

NONCOMMISSIONED, COMMISSIONED AND WARRANT OFFICER RELATIONSHIPS

An important part of your role as an NCO is how you relate to commissioned officers. To develop this working relationship, NCOs and officers must know the similarities of their respective duties and responsibilities.

Commissioned officers hold a commission from the President of the United States, which authorizes them to act as the President's representative in certain military matters. Laws, regulations, policies and customs limit the duties and responsibilities of commissioned officers, like NCOs and other government officials. As the President's representatives, commissioned officers carry out the orders of the Commander in Chief as they are handed down through the chain of command. In carrying out orders, commissioned officers get considerable help, advice and assistance from NCOs. Both commissioned officers and NCOs share the same goal – accomplish the unit's mission.

The Commissioned Officer

- Commands, establishes policy, plans and programs the work of the Army.
- Concentrates on collective training, which will enable the unit to accomplish its mission.
- Is primarily involved with unit operations, training and related activities.
- Concentrates on unit effectiveness and unit readiness.
- Pays particular attention to the standards of performance, training and professional development of officers as well as NCOs.
- Creates conditions – makes the time and other resources available – so the NCO can do the Job.
- Supports the NCO.

Warrant officers are highly specialized, single-tracked specialty officers who receive their authority from the Secretary of the Army upon their initial appointment. However, Title 10 USC authorizes the commissioning of Warrant Officers (WO1) upon promotion to Chief Warrant Officer (CW2). These commissioned warrant officers are direct representatives of the President of the United States. They derive their authority from the same source as commissioned officers but remain specialists, in contrast to commissioned officers who are generalists

The Warrant Officer

- Provides quality advice, counsel and solutions to support the command.
- Executes policy and manages the Army's system.
- Commands special-purpose units and tasks-organized operational elements.
- Focuses on collective, leader and individual training.
- Operates, maintains, administers and manages the Army's equipment, support activities and technical system.
- Concentrates on unit effectiveness and readiness.
- Supports the NCO.

Warrant officers can and do command detachments, units, activities and vessels as well as lead, coach, train and counsel soldiers. As leaders and technical/tactical experts, warrant officers provide valuable skills, guidance and expertise to commanders and organizations in their particular field.

Warrant officers provide mentorship, leadership and training to NCOs to support technical, tactical and mission-related tasks. The relationship between the warrant officer and NCO is similar to the commissioned officer. They rely on each other for help, advice and assistance to accomplish the unit's mission.

The Noncommissioned Officer

- Conducts the daily business of the Army within established orders, directives and policies.
- Focuses on individual training, which develops the capability to accomplish the mission.
- Primarily involved with training and leading soldiers and teams.

- Ensures each subordinate team, NCO and soldier is prepared to function as effective unit and each team member is well trained, highly motivated, ready and functioning.
- Concentrates on standards of performance, training and professional development of NCOs and enlisted soldiers.
- Follows orders of officers and NCOs in the support channel.
- Gets the job done.

Noncommissioned officers, the backbone of the Army, train, lead and take care of enlisted soldiers. They receive their authority from their oaths of office, law, rank structure, duty position, traditions and regulations. This authority allows them to direct soldiers, take actions required to accomplish the mission and enforce good order and discipline. NCOs represent officer and sometimes DA civilian leaders. They ensure their soldiers, along with their personal equipment, are prepared to function as an effective unit and team members. While commissioned officers command, establish policy and manage resources, NCOs conduct the Army's daily business.

SPECIAL MENTION

Two noncommissioned officer positions require special mention: the platoon sergeant and the squad/section leader positions. The platoon sergeant's position is unique because the platoon sergeant must be ready to assume the responsibilities of the platoon leader — an officer. The platoon sergeant takes command in the platoon leader's absence. Therefore, the platoon sergeant's tasks are essentially the same as those of the platoon leader. As acting platoon leader, the platoon sergeant assumes the same responsibilities as the commissioned officer. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant must understand each other; the platoon sergeant must be able to move in and out of the officer's area of responsibility to prepare to replace the platoon leader if necessary. In many cases, the platoon sergeant has much more experience than the lieutenant does; one important task is to teach and advise the lieutenant. The platoon needs both the officer and the sergeant and they must know each other without thinking.

There is naturally some overlap of duties and responsibilities between officers and NCOs. This is a necessary and desirable outcome of close cooperation and should be a source of strength for a unit rather than the cause of friction.

The second unique position is the squad, section or team leader. Possibly the only NCO in the squad, section or team, he is **the** leader of his soldiers. This NCO is the first link in both the NCO support channel and chain of command. They take their orders from both the platoon sergeant and platoon leader. This is another reason why the platoon sergeant and platoon leader must know what each other are doing. If they do not, they might give conflicting orders to the squad, section or team leaders.

Noncommissioned, commissioned and warrant officers depend on each other and work together to accomplish the mission of the unit. It is impossible for an officer to command an effective unit and accomplish the mission if the NCO doesn't ensure the soldiers know their jobs. Commissioned officers, warrant officers and NCOs must advise, assist and learn from each other. Although the officer is held accountable for all that the unit does or fails to do, only by working together with the NCO can he assure the job will get accomplished.