

ATSS-DAS

MEMORANDUM FOR Commandant, United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas 79918-8002

SUBJECT: Access Agreement for release of Student writing assignment Personal experience paper Paper.

1. I, Taheri, Asudhullah, submitted a Personal experience Paper to the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy archives regarding events and experiences that may be of historical significance to the United States Army and the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

2. I understand the manuscript and attached documents will be accessioned into the historical holdings of the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy archives and will belong to the United States Government to be used in any manner deemed in the best interests of the United States Army as determined by the Chief of Military History or his representative. I also understand that I may retain a copy for my own use subject to classification restrictions.

3. I hereby expressly and voluntarily relinquish all rights and interest in the paper to the United States Army with the following caveat/exception:

() ALL: Initials AT **RELEASE**

() NONE: Initials

4. I understand that the information in this paper may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and therefore, may be releasable to the public contrary to my wishes. I further understand that, within the limits of the law, the United States Army will attempt to honor the restrictions I have requested to be placed on this material.

Date: 1 December 10

Student Printed Name: Taheri, Asudhullah

Signature: AT

Accepted on behalf of the United States Army by:

SGA Printed Name/Date: Philip Tapper, 8 Dec 10

Signature: Philip Tapper

Personal experience Paper

SGM Asadullah Taheri

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

Class# 61

SGM Danny Robinson

1 December 2010

Abstract

I joined the Afghan National Army around March 2003 with the hopes of continuing my education and contributing to the development of my country. Although my career has been difficult at times, my service has been rewarding in more ways than I could have ever anticipated. The knowledge, skills, and experiences my military service provided has given me a more worldly view of different cultures and languages than many of my peers and elders.

Introduction

Experience has several meanings; for example, a person that has a diverse background has a lot of experience. Experience teaches from past lessons, enhances our knowledge, and shapes our perceptions of the future. My military experience has made me wiser, more mature, and more sophisticated than my contemporaries in Afghanistan. During my military career, I have had several assignments that have afforded me great opportunities and experiences. The events that have shaped my military and personal experience are the ambush attack between Kandahar and Gazni, working in the G1 personnel office, and coming to the USA.

I was born in the Bamyan province, Yakawlang district of Afghanistan in 1984, In 2003 I joined the Army and completed basic training and advanced training in the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC) in Afghanistan. When I enlisted in the Army; my goal was to make enough money to continue my education, help rebuild my country, and serve the people of Afghanistan. I did not think the military would be a long-term career for me. However, after seven years I must confess that I enjoy the military and the opportunities my service has afforded me. Not all of my experiences have been pleasant; I have had my share of dangerous and difficult encounters while serving in a military at war. But I have learned much about myself, other people, and human nature while serving in the military and I cannot think of any other occupation that would offer a young Afghan man the opportunity to grow and learn as I have in the military. While here in America, I have learned much about different cultures and leadership. I hope to take these lessons back to my country to develop future military, civic, and youth leaders.

Ambush Attack

In 2005, I was the Battalion Command Sergeant Major in the support brigade located in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. The brigade is responsible for security of Kabul and at that time, we found a critical situation in Qandahar. The chief of staff ordered the Commander of the brigade to send one battalion to Qandahar to help the 205 Corps stationed there. The Commander gave my battalion this mission. I contacted the Corps Command Sergeant Major and he told me to be careful Maidan Wardak was very dangerous. I reported my concerns to the Commander; however, he directed my team to continue on to the objective. The Commander had received an intelligence team report indicating the area was safe. In keeping with the Commander's order we continued on. Once we got to Maidan Wardak, the enemy appeared on our right, left, and front. The enemy had us trapped in the middle of the street and a fire-fight erupted resulting in the death of several Soldiers and Sergeants. It was the worst experience in my life; I learned that we must be ready for every situation in order to protect our life and the lives of our Soldiers.

The G1 Assignment

In 2007, the Afghan National Army Chief of Staff appointed me as the G1 planning Sergeant Major. The G1 has several managerial departments and my boss told me to go to the tactics department and have the tactics manager prepare a report. When I arrived, I saw that the manager was having a conversation with two of his subordinates. They were discussing the requirement for a computer operator. The office needed two computer operators and the manager wanted to hire a male that had knowledge of the computer system. His subordinates wanted to hire less qualified females; they did not care about abilities. After much debate they

appointed two females and faced many issues due to their lack of experience. The G1 boss eventually fired everyone in the section because of the lack of competence. I learned that it is important to stay true to your values and do the right thing, despite what others may think.

Coming to America

October, 2009, 25 Sergeants Major and I took the exam to qualify to attend the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy. After a long process and according to our examinations results the Afghanistan Department of Defense chose me along with another person to attend the course scheduled for June 2010. After completing an extensive and sometimes stressful administrative process we flew to the United States on the second of February. The trip was really interesting for me because it was the first time that I traveled outside my country. When I got to San Antonio, it took me a few days to adjust to my new environment. The challenge was to adjust to new people, weather, and culture in a short amount of time. However, the Defense Language Institute (DLI) had an unusual and fun program called the Amigo Program to help students assimilate into the new environment and better understand the language. The Amigo tour office was part of the DLI program that arranged tours for all international students and set up dining outs. In my country we do not have these kinds of programs and we do not have a multicultural society either. This was all different for me and quite enjoyable. The event I most enjoyed was the tour of Corpus Christi. During this tour, I met a Lieutenant Colonel from Afghanistan. Although we spent the day together we never spoke our native language; he thought I was Asian I thought he was from Arabia. After a few days we saw each other in uniform and recognized we were from the same country, it was very funny and from that point on we had a great time at DLI and became good friends. We learned a lot from each other and our experience at DLI.

I think experience is the best way to improve knowledge and develop personally. We should always remember our past and learn from it. I will always remember what happened in combat; because of the lack of experience many Soldiers lost their lives. Political squabbles can often lead to decisions that fail to accomplish the goal or desired effect. The poor decision made by the G1 staff about computer systems taught me to stay true to my values, living with different people with dissimilar customs and cultures from different countries gave me new knowledge about people and gave me greater hope for the future of my country.

Conclusion

My experience in the military has been rewarding, challenging, and difficult. Although growing up I did not think of the military as a valid option for a career, my time as a Soldier has caused me to have a paradigm shift in my perspective of the military. My service in the Afghan National Army has made me wiser, more mature, and more sophisticated than my contemporaries in Afghanistan. I look forward to returning home and sharing the lessons I have learned throughout my career with my people. I hope to continue to serve the Afghan people and share the skills and knowledge I have acquired during my service in the armed forces.