

Running head: SUBORDINATES SUCCESS

Subordinates Success

MSG Lindsay Schmidt

Student Number 858

United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

SMNRC Class 33 Phase II

MOS 21X

WYARNG 07/01/1992 -05/28/2008,

Operation Iraqi Freedom, Balad, LSA Anaconda, 04/10/2005 – 11/15/2005

05/28/2008

Unclassified

Engineer Division, General Engineering NCO, Training Site Command

Abstract

This paper describes how my career has affected and been affected by some of the excellent soldiers I have been associated with. The exceptional career advancement of these soldiers as well as their positions within the Wyoming Army National Guard will be explained. Additionally I will describe one of the defining times of my deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a single deploying soldier attached to a unit from another State.

Subordinates Success

Beginning with my promotion to E-7 as a platoon sergeant with the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company at the end of June 1992 I have had the absolute good fortune of working with some of the best soldiers to serve the State of Wyoming in the Army National Guard. In some cases I have had limited contact with some of the soldiers I will describe. In reference to the remaining soldiers we had a significant effect on our careers. Though there have been many outstanding junior and senior Non Commissioned Officers associated with me during my career I will only describe the individuals that have attained the ranks of Master Sergeant, First Sergeant and Command Sergeant Major. My description of each of these individuals will begin with the first to be promoted to E-8 and finish with the most recent to reach that level.

As a Specialist in my platoon CSM Jason Walford served as the driver for our Company Commander. At that time he was a student at the University of Wyoming and had no plans to remain in the National Guard beyond his initial enlistment. Over a period of two years we had several discussions concerning his intentions upon graduation and beyond. During the talks we had I always tried to reassure him and express my confidence that he would advance and succeed if he remained in service. This was a hard sell at that time due to the responsibilities he had as a young husband and father.

After graduating and being employed in the civilian work force he decided to apply to a position as a Federal Technician. With his selection to a position as a

mechanic his career plans changed in a major way. Success followed him and advancement in junior grades was almost immediate. CSM Walford was promoted to both Sergeant First Class and Master Sergeant while assigned to the Regional Training Institute at Camp Guernsey. He was selected and served as First Sergeant with the 960<sup>th</sup> General Support Maintenance Company for approximately three years. Most recently he was selected as the 94<sup>th</sup> Troop Commands' Command Sergeant Major and is a fellow student in Class 33 of the USASMA Non Resident Course.

Master Sergeant Delane Haynes is one of the two soldiers I believe I had the most influence on during my career. The relationship we have grew slowly over several years and blossomed after he had been promoted to Staff Sergeant. With each progressive level within our unit he demonstrated better leadership, planning and mentoring skills which made him stand out among his peers.

Convincing SSG Haynes that he had the potential to advance beyond being a section sergeant took several months during weekend training periods. His concerns were that he was slotted in a position with an MOS that had no progression beyond E-6. With some persistent encouragement he made the decision to reclassify as a Construction Equipment Supervisor. Once he became qualified as a 21N30 he was promoted to Sergeant First Class when the first slot came open in the unit. His dedication to improving himself professionally was a wonderful example for me to use when mentoring other soldiers. In a one year period he completed BNCOC phase II, MOS reclassification training, ANCOG phase I and ANCOG Phase II.

## Subordinates Success 5

After my time as the First Sergeant of the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company (CSE) the best qualified soldier at the top of the EPS list was SFC Haynes. He was selected for that position and served there for two and one half years. During that time the unit mobilized and deployed to Iraq. 1SG Haynes dedication to duty and attention to detail was in my opinion two of the most influential factors in the success of his unit. The Meritorious Unit Citation was awarded to the unit after completion of their tour. There were a few minor injuries to soldiers and loss of some equipment. The defining point of that deployment is that every soldier made it home safe with all their parts. I believe that the everyday concern and caring he displayed for those soldiers ensured no serious casualties occurred.

Master Sergeant Haynes is currently assigned to the Brigade Support Battalion of the 115<sup>th</sup> Fires Brigade. He will retire soon and spend more time with his family and dedicate more time to his civilian career. The knowledge, skill, professionalism and leadership will be greatly missed within the Wyoming Army National Guard.

This next individual is the other of two that I have been closest to over the last twenty years. First Sergeant Ehde enlisted as a private in my platoon and was assigned in that platoon or in the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company with me for approximately 15 years. As his platoon sergeant and later as his First Sergeant we worked closely during many training periods. He was always very motivated and willingly took my guidance on his career path. He made every attempt to attend training to improve and worked very hard to ensure he was prepared to advance to every new assignment and position.

For a three year period he left the unit on my advice. He transferred to the Regional Training Institute where he served as an instructor for BNCOC and ANCOC. During that time he was promoted to Master Sergeant and was assigned as the Course Manager before being selected to fill the First Sergeant position in the 133<sup>rd</sup> EN CO when it opened. He has done well in that assignment and has had to deal with some difficult situations that have surfaced after the units return from Iraq.

This next situation is a highlight for me during my career. Currently there are two female instructors at the Regional Training Institute. Master Sergeant Connie Johnson and Master Sergeant Carrie Christensen are the two senior enlisted personnel assigned in the General Studies Battalion. Master Sergeant Johnson is the Course Manager for BNCOC and ANCOC training. Master Sergeant Christensen is the Senior Instructor for those courses and supervises individual course instructors. It has always given me a very good feeling to see females succeed, especially when I had the opportunity to be part of their success.

Both of these soldiers were in my platoon for several years. They were assigned as section sergeants and when I became the First Sergeant they both were promoted to Sergeant First Class and served as platoon sergeants. SFC Christensen was the first of the two to leave the unit. After the events of September Eleventh she volunteered to serve with the Force Protection element our State developed. She served with that element until it was disbanded and moved to the RTI at that time. SFC Johnson made the decision to transfer to the RTI to help with her career growth and improve her

knowledge. She also wanted to provide the opportunity for her subordinates to advance into the platoon sergeant position she held.

First Sergeant Dean Roberts is the individual that I had the least amount of contact with and influence on. While I was the Detachment Sergeant with the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company he was assigned as the Section Sergeant in the Direct Support section. He reported directly to the Maintenance Platoon and only reported personnel status to me during training periods. We knew each other for several years and worked together in the detachment to ensure maintenance was completed on the equipment.

Years after our time in that detachment when I was the First Sergeant in the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company I provided him some guidance on his career advancement. I attempted to help him better understand the promotion system and the areas that he could improve in. He did improve and while deployed to Iraq with the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company was selected as the Motor Sergeant for the 115<sup>th</sup> Artillery Brigade where he served for a year. He was selected as the First Sergeant for the Forward Support Company in the 115<sup>th</sup> Fires Brigade during the Transformation process in Wyoming.

The final individual I will relate to my career is First Sergeant David Webb. My first association with 1SG Webb was in the 133<sup>rd</sup> Engineer Company. He joined the unit when he completed his active duty enlistment. I knew of him for many years and he moved between units several times looking for a career path he was comfortable with and advancement opportunity. When I was advanced to First Sergeant he was SGT Webb. SGT Webb was assigned as the NBC NCO at that time. After the events of September

Eleventh SGT Webb was assigned to a mobilizing unit where he was promoted to Staff Sergeant.

SSG Webb deployed to Iraq and remained with the Rear Operations Center after returning to Wyoming. He had found his place while serving in an infantry position which had been his MOS while serving in the Active Army. He advanced to Sergeant First Class in that unit and was the acting First Sergeant for over a year until that unit was disbanded. SFC Webb moved to the Regional Training Institute where he assisted with training up to the time he was selected to fill his current assignment in the Joint Forces Headquarters and was promoted to First Sergeant. We have worked together in the Construction and Facilities Maintenance Office for over two years. We often talk about situations that come up and personnel issues we both deal with in our units. I have provided guidance on his career progression as well as dealing with individual soldier problems. Now as peers we are in agreement on most issues that we may not have agreed before First Sergeant Webb had reached the his current assigned level.

I deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom during 2005. I was a single deploying soldier and served as a liaison officer at Logistic Support Area Anaconda in Balad. I was assigned to the 122<sup>nd</sup> Corps Support Group out of Selma Alabama. I worked daily in the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps Support Commands Joint Operation Center.

I only had one significant experience while stationed in Balad. During a 0200 update briefing the Joint Operations Center came under mortar attack. One round detonated on an exterior wall directly to the front of the liaison officers from the six support groups under the control of the COSCOM. The initial explosion shocked all of



us. All electrical power was lost and confusion set in with many of the individuals present. Two of the other liaison officers and I quickly used flashlights to find our Individual Body Armor and weapons. We immediately put our gear on, locked and loaded our weapons and made our way to the exterior of the building to ensure none of the guards at the gate were injured. Once it was determined that there were no casualties we reported back to the night Battle Captain and returned to our work stations so we could report to our individual Group Headquarters.

After the staff settled down and some organization returned to the room the Battle Captain moved the operation personnel to one of the Group Headquarters located on the base. The remaining personnel remained in the Operations Center because it allowed us to monitor our computers and stay in contact with our Groups. Within two hours maintenance personnel had restored the electricity and operations returned to normal. I was awarded the Combat Action Badge for that event. When I think back on that night I have never felt as though I was in any real danger. I will always believe that the soldiers out on the roads every night who we supported were the ones in danger and deserving of credit and awards.

In summary I want to express that my most memorable experience has little to do with Iraq or mortar attacks. The experiences I have had over my twenty five years with soldiers and seeing them succeed is by far the memories that make putting on my uniform worthwhile. Deep in my heart I have a great feeling of pride each time I see or think of those individuals that have E-8 level or above. I am very proud to have played a role in

guiding them and would like to believe that in some way I shaped their careers helping to make them leaders of today. I would gladly relive my career so I could experience the relationships I have had with most of the soldiers I have led. It has truly been an honor and privilege to watch them grow and become leaders themselves. I can only hope that each of the individuals I have written about get the same satisfaction from the experiences they have with soldiers.