



Command Sgt. Maj. John K. Miyata (seated center right) speaks with members of the 3302nd Mobilization Support Battalion's staff in their offices at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. (Photo courtesy of Command Sgt. Maj. John K. Miyata)

From the CSM: Mentorship basics haven't changed

By Command Sgt. Maj. John K. Miyata

3302nd Mobilization Support Battalion

As the deployment cycle winds down and we return to the garrison, we must take the time to mentor our young Soldiers.

Soldiers enlisting in the Army today are different than those 10 years ago and much different than those when I enlisted 27 years ago.

The basics back in the day were conducting drill and ceremony, "hip-pocket" training, in-ranks inspections, land navigation and learning to operate the PRC-77 radio. Today, many Soldiers completed their Initial Military Training and deployed straight into theater; some of them have served multiple tours overseas.

However, the basic fundamentals that we seemed to have lost over the years are taking the time to sit with Soldiers, talking to them and mentoring them.

Take the time to map out your Soldiers' careers, explain the milestones they'll need to achieve and give them a plan to follow. Provide them with lessons learned from your career and advice on how to do things better. Teach them special skills that they may use as they move to staff level positions, such as the military decision-making process and staff action planning.

Get to know your Soldiers and their families, and see what you can do to help family members play a

bigger part in Soldiers' careers. Have them be involved in the unit's family readiness group and be a part of the military family.

As we progress in our careers as noncommissioned officers, we accumulate a wealth of knowledge and experience over years of deployments, exercises and training missions. The Army spends millions of dollars training us to be proficient in our warrior and military occupational specialty skills.

Many Army Reserve Soldiers bring additional skills and talents from their civilian professions. When these skills and talents are combined, you end up with a highly skilled NCO capable of training tomorrow's leaders.

As an Army Reserve citizen-Soldier, I'm faced with seeing my Soldiers only 40 to 50 days out of the year. Of those precious training days, we have to use every hour and minute to maximize training, and still find time to provide for counseling and mentorship.

As the command sergeant major of the 3302nd Mobilization Support Battalion, it's a priority of mine to ensure not just Soldiers' well-being, but also to use my experiences and knowledge to set them up for success in their future careers.

The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide, FM 7-22.7, says, "Mentorship is demanding business, but the future of the Army depends on the trained and effective leaders whom you leave behind.

"Mentoring future leaders may require you to take risks," the guide continues. "It requires you to give Soldiers the opportunity to learn and develop them while using your experience to guide them without micromanaging.

"Mentoring will lead your Soldiers to successes that build their confidence and skills for the future. The key to mentorship in the U.S. Army is a sustained relationship that may last through the entire career of a young Soldier, even into retirement," the guide explains.

The basic principles of military leadership are tried and true. I use the basic fundamentals of "Be-Know-Do" and the seven core Army Values in my daily life. I use them with my sons, my Boy Scouts and my employees.

Now, let us all get back to using basic principles with our Soldiers.

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