

## **“Ethics “**

**We are the Senior Noncommissioned Officers of today and we must lead by example. As leaders we should always do the right thing. Not just because doing right is good but also because doing the right thing for the right reason and the right intention is better. Our ethical morals and values are what young leaders will govern themselves by in the future.**

**One definition of ethics is the discipline dealing with what is wrong or right. Prior to joining the Army, every person has a particular way of thinking and every person has a value system. The Army is a unique organization which brings us all together and gives us a structure to parallel our thoughts and beliefs. We call this Army Values. Our responsibility is to educate our soldiers on Army Values. This phase does not stop after basic training. We must teach our young leaders to make the right choices. Sometimes it may be easier to take shortcut or half do things, but is it right? Teaching them to always choose the harder right over the easier wrong will make them better leaders.**

**We should not allow ourselves to be in predicaments where we have to ask the question, “Did anyone see me?” If we choose to do the right things all the time, it should not matter who observes our actions.**

**Another definition of ethics is the principle of conduct governing an individual or group. We can further break this down by referring to them as rules. Every organization has rules. Some rules are more defined than others are. Our army helps us tremendously by giving us regulations, field manual and standing operating procedures to guide us. Some, we must follow from step A to Z. Others are vague and have gray areas.**

**When we come upon situations and we can not find a clear cut answer in the book, we must use our ethical decision making process. We must ensure we are not making hasty decisions and that they do not fall under the “because I said so” rule. Using that as an excuse can lose the loyalty of your soldiers and what real effect does this have on our soldiers? Are we providing any training or giving them a foundation for making their decisions.**

**As leaders, we must realize that every one comes from different backgrounds and that not everyone thinks or learns the same. When grooming our young soldiers we must allow them to make decisions.**

**They will make mistakes. We must not be so quick to look down on them or chew them out when their decision is not what we thought it should have been. We live and work in an environment where there is no room for the zero-defect mentality. We should not change their decision if it does not cause harm to the soldiers involved. However, taking time to evaluate decisions and help young leaders look at situations from another perspective will reap more benefits in the long haul.**

**One thing I can not understand is when our young leaders handle a situation almost picture perfect and due to the rank of the person they are assisting, the final answer is changed. In the customer service business, we help numerous Soldiers with pay issues. No matter who's at fault, our mission is to get the situation rectified in a timely manner. Some cases will take longer than others will. However, when an enlisted or officer do not like the answer received from the person assisting them, they have a right to see the person in charge. Now, if the clerk is right, the person in charge should support them. The first decision should remain the final decision. Or if the person in charge is going to override the clerk's decision, the person in charge should explain to the customer in the presence of the clerk that the clerk is correct.**

**Tell the customer due to the circumstances we will proceed this way.**

**When you complete any action in this manner you are not demeaning or taking away the authority you have given the Soldier and the Soldier will respect you for doing so.**

**So often our young soldiers becomes discouraged from the lack of senior leaders standing up for what is right. If we want to groom strong leaders and leaders that will do the right thing even when no one is looking, we have to set the example now. You should be the leader that everyone looks to for advice. Not the example; "I never want to be like SGM \_\_\_\_\_.**

**We should never stop teaching our soldiers or reminding them how important it is to always do the right thing. Don't let your soldiers end up like the soldiers at The Abba Gray prison or the MP company in Iraq (NCO allowing female soldiers mud wrestle). Teach them now and you want have to worry about them later.**