

## Appendix G1: TILT Drill Sergeant Key Informant Interview Guide

T1: ETAC Evaluation of the Trauma Informed Leadership Training Program  
(Last Updated 03.19.2025)

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Participant ID:	Date:
Interviewer:	Note Takers:
Start Time:	End Time:

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0704-0644  
OMB EXPIRATION DATE: 01/31/2026

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## Welcome [6 Minutes]

### Welcome & Introductions [2 Minutes]

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[Lead Interviewer to remain on video for the duration of the interview. Support staff to show video briefly during introductions.]

Thank you for taking time to talk with me. My name is [Interviewer Name] and I work for the nonprofit research organization, NORC at the University of Chicago. NORC is completing interviews with a **small number of Army Drill Sergeants like you** to gather your **feedback** on the Trauma Informed Leadership Training, which we will sometimes call “TILT.” NORC, in collaboration with the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) and United States Army, is conducting an **evaluation** with Army soldiers as part of the **Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance Center (ETAC)**. The purpose of the evaluation is to learn more about **how the TILT program was implemented** and its **effectiveness** in preparing Drill Sergeants to build a trauma-informed environment within their platoons and to support soldiers in accessing support services.

[Note taker 1 Name] and [Note taker 2 Name] are also joining on this call to take notes on the topics we discuss.

While we are getting started **can you confirm that you can hear me and see me** clearly?

[Interviewer to confirm also that s/he/they can hear participant clearly]

- ☐ Yes [Continue]
- ☐ No [Offer technical assistance as needed]

Also, it is not necessary that we see you by video. So, **if you prefer, you may turn off your video**. This is entirely up to you.

This interview will last **up to 40 minutes**. Does this sound okay?

- ☐ Yes [Continue]
- ☐ No [End discussion]

## Agreement to Participate [2 Minutes]

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**INTERVIEWER:** Before we start, I want to share a few points. First, your participation in our conversation today is voluntary, meaning no negative action will be taken against you should you choose to stop the conversation or skip a specific question at any point. Second, our conversation today is confidential, meaning your name and any other personally identifiable information you share today will not be associated with the responses you share.

If you have questions about this project or the evaluation being conducted by NORC, you can contact the evaluation study's Principal Investigator Dr. Elizabeth Mumford. I'm sharing her email in the chat.

Do you have any questions for me at this time?

- ☐ Yes [Answer questions]
- ☐ No [Continue]

## Overview [2 Minutes]

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Today we'll be speaking about the Trauma Informed Leadership Training program, which our records indicate that you completed [recently/in the past year].

Do you **remember** this training?

- ☐ Yes [Summarize following text]
- ☐ No [Read following text]

It involved a four-to-five-hour online training. The training focused on understanding trauma and trauma-informed leadership. The program was intended to help enhance individual and unit performance and to ensure that soldiers are aware of Army support services through a trauma-informed approach. A trauma-informed approach is a strategy for addressing trauma from the systems to the individual level to promote resilience.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today to provide your thoughts and opinions about the Trauma Informed Leadership Training program.

We will get started! As a reminder, your responses are private and will not be shared with others by name but will only be shared as a summary with all other responses.

## Main Discussion Guide [35 Minutes]

### A. Experience in Military [2 Minutes]

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To begin our conversation, I'd like to understand your military experience so far prior to the TILT program.

1. Please tell me **briefly** about your **career in military service**.
  - a. **How long** have you been in the Army?
  - b. Had you served in a **different Service branch** before your enlistment in the Army?
  - c. Describe your **current role**.
  - d. How many cycles have you trained as a Drill Sergeant?

### B. Military Climate [5 Minutes]

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We are now going to talk about your experience and relationship with your own Drill Sergeants while in Initial Military Training.

2. How would you describe your relationship with your Drill Sergeants during Initial Military Training?
  - a. Did you find it easy to talk with your Drill Sergeants? What did your Drill Sergeants do that made it easy/hard to communicate with them?
  - b. Did your Drill Sergeants make it easy for you and other soldiers within your platoon to get close to one another? If so, how did your Drill Sergeants improve your connections with other soldiers?
3. What does a **successful, trauma-informed** Drill Sergeant look like to you?
4. What does a **healthy command climate** look like to you?

### C. General Attitudes about Trauma Informed Leadership Training [5 Minutes]

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Next, I'd like to ask you specific questions about the TILT program.

5. What was your **overall impression** of the Trauma Informed Leadership Training program?
  - a. What, if at all, was valuable to you about the program? What, if anything, did you get out of it?
  - b. Were there any parts of the program that were new for you? If so, what were they?

### D. Process & Modifications: Program Structure [5 Minutes]

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Now, I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences completing the TILT program.

6. Were there specific sections of the TILT curriculum that were **helpful/not helpful**?
  - a. Were there parts of the training that were **confusing** or could be framed differently, or improved?
  - b. How would you improve the **content** of the **training**?
    - i. PROMPT: Based on your experience, was there content or instruction you now feel needs to be in the TILT program, that was missed at the time?
7. How would you **change** the way the training was **implemented**?
  - a. Would you prefer if the training was offered at the **Drill Sergeant Academy**? After?
  - b. Would you prefer if the course was **longer** or **shorter** than 4/5 hours?

## E. Post-Training Success Indicators [5 Minutes]

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Now I'd like to ask you about the relative impact the TILT training, specifically, may have had for you.

8. How, if at all, has TILT **prepared** you to **support** team members who may be experiencing or have a history of trauma?
9. What, if any, **strategies** or **skills** did you learn in TILT that you found most helpful to support your platoon?
10. How **important** do you think incorporating a trauma-informed approach is when working with soldiers?
  - a. Under what circumstances do you think a trauma-informed approach could be most helpful with soldiers?

## F. Post-Training Intentions & Behaviors: Support Services [10 Minutes]

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These next questions are going to be asking if and how TILT impacted your understanding of the support services available to soldiers.

11. What are the most common problems or challenges you see new soldiers struggling with?
12. How do you typically respond when a soldier is experiencing a challenge?
  - a. Do you feel better prepared to connect soldiers with support services? If so, how?
13. Did you learn anything new from TILT about **services** available to soldiers?
  - a. What did you learn about connecting soldiers with support services?
14. Have you connected soldiers to any support services/resources since participating in TILT? If so, please describe your experience.
15. Do you believe that making time (and reducing stigma) for soldiers to access these kinds of services is **beneficial** to the Army? If so, why?

## G. Additional Comments [3 Minutes]

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16. Is there anything about the Trauma Informed Leadership Training program that we have not discussed that you want to mention?
  - a. PROMPT: Do you have any recommendations for different ways – other than the TILT program – to support soldiers?

## Closing [1 Minute]

Thank you for participating in this interview with NORC at the University of Chicago. Your perspectives are invaluable in helping us better understand the effectiveness of the Trauma Informed Leadership Training program.

This concludes our interview. Thank you for your time today.

[END INTERVIEW]