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Making The Right Decisions

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Making The Right Decisions

Military Ethics is all about making the honest, moral, and right decisions all the time. For years some leaders in the military have continue to make bad decisions that have cost the military dollars, lives, and very poor leadership at the senior level. There are ethical decisions that army leaders can make when they decide to discipline Soldiers, write NCOER's, and send Soldiers to NCOES schools. The Army would consistently produce excellent Soldiers if all leaders would continue to make the right ethical decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to highlight a few unethical decisions made by Army leaders on a daily basis. The four common ethical dilemmas consist of decisions made for overweight soldiers, NCOERs, UCMJ, and NCOES.

Over-Weight

Several of the young NCO's and officers in the Army today are overweight and not meeting body fat standards, but they are still advancing in the ranks. The Army is allowing soldiers to enlist in the military already overweight with as much as eight percent body fat over the allowable rate. They complete basic and initial entry training without meeting Army standards. Then once they reach their initial unit, the Army expects them to comply with body fat standards after the Army made exceptions for them to enter in the first place. The decision to make exceptions for these Soldiers, but at the same time penalize active duty is neither fair nor ethical. Now the Army is spending extra time and money to get a substandard soldier to meet the height and weight requirements through nutrition counseling, medical screening, and overweight program. There are also experienced NCO's in leadership positions that are not meeting height and weight standards. There are senior officers and NCOs counseling and flagging their young

soldiers for overweight, when in fact they do not meet the requirements. There is only one Army standard for all soldiers regardless of years of service, rank, and position according to Army Regulation 600-9. There are too many instances where soldiers do not receive the same discipline for failing or not meeting an Army standard. Leaders placed in these dilemmas must continue to make the right ethical decision. For example, a section sergeant has his or her soldier flag for overweight when in fact he or she is overweight without any documentation. Soldiers see right through weak leadership and will often question why they are flag for overweight and their supervisor is not. This happens because leaders are putting soldier experience, maturity, and reputation ahead of standards. Just because a soldier is great at his or her job does not mean bend the standard. The ethical decision would be to address one standard for all regardless of position or rank. Confront leaders rather NCOs or officers who are not complying with Army standards with an honest assessment. Leaders that are afraid to confront their subordinate leaders are doing an injustice to the military and their young soldiers.

NCOER

There are too many inflated NCOERs in the Army. Leaders and supervisors control the development of the future leaders. Leaders that allow bogus write-ups on NCOERs are doing an injustice to the future soldiers by providing them with weak leadership. The Army is developing more paper NCOs than experience NCOs. Leaders are not being open and honest to their NCOs about their job performance, which is creating this ethical dilemma. Here is an example of a common NCOER ethical dilemma. SSG Doe is an excellent supply SGT and received the Bronx Star while performing his duties down range. Overall, he is as good as they get when it comes to his job, but he does not meet body fat standards by 4% in accordance with AR600-9. Too often these NCOs still receive excellent NCOERs and all the facts on their performance is seldom

documented. NCOERs rarely reflect actual performance of soldiers now days. About 90% of all NCOERs have a rating of among the best, but 90% of all NCOs in the Army are not among the best. Maybe the NCOER system should adopt the officer OER system where only a certain percentage of NCOs in a company can attain among the best. That way, leaders or supervisors want feel so guilty about rating their soldiers fully capable. If leaders or supervisors properly counsel soldiers and address the requirements for attaining among the best, the Army would produce a consistent amount of sharp, competitive, and well deserve excellent leaders rather than the numerous amounts of paper NCOs.

UCMJ

Several leaders ethical decisions towards UCMJ are not on even playing grounds between seniors, juniors, and lower enlisted. Although the decision is ultimately up to the commander, there are leaders that believe that there should be a different standard for time in service. Again, some leaders are basing their decisions for punishment of UCMJ on rank and time in service. There are leaders that would agree that a NCO or officer has more to lose than a private does. Therefore, the punishment may or may not be equal or the same. UCMJ is the law for all Soldiers in the Army and regardless of time in service or rank.

NCOES

Our NCOES system is making exceptions to Army standards and is graduating soldiers out into the field to enforce standards that they themselves did not meet. Regardless of recruiting goals, the Army cannot afford to continue to progress substandard soldiers. Again, this cycle continues to produce substandard future leaders. Even at the most senior level NCOES course, The Sergeants Major Academy, the Army is promoting and graduating substandard soldiers. The

military cannot afford to continue to graduate NCOs who do not comply with body fat standards or cannot pass an APFT. These NCOs will eventually be in charge of our future young leaders and will require them to attain those standards, but at the same time setting a bad example of what right looks like.

Conclusion

It is vital that the United States Army and leaders continue to make the right ethical decisions to better prepare the future leaders of the military, which are the young Soldiers. The Army has the correct standards, tools, and systems in place to do the right thing, but leaders must enforce these standards and make the hard right decision over the easy wrong. Although the military is going to far length to maintain soldiers and increase its total by 80,000, but a larger Army does not necessarily make it a better Army. The military will benefit best with a small competent army capable of meeting all standards rather than a large army with thousands of substandard soldiers. Complying with all Army standards and making right ethical decisions will show our future leaders what right looks like.