

Commander's Guidance for Senior Leader Ethics Education

EXPLORATION TOPIC: ETHICAL COMPARTMENTALIZATION - DOES YOUR PRIVATE LIFE MATTER?

The intent for this module, *Ethical Compartmentalization - Does Your Private Life Matter?*, is to provide a platform of study and engagement with peers that will enhance understanding of tensions within the Army which arise from attempting to balance professional and personal goals, values, and other aspects of the identities within leaders and soldiers. All leaders have experienced these tensions between what happens in your private life and its impact on professional identity. They will continue to characterize the environment in which senior officers will serve in the future as modern media and immediate access to information make private lives less and less private. These tensions require a strong foundation of ethical values that are consistent with the Army Values.

In order to provide insight into the effects of these issues on the Army Profession, the module recommends an "evaluation the effects of personal and professional values either reinforcing or being in tension with each other."

The first area for this investigation is the need for personal and professional values, conduct and behavior to reinforce each other. Can personal and professional values ever truly be aligned? What are the benefits and risks of complete alignment of personal and professional values and of misalignment? How does one resolve tensions between professional and personal goals and values?

The second area for investigation is the examination of Ambition versus Selflessness. What is legitimate ambition? We preach selflessness as a sterling quality of character and then we reward ambitious behavior. Does this affect our moral decisions in our private life or should it? How is it that senior officers who talk a lot about selflessness were, in their rise in position, some of the most openly ambitious officers? Does the Army Value of selfless service need to be redefined? Can we truly expect Soldiers to service without any consideration of self or of reward to self? Should Soldiers private lives be open for public inspection and should they have an impact on their careers? Due to their elevated level of responsibilities and visibility, strategic leaders are held to higher expectations and receive increased scrutiny.

The third area for investigation examines People/Family versus Mission. Does the goal of having combat-ready units justify neglect of families? Conversely, does the proper care and nurture of families excuse having noncombat-ready units? Can we achieve both? Should dependents accompany their sponsors overseas? Does it detract from readiness, or contribute to it? Is it ethical to separate families from their sponsors in peacetime under any circumstances? What are the effects of separating families?

The fourth area for investigation examines balancing self-development and organizational development. Is one more important than the other to the effect that lower priority never occurs? What are the risks of focusing solely on the organization and neglecting continued self-development? Is doing for self selfless?

Together with the foundational modules, *The Army Profession as Our Unifying Purpose and Context* and *Investing in Character Development*, this module promotes learning in the higher categories of the cognitive and affective domains. Learning new material, applying the learning, and engaging in topic discussion is the suggested method.

