capable and needed little in the way of tactical advice. Rather, they needed the advisor to supply a service, i.e., air support and NGF. Once they had it, they knew what to do with it. Something like the RD cadre presents a far different problem. The organization was politically divided, and there were individuals holding minor posts who had more authority and influence than the organization leader. The political rivalry between the province chief and division commander, plus their differing goals, often made it impossible to carry out plans and meet objectives.

M018
MA03
0609
0200

Thorough knowledge of the culture and customs of the environment into which he is to be placed. This should be instructed by personnel who have a positive attitude toward the people and country on which they are instructing. A basic knowledge of the language is required under any circumstances.

A knowledge of the availability and usefulness of all sources of intelligence.

M030
03
0605
0202

With the South Vietnamese Marines, an advisor was not accepted until he had been under fire with them and reacted in a manner which positively affected the engagement.

M006
MT03
0602
0109

1. Adequate language training.
2. Cultural instruction.
3. Physical training.
4. Technical training (supporting arms, communications).

Never show fear or impatience because your counterpart is not handling the situation as you would or feel should be handled. Always "help," never, never "advise"!! Be interested and think before you speak. In the same vein, don't make "small talk."

Recommendations

- M007
03
0509
0103
1. Language instruction -- the advisor should always have a good idea of what is going on around him.
 2. Tell him what the government really wants him to accomplish -- give him the priorities.

M021
03
0509
0200

Some language and cultural training goes a long way. I got my foot in the door at the beginning by being able to talk on a few simple subjects, such as geography of their country and a couple of their historical heroes. Teach prospective advisors that, as outsiders, it is very easy to be critical of methods employed by the VN's. At first I found fault with some things they did which, in retrospect, I realized U.S. units had done the same things, and I hadn't given them a second thought.

As an artillery advisor, I was at first shocked at many of the things they did. They violated basic firing and safety practices, but then I learned to look past that. What counted was the effect and there was no one better at getting good coverage on the target in minimal time. When U.S. Army officers visited our position and about gagged at seeing cooking fires in the gun pits, I had to laugh. I had felt the same way but never heard of an accident -- different strokes for different folks! What I am saying is that if some of their practices seem unconventional, look at the results before passing judgment. They never leveled their bubbles when in a hurry, but they still put the rounds on target. They gave the infantry what they wanted as fast as possible.

M015
03
0409
0103

Instructions by local nationals or military on customs, traditions, etc.

M022
03
0409
0010

More language training, basic psy ops.

In reference to the VNMC, I could explain to a replacement the different style and leadership and the different tactics used by a VN infantry unit.

Recommendations

M038
MT03
0406
0006

Language.

Patience of the Vietnamese.

M002

I think that either advisor school, at Ft. Bragg and at Quantico (when in operation), are acceptable, but more language training is necessary than either one provided.

I don't think that it's possible to train a man for the difficult personal type encounters. It's something that must be encountered to learn how to handle them.

Table 9
 Recommended Training for
 Advisory Duty by USMC Advisors

Training Area	Percent Response
Customs, history, culture, political study of Vietnam; knowledge of counterpart; instruction by host nationals; acceptance of Vietnamese culture	100
Language	80
Supporting arms, specialty and basic military skills review	31
Physical fitness training	9
Screen personality, top 5% of peer selection	9
Professionalism, managerial course	6
Advisory mission, goals	3
Brief by prior advisor	3

Table 10
 Areas of Understanding Considered
 to be of Particular Value to
 Military Specialty

Advisor Asset	Percent Response
Knowledge of culture and traditions	14
Knowledge of counterpart	
Language training	9
Thorough indoctrination program	
Learn to eat like counterpart culture	
Don't be pushy (never make suggestions in front of counterpart's peers or subordinates)	
Ability to function with Vietnamese poor logistics and personnel management	
Be respectful and professional	
Have patience and mutual trust	
Never show fear or impatience	
Be flexible and adaptable	6
Be prepared for long periods of boredom	
Physical conditioning	
Option of relief if desired or rejection by counterpart	6
Overlap assignment with predecessor	
Notes from previous advisor provided	
Extend tour of duty to 2 or 3 years	
Supply training program	
Technical knowledge of specialty	
Experience under fire and positive reaction	
Knowledge of employment of supporting arms	14
Knowledge and use of intelligence information	6
Knowledge of how to get counterparts to employ correct tactics	