

LATE

Go

ETHICS PAPER

By

SGM Patrick Lumpkin

SGM Miller

Faculty Advisor-Leadership Division

Ethics Paper

As the Army evolves, we as Senior Non-Commission officers will be the role models for future Soldiers to come. Our Ethic and moral values will influence future generations of Soldiers. Therefore, we must evaluate how we develop as professionals, and what it is that we believe in. To accomplish this process, we should understand the definition of ethics. Although we all have an idea what Ethics is, we want to insure that we have the correct idea. Ethical conflicts arise when the actions of one person or a group of people interfere with the interests of another person, group of people, or the community as a whole. Unfortunately, ethical decision-making models, no matter how elaborate, cannot adequately portray the complexity of ethical dilemmas. Webster's dictionary states, "Ethics. Is the study of the general nature of morals and the specific moral choices an individual makes in relating to others. The rules or standards of conduct governing the members of a profession."

Lets break this definition down into parts so we can look at and study it. First, "specific moral choices an individual makes in relating to others." As Senior Non-Commissioned officers we have a duty to foster the Army values and instill these values in our subordinates. We are further obligated to teach Soldiers to make the right choices even when it would be easier to take a short cut. This guidance will help them to do the right thing "the hard right over the easy left." The transition from junior leadership to senior leadership involves the development and enhancement of new skills and abilities. Leaders are required to master and display the Army values within their organizations. At the senior NCO Level leaders are required to display advanced ability in moral reasoning. As the Army continues to change, greater demands are placed on the senior

leader in the areas of interpersonal skills, critical thinking, intellectual creativity and flexibility (to name only a few). As an analogy we can look at the old saying "If a tree falls in the woods and no one is around does it make a sound?" now we can change that to "If we do the right thing and no one is around will anyone know?" That is what Ethics is all about, if no one is around will we do the right thing?

As Sergeants Major, we have observed our fellow Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers put in situations where they have had to make choices. How they made their decision is a direct reflection on the leaders that they grew up under.

In these times of Army reformation we all will have to do our part to reevaluate old attitudes that in the past were okay. For instance, the Maxed NCOER, that in reality should have been rated as success. Or the award that suggests a soldier should receive an MSM, when in reality he should be recommended for an AAM.

We as senior leaders can't lose site of the fact that being promoted into positions of leadership mandates we lead from the front. It is important to always remember we are leaders first and managers second. We set the example by picking up the torch and moving out in front to lead. Let us not forget that we are always under a microscope by our supervisors and those that we lead and mentor. It is dangerous to believe that they do not observe our actions.

Therefore, as we grow and move forward, let us take the time to judge our actions before we commit ourselves. If senior leaders make a bad choice or commit a dysfunctional action. There will always be someone there to point out our mistakes. We must live with the outcome of those actions and be judged by them. We must also take

into account that it is not just the soldiers we lead that judge us by our actions; But the public that pays the bills.

In these times of decreasing budgets, the American people and the media have us under a microscope. America has the right to expect that as professionals we will handle ourselves in an ethical and moral way. It is for this reason they have entrusted their sons and daughters in our charge. We must teach them discipline and instill the ethical and moral attitude needed to prepare these young Soldiers for the future.

I believe we should never forget that today's Soldiers are tomorrow's senior leaders. For the benefit of the Army, we should take every opportunity to instill values in the Soldiers that we lead. As senior leaders we expected to act ethically in all situations. As Sergeants Major, we are obligated to maintain an ethical climate at all times that supports the development of our subordinates. All leaders in the Army must maintain and enforce the standards of the seven Army Values.