

A FEW EXTRA ITEMS NEVER HURTS

Situation: I witnessed a Drill Sergeant (DS) in my unit circumvent the Army's system to steal over \$7,000 dollars. DS Whales was an outstanding non-commissioned officer. He was assigned to a Training Post and loved his job. He enjoyed very much being a Soldier, training Soldiers, and above all, being a Drill Sergeant. A few years ago, I was a young 1LT and was assigned to the same unit as DS Whales as the company XO. I was immediately liked by the cadre and the trainees. I was very good at doing PT and had a natural rapport with the Soldiers. DS Whales and I talked often and soon became good friends. One day, I walked into the DS conference room and saw Whales at his wall locker. He had all new equipment and extra equipment as well. I was very curious about how he obtained all those items. I asked how and he said all DS get new equipment every year for being on the "Trail" and besides having a few extra items never hurts. Since I was not very educated on the issue and still new to the Army, I took his word for it.

DS Whales had a wall locker full of brand new and extra equipment. As a very close friend, Whales told me how he was able to get all those things. I regretted the fact he told me anything. One reason was because he even gave me a few items I thought legitimately belonged to him. I tried telling him what he was doing would eventually get him caught and in serious trouble. He was circumventing the Central Issue Facility (CIF) system to get new and extra equipment. I was not too sure how to tell my 1SG and commander. I just thought as long as DS Whales was careful and kept it on low profile, everything would be okay. One day, a worker in CIF noticed the inventory was not matching and researched the problem. After noticing a serious problem, the worker took it to the director who then notified CID to investigate the situation. After a quick and thorough investigation, it led back to DS Whales. CID questioned all cadres, including me. When asked did I know about the situation, I said I had no knowledge of Whales' activity. That is not lying is it?

REFLECTION...

I will no longer allow myself to form a friendship where it compromises my integrity and prevents me from the right thing. I was wrong in how I handled DS Whales' situation and I was not worthy of being called a leader. He was removed from his duties as Drill Sergeant and assigned to another unit pending further investigations. He later received a General letter of reprimand. When confronted with the situation in the future, I know without a doubt, I will handle the situation properly and swiftly.

Ethical Dilemma at the Time of the Incident: Whales had managed to acquire over \$7,000 dollars worth brand new and extra equipment from CIF. I asked myself, should I inform my chain of command, confront Whales to come clean of his wrong doing, or just say nothing and hope nothing comes of this issue?

Rules/Laws That Apply: Uniform Code of Military Justice

At What Point Did You Say "Enough is Enough"? When And How Did You Take Action? When I became aware Whales had robbed the Army of \$7,000. I mentioned he needed to stop what he was doing because he would, at some point, get caught for his actions.

Conflict or Tension of the 7 Army Values? How Did You Resolve Those Conflicts? Loyalty versus Duty. I violated every aspect of my command responsibility. I allowed my professional side to be overtaken by my personal side in approaching this moral dilemma. I violated my integrity most of all. I violated all 7 Army Values by not stepping up and being a true leader and friend to terminate Whales' behavior. I allowed a lack of leadership and friendship to prevent me from doing the right thing.

Consideration of Other COAs and the 2nd and 3rd Order Effects. I saw two COAs. First- I could have given Whales a direct order to come clean and stop his dishonest behavior. Second, I could have promptly reported his actions to the 1SG and commander.

How Did You Get the Courage To Do the Harder Right? I failed to do so.