

Case-Ex: “Life out of Reach” (SFC MacDonald)

Example Questions

Part 1

[Watch Part 1 of “Life out of Reach”]

1. What decision(s) is SFC MacDonald faced with? What are the pros and cons of each decision?
2. Other than the life of the wounded detainee, what other considerations does SFC MacDonald have to evaluate in making his decision?
3. If an American Soldier was in the place of the wounded detainee, how would that change the ethical considerations of the decision facing SFC MacDonald?
4. Watching the detainee bleed to death, SFC MacDonald says, “As a medic, it’s your challenge—you’re fighting death.” But he adds “safety and security were first.” How can the level of competence in our work and our commitment to the Army Profession reinforce and develop our professional character?
5. How does a person’s moral character and past experiences influence his or her ability to make a decision? How did this affect SFC MacDonald’s decision?

Part 2

[Watch Part 2 of “Life out of Reach”]

7. SFC MacDonald watches the man bleed to death. “It’s not easy to accept,” he says. How can professional Soldiers prepare themselves for life-and-death decisions they may face in combat?
8. SFC MacDonald says, “As a medic, you’re trained to evaluate the situation. If you’re the only medic (and you get hurt), your unit will be in trouble.” How did SFC MacDonald’s recognition of the moral dilemma and his evaluation of the situation impact his decision?
9. When leaders confront ethical decisions they look at each possible course of action by identifying the rules, outcomes and values associated with each. What rules, possible outcomes and values were associated with the decision SFC MacDonald had to make?
10. When is a leader ever justified in violating Army Rules and Regulations in order to follow his/her personal moral convictions?
11. What professional characteristics did SFC MacDonald exhibit in this situation? How can his example impact his Soldier’s professional development?