

# Leadership in Cinema



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

## BAND OF BROTHERS PART SEVEN: THE BREAKING POINT

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Studio: HBO Pictures..... Released: 2001

Genre: War/Drama ..... Audience Rating: R

Runtime: 112 min

### Materials

VCR or DVD (preferred) television or projection system, Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles handouts (single-sided), notepads, writing utensils.

### Intent of Leadership in Cinema

The Leadership in Cinema program is intended to provide a selection of films that will support continuing education efforts within the wildland fire service. Films not only entertain but also provide a medium to teach leadership at all levels in the leadership development process—self or team development. The program is tailored after *Reel Leadership: Hollywood Takes the Leadership Challenge*. Teaching ideas are presented that work with “students of leadership in any setting.” Using the template provided by Graham, Sincoff, Baker, and Ackerman, facilitators can adapt lesson plans to correlate with the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles. Other references are provided which can be used to supplement the authors’ template. (Taken from the [Leadership in Cinema website](#).)

### Lesson Plan Objective

Students will identify Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles illustrated within Band of Brothers and discuss leadership lessons learned with group members or mentors.

## Basic Movie Plot

Starting with their rigorous boot camp training in Georgia in 1942, the miniseries recounts the remarkable achievements of this volunteer rifle company, which parachuted into France early on D-Day morning 1944; spearheaded the Market-Garden and Rhine offensives; engaged the Nazis in Bastogne and the Bulge; and captured Hitler’s “impenetrable” Eagle’s Nest at Berchtesgaden in 1945. (Taken from the [HBO official website](#))

This Emmy-winning miniseries etched an unforgettably vivid portrait of WWII, as experienced by an Army unit serving in Europe, which parachuted into Normandy on D-Day and fought for the remainder of the war. Band of Brothers gives the history and tells the story of Easy Company, 506th Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division, US Army. Drawn from the interviews with survivors of Easy Company, as well as soldiers’ journal and letters, Band of Brothers chronicles the experiences of these young men who knew extraordinary bravery and extraordinary fear. (Taken from the [History Channel](#))

## Band of Brothers – Part Seven, The Breaking Point Summary

In the dead of winter, in the forest outside of Bastogne, Belgium, the men of Easy Company struggle to hold the line alone while fending off frostbite and hunger, Having arrived with no winter clothes and little supplies and ammunition. Medic Eugene Roe (Shane Taylor) is overwhelmed, on edge and close to combat exhaustion when he finds friendship with a Belgian nurse. Easy Co. spends a miserable Christmas in the trenches, and receives the news that the German army’s demand for surrender was met with Gen. McAuliffe’s defiant answer: “Nuts!” (Taken from HBO website)

## Cast of Main Characters

Capt. Winters/Richard D. Winters.....	Damian Lewis
1st Sgt. Lipton/Carwood Lipton.....	Donnie Wahlberg
Lt. Dike/Norman S. Dike .....	Peter O’Meara
SSgt William “Wild Bill” J Guarnere .....	Frank John Hughes
Lt. Nixon/Lewis Nixon .....	Ron Livingston
SSgt. Toye/Joseph Toye .....	Kirk Acevedo
Pvt. Luz/George Luz.....	Rick Gomez
Pvt. Malarkey/Donald G. Malarkey .....	Scott Grimes
1st Lt. Compton/Lynn “Buck” Compton .....	Neal McDonough
Lt. Speirs/Ronald C. Speirs .....	Matthew Settle
Pvt. Muck/Warren H. (Skip) Muck.....	Richard Speight Jr.

(Photographs of main characters at the end of the list)

## Facilitation Options

Band of Brothers is an excellent leadership film addressing multiple facets of the wildland fire leadership values and principles. Various avenues can be pursued depending upon the facilitator's intent. At a minimum, students can identify the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles that are illustrated in the film. Students should be less concerned with how many principles they view within the film and more concerned with how the principles they do recognize can be used in their self-development as a leader.

The film can be viewed in its entirety or by clip selection depending on facilitator intent and time schedules. Another method is to have the students view the film, and then hold the discussion session with the entire group.

### Full-film Facilitation Suggestion

When opting for the full-film method, the facilitator should legally obtain the video, abide by proper copyright laws, and follow the outline below:

1. Facilitator will go over a basic plot of the movie and cover the objective.
2. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles with students (Hand out sheets)
3. Advise students to document instances within the film that illustrate/violate the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles on the handout provided.
4. Show students Band of Brothers – Part Seven: The Breaking Point.
5. Break. After showing the movie, provide at least 15 minutes for a break, and also give time for the students to discuss their finding and reflect on how this movie applies to their jobs and private lives.
6. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their leadership role in wildland fire suppression. The facilitator can reference the specific clips (see clip facilitation section) to encourage further discussion or help clarify points of interest.
7. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives, as well as take the opportunity to initiate or update their leadership self-development plan. Also, consider mentioning to the students about acquiring a mentor and relate this to the self-development plan.

### Clip Facilitation Suggestion

When opting for the clip method, the facilitator should follow the outline below:

1. Break into smaller groups. (Optional) But consider breaking up into three groups, one for each of the values (example).
2. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Value or Principle(s) targeted for discussion. Hand out the sheets, and briefly go over each one, duty, respect and integrity.

3. Facilitator will go over a basic plot of the movie and cover the objective.
4. Facilitator will briefly describe the clip and guide the discussion of the clip to the specific principle that is discussed. Make sure to get plenty of feedback from the students before revealing the answer. (Spend approximately 5 minutes per clip).
5. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their leadership role in wildland fire suppression. The facilitator can reference the specific clips (see clip facilitation section) to encourage further discussion or help clarify points of interest.
6. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives, as well as take the opportunity to initiate or update their leadership self-development plan. Also, consider mentioning to the students about acquiring a mentor and relate this to the self-development plan.

## **Specific Clip Usage for Band of Brothers – Part Seven: The Breaking Point**

**Facilitator Hint.** Ensure familiarity with each individual clip in order to guide the groups.

The following clips may assist facilitators with leadership discussions. All times are approximate. (Start time/Stop time.)

### ***Duty***

**Discussion Point One** (51:49/52:40): Assault begins on Foy. Winters briefs Dike about the upcoming assault on the town of Foy. Stop at 52:40 just after Dike yawns. Discuss and contrast Winters and Dike's body language during Winters briefing. The discussion point here is that Winters is proficient in his job and conveys that during his briefing, whereas Lt. Dike, by yawning is showing that he is probably not quite engaged completely in the briefing.

**Discussion Point Two:** (56:45/57:55) Winters sees that Dike is not going to be able to lead the assault and wants to go in himself and lead but is stopped by Colonel Sink, Winters makes an immediate decision to get Lt. Speirs to lead the assault. The discussion point here is that Speirs practiced the duty principle by preparing himself beforehand. He was able to immediately take charge when in charge. He also maintained his situational awareness and prepared himself even though he was not the initial person in charge of the assault. He immediately knows what he is doing and is highly proficient in his job. Discuss how Speirs tells Dike that he is in charge, Discuss Speirs and Lipton's quick and effective briefing to the men.

### ***Respect***

**Discussion Point One:** (11:15/12:30): During this clip, First Sgt. Lipton is describing Lt. Dike and some of his misgivings. Discuss how this relates to the lack of respect Lt. Dike has for his men, focusing on the point that he is not available to his subordinates and his briefings are less than adequate.

**Discussion Point Two** (13:44/15:18): First Sgt. Lipton is walking around to the foxholes, checking on the men and talks to Guarniere and Luz. Both of these men are commenting on

Dike's lack of leadership ability. Discuss how Lipton's respect for his men differs from that of Lt. Dike.

### ***Integrity***

**Discussion Point One** (21:59/23:00): Lt. Nixon is given a chance to go home for a month and help out the war cause by aiding the government in selling war bonds. He declines to do this because it would not be in the best interest of the situation at that time. The teaching point here is that Nixon chose the difficult right over the easy wrong. He instead suggests sending one of the less efficient Lt's home so that the company itself will actually be strengthened.

**Discussion Point Two** (105:25 to end): Speirs and Lipton talk, Lipton is rewarded with a field commission for his actions during Bastogne. The teaching point here is the Lt's and above all recognized Lipton's work and actions during the previous engagements.

### **Film/Book Discussion**

Consider having a few students read Stephen E. Ambrose, *Band of Brothers: E Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne from Normandy to Hitler's Eagle's Nest* (New York, 1992). Lead a discussion between students who have read the book and those who watched the film. Compare and contrast the book and the movie.

### **References**

- [Band of Brothers website](#)
- The Avalon Project: [World War II documents](#)
- National Archives: [Powers of Persuasion – Poster Art of World War II](#)

### **Resources – Books**

- Ambrose, Stephen E. *Band of Brothers: E Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne from Normandy to Hitler's Eagle's Nest*. New York. 1992.
- Kennedy, David. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. 1999.

Hyperlinks have been included to facilitate the use of the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program website. Encourage students of leadership to visit the [website \(https://www.fireleadership.gov/\)](https://www.fireleadership.gov/)..

## Band of Brothers: The Breaking Point

(Facilitator Reference)

Below is a short list of examples from the movie that coincide with the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles. Discuss leadership lessons learned from the film with the class and have the class discuss these within their groups. Have the group document film clips illustrating the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles.

### Duty

1. Be proficient in your job, both technically and as a leader.
2. Make sound and timely decisions.
3. Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished.
4. Develop your subordinates for the future.
  - Speirs, Winters and Lipton are all proficient in their job. (Specifically, how did Speirs show that he was proficient in his job?)
  - The example of Winters ordering Speirs into the fight, he made a timely decision. (Specifically, how did Winters provide an example of making a timely decision?)
  - Briefings given by Speirs and Lipton are examples of good briefings for their situation. (Specifically, how did their briefings appeal to you as a recipient?)
  - Winters has to delegate some tasks to Lipton and Speirs. (What types of duties does Winters hand down to Lipton and Speirs?)
  - Speirs and Winters examples for timely decisions taking charge. (What are some examples of Winters and Speirs taking charge?)
  - Lipton was putting the safety of his men before everything by questioning Dike. (When Lipton talks to Winters about Dike, how was he putting the safety of his men first?)

### Respect

1. Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.
2. Keep your subordinates informed.
3. Build the team.
4. Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.
  - Dike did not keep his other Lieutenants informed, he as often absent. (Why was Dike's absence from the group such an important event?)
  - Lipton observed others behavior when he gave the Luger to Mularkey. (Why was important for Lipton to observe others behavior?)

## Facilitator Reference

- Dike's briefing as opposed to Winters or Lipton's. (How did Dike's briefing differ from Winters or Lipton's?)
- Lipton did a great job of quelling some of the inner morale problems by speaking to Luz in a professional manner. (How did Lipton's speech to Luz effect the situation?)
- During one of the attacks, Lipton is taking care of his subordinates needs, going around to the different foxholes and asks them how they are doing. (How did Lipton's actions during the bombing show that he was looking out for their well-being?)

## Integrity

1. Know yourself and seek improvement.
2. Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.
3. Set the example.
  - Dike may or may not have known his capabilities, but he was not a combat leader. (By his actions, could you assume that Dike did not "know himself"?)
  - When he is briefed by Winters, Lt. Dike seems to have understood his orders, but by yawning, he physically showed that his situational awareness was not up to standard. (Why was Dike's physical response to Winters briefing so important?)
  - Winters helps Lipton receive a field commission crediting Lipton for good performance. (How does Winters actions show how he set the example of giving credit where credit was due?)
  - Winters, Speirs and Lipton all share in the hardships of their subordinates. (What sorts of examples can you give of these people sharing in the hardships of their subordinates?)
  - Even after the incredible losses suffered by E Company, Lipton continues to fight and lead the men, showing little despair. (Can you give an example of when Lipton truly complained about the situation he was in?)

## Questions to Generate Further Discussion

Excerpt from: “Leaders We Would Like to Meet” Interviews

1. What makes you want to follow someone?
2. What kind of leader do you think you are? What do you think others would say?
3. If you were to pick three of the most important character traits for an effective leader, what would those be?
4. Are leaders born or made?
5. Who are some of the individuals that had a significant influence on your life? Currently, who do you think is leadership role model and why?
6. If you are not currently in fire, how do you think this movie could be applied to your job?
7. What are some of the toughest decisions or dilemmas you have faced? What helped to guide you through those situations?
8. Why do you think people follow you?
9. How do some of the events in Band of Brothers – Part Seven apply specifically to your job? To your personal life?
10. Which character in Band of Brothers – Part Seven do you think is most like you?
11. How do you go about initiating a new idea in order to put it into practice?
  - Regarding leadership, what quotes come to mind? “Before honor comes humility.” Proverbs
  - “Lead me, follow me, or get out of my way.” General George Patton
  - “Leadership is not only doing the right thing, but it is doing the right thing at the right time.” Life Application Bible
  - “Leaders are not born, they are made. They are made by hard effort, which is a price all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.” Vince Lombardi
  - “Only one man in a thousand is a leader of men, the other 999 follow women.” Groucho Marx

## **Band of Brothers – Part Seven: The Breaking Point**

Document film clips illustrating the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles and discuss leadership lessons learned from the film with the class.

### **Duty**

1. Be proficient in your job, both technically and as a leader.
2. Maintain situational awareness in order to anticipate needed actions.
3. Improvise within the commander's intent to handle a rapidly changing environment.

### **Respect**

1. Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.
2. Put the safety of your subordinates above all other objectives.
3. Take care of your subordinates needs.
4. Observe human behavior as well as fire behavior.
5. Consider team experience, fatigue and physical limitations when accepting assignments

### **Integrity**

1. Know yourself and seek improvement.
  - Actively listen to feedback from subordinates.
2. Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.
  - Credit subordinates for good performance.
3. Set the example.
  - Share the hazards and hardships with your subordinates.
  - Don't show discouragement when facing setbacks.
  - Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.

**Be proficient in your job, both technically & as a leader.**

- Take charge when in charge.
- Adhere to professional standard operating procedures.
- Develop a plan to accomplish given objectives.

**Make sound & timely decisions.**

- Maintain situation awareness in order to anticipate needed actions.
- Develop contingencies & consider consequences.
- Improvise within the commander's intent to handle a rapidly changing environment.

**Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, accomplished.**

- Issue clear instructions.
- Observe & assess actions in progress without micro-managing.
- Use positive feedback to modify duties, tasks & assignments when appropriate.

**Develop your subordinates for the future.**

- Clearly state expectations.
- Delegate tasks that you are not required to do personally.
- Consider individual skill levels & developmental needs when assigning tasks.

**Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.**

- Put the safety of your subordinates above all other objectives.
- Take care of your subordinate's needs.
- Resolve conflicts between individuals on the team.

**Keep your subordinates informed.**

- Provide accurate & timely briefings.
- Give the reason (intent) for assignments & tasks.
- Make yourself available to answer questions at appropriate times.

**Build the team.**

- Conduct frequent debriefings with the team to identify lessons learned.
- Recognize accomplishments & reward them appropriately.
- Apply disciplinary measures equally.

**Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.**

- Observe human behavior as well as fire behavior.
- Provide early warning to subordinates of tasks they will be responsible for.
- Consider team experience, fatigue & physical limitations when accepting assignments.

**Know yourself and seek improvement.**

- Know the strengths/weaknesses in your character & skill level.
- Ask questions of peers & supervisors.
- Actively listen to feedback from subordinates.

**Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.**

- Accept full responsibility for & correct poor team performance.
- Credit subordinates for good performance.
- Keep your superiors informed of your actions.

**Set the example.**

- Share the hazards & hardships with your subordinates.
- Don't show discouragement when facing setbacks.
- Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.

**DUTY**

**RESPECT**

**INTEGRITY**



## Leadership Self Development Plan

For Wildland Firefighters...a Lifetime of Learning

**Next level of leadership:**

**Directed reading (Professional Reading Program) and other self-study:**

**Training (Next wildland fire L- and S-courses):**

**Details (Temporary assignments with new or increased responsibility):**

**Mentor (Identifying and asking a role model to provide guidance):**

**Outside Activities (Associations, volunteer programs, higher education, etc.)**

**Employee:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

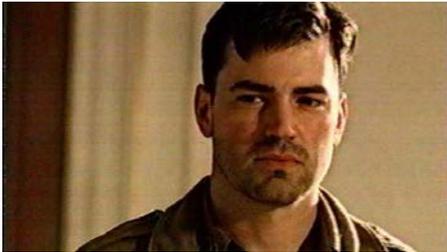
**Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Main Character List

### ***Band of Brothers – Part Seven: The Breaking Point***



First Sergeant Lipton: Main Character in this film. Story is told mainly from his perspective. He is the one who went in and talked to Winters about concern with Dike leading Easy Company into Foy.



Captain Nixon: Gave up his place to go home in order to stay and help with the situation at Foy.



Lt. Compton: Compton is the one who sees all of his friends killed during the engagement. He is taken off the line about the middle of the movie.



Lt. Dike: He is the leader who is absent and the men talk about him throughout the movie. When it is his time to lead, he ends up getting replaced by Lt. Speirs.



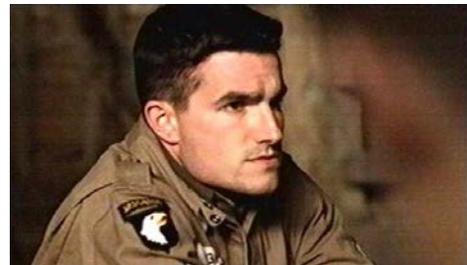
Captain Winters: Lipton went in and talked to him about Lt. Dike. He also made the decision to send Lt. Speirs in and lead the advance in replacement of Lt. Dike.



Lt. Speirs: Lt. Speirs is the one who takes over in place of Lt. Dike on the assault of Foy. At the beginning of the movie, his legendary exploits are discussed by the men.



Pvt. Luz: First Sgt. Lipton talks to Luz about not making things worse within the ranks.



Pvt. Guarniere: One of the soldiers who is hurt during the encounter.

## Student Reference



Pvt. Toye: One of the soldiers who is hurt during the engagement



Pvt. Mularkey: Lipton gives Mularkey the Ruger as a morale booster.



Col. Sink: At the end of the movie, Winters runs right past Col. Sink as Sink is giving him orders.