

AS WE SEE IT . . .



HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE NATIONAL GUARD

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Commanding Officer, 83d Medical Group

IN many ways, service in the National Guard resembles that of an employe in business or industry. In either instance, performance counts. And satisfactory performance still depends upon such old-fashioned virtues as honesty, enthusiasm, loyalty, persistence, determination, initiative, courage, plus a sincere desire to learn.

To believe that progress in the Guard depends upon luck or knowing the right people is wrong; winners in sports, business or in the military field are those who have the ability and who are prepared to take advantage of the breaks when the breaks occur.

When a man has advanced in the Guard we know that all along the line of his promotions he has been able to please his Commanding Officers. Hence, if you are to learn from his experience, you set out to know why. Was it luck? Did he have the proper contacts? Did he have a pleasing personality? Did he progress by flattery, talking his way up, catering to someone's fancy? Or did he have ability to do a job that no one else wanted to do or liked to do, and do it cheerfully and well?

Any officer or enlisted man in the Guard who stands ready to do what should be done, when it should be done, without repeated telling, is sure to make progress. The attitude, "How much can I give to the organization?" rather than "How much can I get?," will spell success and advancement in the Guard.

The Guard as we know it is characterized by a friendly and informal relationship between officers and enlisted men. Guardsmen are less hesitant than others in their criticism of their superiors. A part-time Commander has shortcomings, yet he has a predominance of good qualities, otherwise he will not remain a Commanding Officer very long. You can learn something from him. But this needs cooperation and understanding on your part, plus a sincere desire to learn. Passive resistance to his suggestions (a wet blanket reception to every proposal) not only stifles your ability to absorb new ideas, but hinders unit progress.

You can not remain in the Guard very long before you discover that being a Guardsman is not a two-hours-a-week avocation. Many officers and men never measure up to their full potential as leaders, simply because they have the idea that Guard duty begins with roll call and

ends with saluting the Colors each drill night. The man who gets ahead in the Guard is always interested. He is thinking, talking, and planning National Guard at every opportunity. He constantly is searching for ways to improve his contribution to the unit, to do his job better, looking forward to the next field training or the next training quarter with the determination that previous mistakes and omissions won't happen again. Improved performance is his motto. He actively supports all phases of the Guard program.

In the Guard as in industry, initiative is essential. Your Commanding Officer is interested in your progress. The more men he can advance, the better for him and for his unit. He thus builds for the future, for he knows that in the long run his unit never will want for replacements.

If you are wise you will set your objective high and be willing and prepared to climb step by step. By enrolling in extension courses you will broaden your background and usefulness, and incidentally achieve one requirement for promotion. If enthusiastic, if interested, you prove beyond question that you have what it takes. This is the most direct and sure way to success in any field, and especially in the Guard.

Remember that you will be plagued by interminable details and formalities, social and otherwise, that you may consider insignificant, or interfere with your so-called freedom. To neglect them or to treat them as unreasonable may prove your undoing. Science and experience have shown us that the important things in life are relatively simple and most of the so-called insignificant things are important. A superior type of duty performance in the National Guard involves doing each phase of the operation on time regardless of its seeming unimportance at the moment, with the full realization that it is but one aspect of a complicated plan. Never be content with doing a routine job and trying to justify such action by the attitude of "equal pay for equal work." That extra effort and those extra hours will pay in the long run.

Your chance for success in the National Guard depends upon your attitude—a responsibility you cannot delegate. On this rests your level of achievement.

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dear guardsmen:

It's been quite some time since we last mentioned this idea—that gift subscriptions to THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN constitute a practical, useful, simple, appropriate, thoughtful, friendly, etc., etc., way of (1) showing appreciation to a National Guard enlisted man who has done something out of the ordinary, or (2) getting new Guardsmen acquainted with their component and helping to whet their interest in it.

What brought this to mind was not one, but two, recent communications. For example, Chap (1st Lt) William E Stone of Connecticut's 102 Inf sent us a subscription "to express my thanks to a Guardsman who volunteered to play the organ in chapel at our annual field training"—Sgt Noll R Snell of Seymour, Conn.

And "The Old Dominion's" Adj Gen Sheppard Crump initiated the practice of entering subscriptions for new members of the Virginia National Guard, "with this thought in mind: it is believed that THE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN magazine being sent to the individual's home with the compliments of the Commonwealth of Virginia for the first year will assist the individual as well as the family, friends and relatives of the individual, thus publicizing the National Guard."

It's a good idea any time of the year, and even more especially appropriate with Christmas coming. Think how much easier it is to write a check for a subscription than to buck those shopping crowds!

THE STAFF

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our cover

High over Denver, the Colorado ANG's "Minute Men," display their precision flying which has made them one of the top acrobatic flying teams in the Nation. Demonstrations from coast to coast this Summer have won them universal acclaim.