1. GENERAL. As the Company First Sergeant and senior noncommissioned officer, I look to you to set the example for leadership and to be an inspiration to the company (officers, NCOs, and enlisted Soldiers). You must set the example for all in courtesy, deportment, uniform, and standards of conduct. You will participate in POI training every day and ensure that every aspect is done correctly (to include taking immediate corrective action). Our companies can only be great if they are led by competent, caring, NCOs who always ensure the standard is met.

2. SPECIFIC.

 a. Reception Program.

 1) Make all Soldiers and their families feel that they are a part of the company from the moment they are assigned.

 2) Develop a detailed in-processing program which includes a discussion with you and with your commander within 24 hours.

 3) Ensure that the entire chain of command briefs the new Soldiers; ensure that new Soldiers attend the first available Newcomer’s Orientation.

 4) Assign sponsors to all new Soldiers. Make progress checks. Ensure sponsors send a welcome letter. Provide me (through the S1) a copy of your sponsors welcome letter.

 5) Get personally involved in reception and instructor certification (as needed) from day one; I hold you responsible for successful RSOI in your unit.

 6) Correct personal, pay, and family problems immediately; focus on use of support agencies on post to help Soldiers resolve these problems.

 7) Ensure that the family is comfortably situated and within a reasonable time finds permanent accommodations. For single Soldiers, get them a room in single Soldier quarters. New Soldiers, E6 and below, will have a member of the chain of command inspect the Soldier’s prospective dwelling prior to allowing them to sign a lease.

 b. TRAINING.

 1) “The best form of welfare for the Soldier is first class training.” Field Marshall Erwin Rommel.

 2) Conduct training planning, rehearsal, execution, and AARs.

 3) Be at training; there is no substitute for the First Sergeants presence; you are the key trainer within the company.

 4) Be personally involved in safety; we don’t have accidents - we manage risks to ensure our Soldiers are provided a safe environment to train in.

 5) Closely manage your training statistics. This takes a long range focus and detailed planning.

 6) You are the chief individual trainer for cadre within your company. Along with the CSM, develop an instructor certification program that is compatible with the collective training objectives of the company and battalion.

 7) Give your NCOs time to prepare for training, make them rehearse, then hold them accountable.

 8) Train to standard, not to the clock.

 9) Train on the basics. As professionals, we must be able to perform our basic tasks under all conditions. This includes maintenance.

 10) Coaching, Teaching, and Mentoring are our bread and butter; be a master at them.

 11) Leaders of all elements must be proficient in empathetic leadership.

 12) Your company APFT average ought to be 270 (+). Help your commander develop and sustain a tough, challenging, interesting PT program. Work on stamina, and strength.

 13) Function as the principal advisor to your company commander on training deficiencies and help him to organize remedial training to correct problems. You are the most knowledgeable man in the company on tactical operations. Teach, coach, and mentor all in your company.

 14) Establish, and execute a viable NCODP program. You are the primary instructor; make your program have an end state; then get there. Also train your NCOs how to inspect, counsel, identify Soldiers in trouble, and lead from the front.

 15) Conduct your own safety assessment prior to any training. If it looks and smells like we are putting Soldiers at risk; stop the training and make your commander take a second look.

 16) Train with all equipment, and cross train to provide redundancy.

 17) Evaluate each training event, and conduct an AAR. Ask your fellow company 1SGs for O/Cs, you’ll both learn from the experience.

18) Be able to alert, assemble, and employ the company for emergency contingencies (Lost Ranger, Mass Casualty, etc.).

19) Don’t put your commander in the hot seat with me by setting him up for failure and canceling planned training. Be the proponent of unit (Phase, PTT, Team) integrity within your unit; make your chiefs responsible for missions and their Soldiers.

 20) In the field: Assist your commander in the employment of the company, ensure that your Soldiers stay in uniform, ensure that your individual PIs are executing to standard and mitigation measures are in place.

 21) Do not waste Soldier’s time. Always prepare, rehearse, and then start on time. I get ugly when we waste time because we didn’t prepare.

 c. MAINTENANCE:

1. Maintenance is a chain of command function. Pay attention and be involved.

 2) Know your equipment.

 3) Have a complete understanding of the maintenance system.

 4) Always maintain by the book (-10/-20); Make sure your operators use their -10s and that they are up to date. Insist that PSGs become the expert on their equipment systems.

 5) Maintain during cycle; have a system that double check to ensure that maintenance is being performed.

 6) I will personally check maintenance; I will be interested in the results of Road Side Spot checks.

 7) Property accountability is the basis for effective maintenance and supply. You owe it to your commander to ensure his flanks are secure in this area; he will fail if he forgets this area.

 8) Make someone accountable for every piece of equipment; personally ensure that the next higher supervisor is involved in change of hand receipt holders and that they out brief you on the results of their inventory.

 9) Initiate property adjustment documents as soon as shortages are discovered.

 10) Sensitive item accountability is non-negotiable. Report losses immediately, and immediately secure the area, freeze all personnel in place, and segregate those who may be involved in the loss.

 11) Expect your Soldiers to maintain their quarters as a healthy environment for them to live in. Ensure they understand that we will not allow them to live in squalor. You are the one I will require to ensure that all Soldiers live in a safe, healthy environment.

 12) Teach your NCOs how to ensure their Soldiers maintain their individual equipment (to include TA-50); then hold them to standard.

 d. MAINTENANCE OF PEOPLE, DISCIPLINE, AND HAVING FUN:

 1) Soldiers problems deserve our utmost attention. Genuine care in solving Soldier’s problems prevents AWOLs, attempts to hurt themselves, and disciplinary problems.

 2) Expeditiously complete financial/personnel actions for Soldiers. Use LES as a tool. Stay on top of what your Soldiers are doing and you should not have a late pay transaction. Keep the PAC informed of position changes and other personnel actions. I hold you responsible for personnel readiness in your company.

 3) Push your Soldiers to go to school; military and civilian. Prepare them for their future. Push SSD.

 4) Remember that the demography of the Army has changed and most have dependents. A Soldier’s home life affects his duty performance. Take family responsibility into consideration and insist Soldiers meet their obligations. Use the Chaplain, and ACS to help you help families when necessary.

 5) Establish predictability within your battle rhythms.

 6) Support the BN Family Readiness Group.

 7) Track your over 40 personnel, single parents, geographic bachelors, permanent and temporary profiles to ensure requirements are being met to assist these Soldiers.

 8) Inspect POVs and conduct safety briefings before all long weekends or holidays. Talk to your troops about safety before each weekend.

 9) NCOERs are vital elements of a professional’s career. You make sure they are on time.

 10) Awards should be given to deserving Soldiers immediately; track them and ensure the system works. Publicly recognize your good Soldiers and good duty performances; even if it is just calling them out front of the formation and thanking them for a job well done.

 11) Visit Soldiers in the hospital immediately when notified of a serious accident. Either you or your chain of command should visit hospitalized Soldiers frequently (normally, daily). Ensure that next of kin are notified; that the family readiness group is notified, and that I and the CSM are notified.

 12) Use Hometown New Releases.

 13) Do not tolerate physical or mental harassment of Soldiers; Use the appropriate administrative or judicial procedures to deal with problem cadre.

 14) Sponsorship is a commander and 1SG responsibility. Assign good Soldiers to be sponsors.

 15) Make an effort identify quality Soldiers for service in the T-10 AGR Program.

 16) You are the company safety noncommissioned officer. Always conduct risk management. Train your subordinates to conduct risk management; and ensure they understand that this is a zero defects area. Risk management worksheets are a contract with me.

 17) Emphasize positive leadership by thanking Soldiers for a job well done.

 18) Make a big deal of promotions - it is. I will attend all promotions.

 19) Disciplinary actions. Be smart and talk to JAG early on. I retain the authority to punish E6 and above.

 20) Check your subordinates to ensure they are counseling their subordinates. Make sure your NCOs are trained to provide effective, focused counseling to improve Soldier performance.

3. Final thoughts:

 a. I like informality, and open - candid discussions. I expect you to speak freely and honestly with me. If you have a complaint about guidance or policies, come and tell me. Have your facts straight. Once I (or your company commander) make the decision, execute it violently to the best of your abilities.

 b. Statistics are a way of life; keep an eye on them so that they don’t crush our training program.

 c. I am not a zero defects commander. I will underwrite honest mistakes. However, I will not tolerate incompetence or apathy.

 d. Account for your company at all times; I expect you to know your unit status - cold.

 e. Assist and advise your commander on matters pertaining to awards, promotions, schools, and UCMJ; you have seen much more in these areas than he has; allow him to use your experience.

 f. Be the promotions expert for your company. Ensure that your Soldiers see you before boards so that you can conduct a preliminary analysis.

 g. Get the word out to Soldiers; you are a conduit of information - but practice using the chain of command to spread information; very little should be reserved for formations.

 h. Maintain a standing list on best qualified for schools; ensure that Soldiers selected for attendance are ready.

1. Monitor all leaves for your company; know how to get hold of your Soldiers.

 j. Assist and advise your commander on all personnel actions.

 k. Keep your company area, and your barracks up to standard; ensure bulletin boards remain current.

 l. Keep your UMR current.

 m. Follow the guidance and advice of the CSM; I will.

 n. As the First Sergeant the success of your Soldiers is a direct reflection of you. Everything form morale, to moral and ethical conduct, to technical and tactical proficiency of your NCOs and Soldiers, is squarely on your Soldiers. Your attitude will become the attitude of your Soldiers; they will adopt your mannerisms, your sense of humor, and your outlook on the future of your unit and the battalion. Always give them a professional NCO to emulate. You have one of the best jobs in the Army; as great as mine. Don’t lose your perspective, or your sense of humor. Have confidence with humility. Balance the triad of professional, personal, and family responsibilities. Have fun as a 1SG. It will be a defining period in your professional and personal lives.

 R. BRIAN DEATON

 LTC, IN

 Commanding