



Case-Ex[®] Video: "Trusted Counsel" Discussion Guide



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"Trusted Counsel"



CASE-EX® VIDEO VIGNETTE: DISCUSSION GUIDE

For all members of the Army Profession

<http://cape.army.mil>

“Trusted Counsel”

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BASIC CONCEPTS

- Watch the video and read the transcript prior to discussion.
- Review “Facilitation Best Practices.”
- See “Additional Resources” for more content.
- Think about a personal experience, story or event which relates to the scenario and consider using this as a way to start the discussion.
- Present each part of the vignette and lead an open discussion which relates to a desired learning outcome. Use the “Sample Discussion Questions” to help you prepare questions.
- After watching and discussing each part of the story, identify the takeaways and discuss how each participant will apply this experience.

FACILITATION: BEST PRACTICES

The facilitators’ main role is to be a catalyst for conversation and learning about the topic at-hand. This module contains two rounds of discussion and ends with time to reflect on personal stories and vignettes that relate to the module.

Here are some key points to consider when preparing to facilitate a discussion:

- Let participants do most of the talking.
- The facilitators’ key role is to ask questions that spark thought and conversation.
- Ensure you engage everyone within your group and set the conditions for them to share thoughts openly. Do not let any one person or contingent dominate the conversation.
- Have questions prepped for each round to drive the conversation. Ask open-ended questions and encourage participants to elaborate on their answers/thoughts.

You are the catalyst for conversation. Make sure you continue to ask questions that make your group dig deeper. *For more information and guidelines on facilitating professional development discussions, visit the CAPE Website at <http://cape.army.mil>.*

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT: PART 1



“A few months back a friend of mine had recently returned from deployment. When I first got here — brand new to the Army; never been to

a post before — I relied heavily on him just simple for things like, ‘Where’s the PX?’ ‘Where’s the shoppette?’ ‘Where can I go for this?’ ‘How do I clear this?’ He also helped me get my uniform squared away on my ASU’s and things of that nature. So as far as I was concerned, he was somebody I could trust and follow.

Then after he deployed, I obviously didn’t see him for a 12-month period, but then upon his return it definitely wasn’t the same. His spouse and himself were having quite a few marital problems and he had made the command decision that they were going to actually separate.

One night his marital problems came to a head. He texted me in the middle of the night stating that his wife and him were getting into a pretty bad fight and he was starting to break some of their things just out of frustration. She even went as far as to say he was carrying a knife on him. All

the text message said is, ‘Great, the cops are coming.’ She’s saying, ‘I’m doing this and then that’s not what’s really happening. Do you mind if you can come over?’ Last thing I want is to find out the next day through brigade channels that they had some kind of domestic violence incident or even as far as a homicide goes.

I texted him back real quick as fast as I could (and said), ‘Don’t do anything stupid. These are the kinds of things you don’t need. Just walk outside if you need to cool down. I’ll be over there in a minute to give you an option to leave.’

When I went outside making the drive over I was only imagining how many things could go wrong. Once I showed up, he could have easily gone back in there and it could have escalated into a domestic violence. He could be led away in handcuffs and I’m just sitting there watching and then I would have to leave again. You know it could have gone even further, you know, he could have grabbed a gun out of his safe and easily shot her or something along those lines.

So, I didn’t quite know what to expect.”

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT: PART 2



“Once I arrived the Police Department was already there, so I parked across the street. I don’t want to be as invasive as I could be – I really just

wanted to kind of watch and give him an option to leave. And as soon as I got there, I texted him just to let him know I’m outside but the Police Department is as well so be prepared to talk to them.

So the police department decided to talk to him first and gather his side of the story and calm him down and make sure he wasn’t going to be a threat to his spouse because that could easily happen.

The Police Department then talked to her and then established that they really don’t have any place and it’s not a domestic dispute yet; or it is a domestic dispute, but it’s not a domestic violence yet. So they (couldn’t) remove him from the premises and they (couldn’t) remove her from the premises, and that’s what they were both kind of going for. So I advised them at that time that I could take him away from the situation — either set him up in my house or even as far as taking him back to base and setting him up with the staff duty because they obviously have transient barracks rooms for these reasons.

Ultimately, they advised him he doesn’t have to leave but it would probably be a good idea. I told him that it really

would be the best option for him and his spouse, safety wise. Just all around, just come with me and sleep it off. That’s what he finally decided to do. He left with me. I set him up in my spare bedroom and told him the next day we can decide what the course of action is, and if he wants to finally get his divorce and finalize it and start that process, you know, I can help him with that. If he wants to get a transient room through his chain of command, we can make that happen too. If he needs a ride, I’ll take care of it.

In my mind it was just taking care of a fellow soldier and making sure problems that can be prevented don’t happen. I think having somebody to call, no matter what situation you find yourself in, is extremely important. That kind of delves into what the Army is all about and it’s that the Soldiers on your left and your right look out for you and they keep you safe.

That doesn’t just apply to the battlefield; it applies to the home front as well. And it’s anything: If your car is dead on the side of the highway or if you’re in a really bad situation and you need help, you can always count on somebody else to—at least one person to—be able to help you out. He thanked me when his divorce was finally finalized and everything was finally, finally done. He just took me to the side and he just thanked me for giving him a good option and keeping him out of trouble, and not letting things escalate beyond what they needed to be. (He) just thanked me directly.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources are available:

	<p><u>Center for the Army Profession and Ethic:</u></p>
	<p><u>Department of Defense :</u></p>
	<p>News article on recent efforts to reduce domestic violence within the US military's ranks:</p>
	<p>http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=61131</p>

SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PART 1: Discussing SPC Spring's Story

[Watch "Trusted Counsel" – Part 1]

1. How does SPC Spring describe his friend? What did his friend do to build trust with SPC Spring?
2. How did SPC Spring's friend impact his identity as a young Army Professional? What role does a mentor have on the development of an individual's identity and character?
3. How did this relationship, developed early on in SPC Spring's career, impact the decision he needed to make when he received the call in the night?
4. What decision did SPC Spring face when his friend called? What were his options?
5. What most prepared SPC Spring to make the decision to offer assistance to his fellow Soldier in the middle of the night? (Consider his identity, the trust relationship between them, rules and regulations, etc.)
6. SPC Spring's friend is senior to him in rank. Does rank make a difference in this scenario? Why or why not?
7. Would you have made the same decision and why? What factors should you consider most important in your decision making process?
8. What are the possible negative implications for SPC Spring's decision, and should this have changed his course of action?
9. How did SPC Spring's actions demonstrate his dedication to the Army Profession? The Army Values?
10. What resources, training and experiences most prepared SPC Spring to effectively process this situation and make the right decision?

PART 2: Discussing SPC Spring's Story

[Watch "Trusted Counsel" – Part 2]

1. How did SPC Spring's actions demonstrate his commitment to his friend? His unit? The Army Profession?
2. How does SPC Spring's actions display his level of competence and character as an Army Professional?
3. If you were SPC Spring's leader, how would you react when hearing how he provided assistance in this situation?
4. What other factors should SPC Spring have considered throughout this process, and how could they have impacted his behaviors and decisions?
5. SPC Spring remarked, "The Soldiers to your left and right look out for you and keep you safe." What does this statement reveal about Army culture, specifically, the climate within their organization?
6. What risks did SPC Spring take when he decided to involve himself directly in his friend's situation? Should any of those risks have changed his decision and why?
7. How did SPC Spring serve as a steward of the Army Profession? How did his friend help to develop this stewardship in SPC Spring?
8. How does the esprit de corps of the Army Profession and its sub-organizations impact the behaviors of individual Army Professionals? How did this esprit de corps impact SPC Spring's behaviors?
9. Should SPC Spring's approach to helping and supporting his fellow Soldier be held up as a model of professional behavior or living the Army Values? Why or why not?
10. How does the Army train and develop its junior professionals to choose the right course of action when faced with a situation such as this? How are you preparing and developing your Soldiers to know what to do in similar scenarios?

AAR/CHECK ON LEARNING

Personal Vignettes and Takeaways

Facilitator asks students to share any personal vignettes and takeaways from the module.

It is important for the group to relate to this story on a personal level. Conclude the module emphasizing the significance of SPC Spring's story. Soldiers should walk away with a better understanding of the decision point and be able to properly convey the importance of the decision-making process to individuals in their unit.

Upon concluding, the following questions are useful for determining learning and promoting reflection:

Learning	Q – What did you learn from listening to the reactions and reflections of other leaders? Q – What are the future implications of this decision and or experience?
Reflection	Q – How do you feel/what do you think about what you learned? Q – What will you do with your new information? Q – How can you apply this experience to better develop yourself and your fellow professionals?