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## Need Guidance with Problem NCO

Posted by parrothead - 2010/01/24 15:15

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I have recently been assigned as the EVAC NCOIC at an INF REG. I am very excited about this job and the opportunity I will have. So far all has gone well. I have a great PSG with tons of medical experience and supports me well. I have a great group of smart medics that are chopping at the bit to get a head of one another.

I have no illusions of being the perfect NCO but have proven myself to be the most competent NCO and have been placed 2nd in charge. This is a very new role for me and don't have a lot of leadership experience.

Now to the problem. About 3 months ago we got a new SGT from MEDAC. This guy is an idiot. He can not lead soldiers. He can't lead in PT. He does not know medicine. He can't follow simple directions without asking a million questions. It has gotten to the point to when I have a task to accomplish I talk directly to one of my senior SPC's and almost completely ignore him. I have way more confidence in my lowest PV2 than I do this NCO. 1st I reprimanded my soldiers for disrespecting him behind his back. These Joes smell weakness and can be brutal. Then they got tired of making him look like an ass and tried to lead him. He wasn't smart enough to figure out they were trying to help him. I couple of weeks ago my PSG left for a recon for an upcoming field problem. During this time this guy came to work late once. Unshaven once and on Friday I gave him a list of 3 very simple tasks to have completed and only 1 was done correctly. After talking to my PSG he told me that he wanted him counseled for all three.

I have a couple of questions about this. Mainly because we are the same rank should treat this guy like an incompetent subordinate? Or should I treat him differently because he is the same rank?

Please do not think that I have not tried to give him guidance. After over 3 frustrating months I really do believe that he is not mentally capable of handling it. Really I feel like someone got him promoted because they felt sorry for him. There is no way he was ever stellar enough to be recommended for a promotion board in any unit much less an Infantry Reg. I am by far the most patient person here. Other sections would destroy this guy.

I have talked to his supervisors at his last 2 jobs and have a feeling that they spent no time doing what was right and just dumped him off on someone else. We are within 6months of going back to Afghanistan and there is no way I will trust him with the lives of my guys. On missions or doing anything else! What should I do with him? Can I get this guys competency tested? Should I push for a reduction board before he gets someone hurt? Because we have been so busy I have procrastinated as long as possible and need to counsel him tomorrow. Any guidance is appreciated.

Chris

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## Re:Need Guidance with Problem NCO

Posted by GIJOE - 2010/01/24 20:28

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Chris,

Please understand the guidance provided is based on the information I received. I can only provide ideas and suggestions but if this leader has the issues you conveyed to me, you will need to speak with members of your chain of command in order to develop a satisfactory plan of action.

Rule 1: Remember you must treat this Soldier as you would want to be treated. No exceptions!

This means that no matter what...be professional. Never set out to get a Soldier or make them pay for their actions. If you take the proper steps and are professional the troubled Soldier with either correct their substandard performance or continue with substandard performance. Either way you will achieve your goal. The best possible outcome is that a substandard performer becomes a contributing member of the team. Should the Soldier fail to respond to the plan of action you will have developed a course of action that handles substandard performance. No matter what the Soldier is responsible for making the choice and the problem will be resolved. By using this approach the Soldier is the driving force in solving the problem and the Soldier is responsible for their actions.

Let's answer a basic question that is very important: Are you senior to the Soldier in question by Date of Rank?

1. If the answer is no, then the Soldier's rater should be responsible for the course of action
2. If you are senior to the Soldier by date of rater then you should be his rater. If you are not his rater than you should not be responsible for solving this problem.

This question is important because AR 623-3 spells out specific duties for the rater and based on the situation you described I believe the rater is in the best position to resolve this issue. Failure to handle this situation through the rater could result in negative consequence for the chain of command but most importantly it could mean that the Soldier's conduct will not be corrected and potentially place other Soldiers in harm's way.

Step 1: Speak with the Chain of Command

Talk with your platoon sergeant and define what you want to achieve. You cannot proceed until you have knowledge that your chain of command will support your decisions.

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Step 2: Develop a Course of Action:

Once you have support from the chain of command discuss the following options with them

Conduct counseling for the offenses you cited. Develop a plan of action to correct the substandard performance. You stated he was late, unshaven and failed to complete tasks to standard. This means his corrective training should address all 3 items with specific goals. Ensure you conduct an assessment of how well he completed the training.

Ensure the counseling above contains the standard derogatory counseling or magic statement. Ensure that the counseling above also states that future violations of this nature could result in punishment under the UCMJ.

Should the Soldier fail to complete the training to standard counsel him again and consider recommending the following actions:

- UCMJ
- Revoking privileges
- Putting a negative comment on his NCOER
- Relief for cause NCOER
- Flag action
- Bar to reenlistment
- Administrative Reduction Board (See AR 600-8-19, You will need the support of the entire chain of command for this up to and including the BN CSM and BN CDR)

You have the following resources at your disposal

Chain of command: a valuable source of knowledge and experience

IG: using the chain of command call the IG and discuss the matter with them and your proposed course of action. Do not provide the name of the Soldier. By doing this the chain of command lays the foundation to ensure the plan of action is appropriate and should the Soldier decide to call the IG they already know of the situation and your actions have been previously approved. While not necessary this step always saved me trouble.

JAG: for the same reason as stated for the IG. I used JAG if I thought the action was going to go to UCMJ.

Note: I usually only call one agency. I used the IG if I thought the Soldier was simply going to complain about the corrective training. I used JAG if I thought the situation might result in UCMJ action.

Step 3 Assessments:

The assessment is critical ensure you monitor the Soldier's progress. Ensure you document the assessment. By doing this you make a paper trail. Keep in mind that a Soldier can be separated from Service for patterns of misconduct. See AR 635-200.

The Tools listed above will help you correct any problem and within 30-60 days the Soldier will either show signs of improvement or provide you with enough documentation that you can use any of the tools listed above to take the appropriate level of corrective action.

Last but not least you should also consider sitting down with this Soldier and having a serious heart to heart with them. It may be best to have the platoon sergeant led this discussion. It is possible that this young leader has never received any real mentorship. He could be naive and truly not understand his shortfalls. I believe this step should be taken regardless of how you proceed. As a leader you have a responsibility to inform a subordinate leader if you believe they are falling short.

Some tools that could assist you in situations like this include the Books: The Mentor (covers corrective training, revoking privileges, problem solving and counseling), The Evaluator (covers NCOER counseling, relief for cause actions, etc)

I hope this information has been helpful. Please keep me updated on how things are going. If we can be of future assistance please do not hesitate to ask.

Best Wishes!:thumbsup:

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