

# Ethics equals relationships

*By SSG Dave Enders*

The *NCO Journal* is getting its third editor in chief in less than three years. For any civilian magazine, that would be the kiss of death. But for the *NCO Journal*, it's no problem.

Being an NCO is about handling transitions seamlessly, teaching and mentoring your soldiers while they're your soldiers and then either passing them to the next NCO or making them the next NCO, and doing your job as well and then passing it to the next NCO – an endless cycle.

When SFC Donald Sparks brought the *NCO Journal* back into print, the editor in chief's job was mainly to get exposure for the magazine: get contributions from the field, build the content, and develop relationship between the *NCO Journal* and other agencies. He did that.

The next job for the editor in chief was the job of refining the print magazine, but it was time for Sparks to move on and refining the magazine fell to me.

Our goal has been to improve the overall content and appearance of the magazine with each issue being the best *NCO Journal* since it came back into print. Between the staff and me, we've accomplished that goal.

But, when you look at it from an NCO ethics point of view, it's the relationships between the NCOIC and the individual staff members that matter, not the job.

I can't speak much about the relationship between Phil Tegtmeier and me because he and I have been a management team. We've been a tremendous team, in fact.

I can't speak much about the relationship between SPC Jimmy Norris and me either, aside from trying to prod him into becoming *the next NCO*. As the photojournalist, he hasn't been here long enough yet to accomplish anything. He hasn't been

the photojournalist for even an entire issue yet, and our NCOIC to soldier relationship hasn't had time to affect the *Journal*.

That leaves me with one staff member to talk ethics about: SPC Michael Stone.

Stone came here as the *NCO Journal* illustrator straight from AIT, completely green, and Sparks had no more time to work with him than I've had to work with Norris.

The quality of the written content for the *NCO Journal* hasn't changed much since Sparks was here. But the quality of the graphic content has improved greatly, and it continues to improve. We've transitioned from artwork that was primarily photography to representational graphics that illustrate key points in the articles. Stone made that happen.

Stone was a great illustrator. He became a great art director.

The drive, ambition, ability and potential were all Stone. But I did my part to keep him moving in the right direction and to teach him about the processes involved in his job.

Stone learned the process for selecting and producing complementary graphics for articles, the placement of graphic elements on the page and the *how to* for design based on where a graphic element is to appear on the page, and the techniques for balanced magazine design.

As far as producing artwork goes, Stone learned that from someone else – I am no artist. But how it's all supposed to work within the page layout to complement the written articles, that he learned here, from either Phil or me.

In fact, you'll be seeing more of Stone's work soon enough. When they went looking for someone to produce the artwork for the new *NCO Guide*, which will be on the streets next year, Stone was the best local

person available. He took charge of the production for all the artwork, producing most of it himself and working with another soldier who wanted a hand in it.

Would Stone have been able to accomplish what he's done if I hadn't taken time to show him how? Actually, Stone probably would have found a way, but I know that I made it a lot easier for him. And, I made him the art director as opposed to the illustrator.

Several of the articles in this issue have compared being an NCO to being a parent. Being an NCO and taking that role seriously doesn't quite match being a parent, but there is no other job in the world that comes nearly as close.

Am I proud of what Stone's done with what I've given him? You bet I am – he's my soldier.

I'm proud too of the relationship that Phil and I have built. We are a management team.

And I'm proud of the relationship that Norris and I are building – we haven't had time to develop it, but we may.

MSG Lisa Hunter takes over as *NCO Journal* editor-in-chief immediately following this issue. If she wants me to keep working with these soldiers, I'll be glad to do it.

I'm passing the *NCO Journal* to Hunter because it's time for me to move on. As far as the magazine goes, Hunter is simply going to take over as editor in chief and do what the editor in chief needs to do. Some might think it difficult to pass this responsibility to another, but it's not really – I've had my run, albeit a short one.

As an NCO, the thing that's hard for me to pass to Hunter is the soldiers. But, they're hers now, and she'll be their NCO. Drive on.

---

*SSG Enders is the NCO Journal editor-in-chief.*