

RUNNING HEAD: Challenges Females Leaders Face within the Military

Issues and Challenges that a Female Leader Face within the Military

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### Issues and Challenges that a Female Leader Face within the Military

The issues and challenges that female leaders are confronted with are (insurmountable). The thought of an Army developed by males and dominated by females does not sit well with the vast majority of male authority. Generally, women are looked at as weak feeble creatures, vulnerable, submissive, not to be taken serious, and last but not least nurturers. Women are constantly having to prove themselves daily to their male counterparts that we are, if not, just as tactically and technically proficient in order to be heard. Because of this handicap most women have shorten their careers because of the many obstacles they are faced with, in the end it is just not worth the fight. For the many women who have stuck around they have over come various obstacles that were placed in their path on a daily basis. And they are now making a difference for our future female leaders, they may not see a change in there careers but for those who are following in their foot steps change is evident. I cannot blame the women who have chosen to exit the service before they have reached the senior level. It will take a strong minded, influential supportive female role model who is active in her words and deeds to show future female leaders how to represent and present themselves with confidence and poise, and not having to compromise themselves for profit or gain. Such a leader will give the female Soldiers some hope and leadership, in which they can relate, emulate, idolize and want to be like in the future. Are you that leader? Are you someone to emulate?

Measuring up to the Boys whether it is recreational activities or work related duties females are often looked at as the back-up for positions that were initially tasked to a male Soldier even though the female is more knowledgeable, qualified, better suited,

and have more experience than their male counterpart. We will always be looked at second or the perceived notion they have to put a female in position because of equal opportunity. Let not forget about promotion if a female gets promoted before her peer look out because here comes the rumours, or if a Female gets a position that has never been held by a female before she will automatically become as issue under scrutiny her ability to perform will be evaluated and judge for other females to come. If she performs well then here come the good ole girl saying “you are the first female that I ever seen that can do this or do that’. On the other hand if she fails then here comes I told you so and it will be a long time before another female get the position. The question is why is it that female leader has to endure what comes unnatural but on the other hand the male leader is accepted with faults and cover-ups? Why is it that our male counter parts want to see us fail if we are better at doing the job than they are? This is why they under mind or second quest our ability thinks and make decisions, our confidence, and perform our duties accordingly. We will voice our opinions but at what cost our jobs? Oh by the way here it comes, a female with a strong personality “the Bitch” Who authorized this profound word to be address towards any woman even more hurtful in the work place. Why is it that if a female leader who is engaged on the 50 meter target is either a Bitch or on her period? This is what we call ignorance. Sometimes we are our own worst enemy’s competition among female leaders, some females do think that other strong female leaders undermined their authority and they hold that against the other female. Many times this is unwarranted and unnecessary and leads to other issues. Females we can’t get it right, when we have disagreements it is deemed as cattiness or over a man, or whining it is said that too many women in one space can’t get along or even worse that

same disagreement if taken to a supervisor will not be taken seriously. As leaders we need to learn how to deal with women and their issues and understand that we do have legitimate issues that needs to be handled in a professional manner and to not pray on their issues as a weakness for personal opportunity.

During Operation Iraq Freedom II we were told that a senior female leader was enroute to take over the company and it seems as though she was the topic of discussion upon her arrival. We currently have a male leader who is in position for the sake of being in charge he is a leader who has never worked around females and it shows he is very hard on the males and he will hold them to the standards but on the other hand the female Soldiers were left to fend for themselves. He did not care if they were complying with the regulations or not. Maybe he was afraid of being reported for sexual harassment if he called a female on a violation. But rest assure this all changed when the new leadership arrived.

All of a sudden Soldiers were taking pride in their personal appearance and physical fitness. This leader was not afraid to call you out on your infractions that you may have. And she started from the top down which was unheard of but it was needed. She was a leader who had the grace of a ballerina and the posture of a professional leader and the attitude on how to get the job done right the first time. She spoke with dignity and respect and was neither condescending nor rude and did not hesitate to speak what was on her mind in the presence of her superiors. She would defend Soldiers even if they were not in her section. When ever you saw her in uniform she was someone to emulate her hair was always tucked behind her head and her hat was always as crisp as her uniform she exemplified AR 670-1. She knew all about the Army Standard and insured

that she would always uphold it to the best of her abilities. She did not mind becoming outcast because she was vocal about her beliefs regarding what was right for the unit. She did not hesitate to use discipline when necessary and she would let you know if the leadership cannot entrust you with small task, so how could you be expected to complete real world missions. Discipline is the key a leader who got the job done! Laziness and excuses was not tolerated and if you wore the rank you were expected to perform or be the first to attend a reduction board. These are the traits of a real leader she has not only been a role model for the female population but for the males Soldiers as well.

Physical Fitness is a perceived notion that females has to do less that their counterparts why is that? We all know that we are built different and we are not in competition with them this is something this is beyond our control. Sexual harassment is a sensitive topic for instance if you are considered attractive and in a leadership position, personnel tend to test their boundaries with you and before you know it you are bombarded with sexual advances/comments. It is evident that when females are put into a position first you are qualified for the job and somehow their intentions (sexual) are not your intentions. You already have to work extra hard to prove that you are a Soldier first and a woman second. But when the female dismisses the sexual advances it causes bitterness and can lead to more serious issues. Gender discrimination is not a privilege or a right. It is an unacceptable situation that exists within the military because of gender bias and issues. Men in the military are already an established dominant population. But that does not mean that the military can never be female ready. It is up to female leaders who are currently serving to cultivate the military. Women are currently serving alongside men with little restrictions as possible while taking care of themselves in

garrison and in the field. After all, male Soldiers have taken care of themselves forever. If women want to be treated equally in the military, we need to become just as self sufficient and independent as our male counterparts.

We have since seen combat in Desert Storm Desert Shield, Operation Iraqi Freedom I, II, III, and IV. We have earned our place in the military and have since been acknowledge that men and women actually have the same skill level once trained properly and can serve on the battlefield without being a hindrance to one another.