
WARRIOR ETHOS:

Soldiers Selflessly Committed to Army, Unit, Fellow Soldiers

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FM 7-0, *Training the Force*, defines the Warrior Ethos as "...the Soldier's selfless commitment to the nation, mission, unit, and fellow Soldiers. It is the professional attitude that inspires every American Soldier. The Warrior Ethos is grounded in refusal to accept failure. It is developed and sustained through discipline, commitment to the Army Values, and pride in the Army's heritage."

We can no longer rely on fighting our nation's wars on a linear battlefield, where we can easily differentiate between friendly and enemy lines. The enemy's face has changed, as must our way of fighting. The mind-set we must assume in fighting that enemy must also change. We can no longer rely on just our Combat Arms brethren to defeat the enemy. The unique realities of the modern battlefield mandate that ALL Soldiers assume the mind-set and tenacity of the infantryman, and should they be called upon, take the fight to the enemy. Current military operations in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have seen cooks transformed into SAW gunners during convoy operations and field artillerymen performing cordon searches throughout the heart of Baghdad. They assumed these roles with no complaint, and with little or no formal training. The thread common to these Soldiers is their selfless

commitment to the nation, the mission, the unit, and fellow Soldiers. They refuse to accept defeat. This state of mind has remained prevalent throughout our nation's 229-year history.

The Warrior Ethos should not be a new concept to anyone present today. The NCO Creed, The Ranger's Creed, Von Steuben's "Blue Book," the Code of Conduct, and most recently, the Soldier's Creed, have all emphasized the heart of what the Warrior Ethos represents. These beliefs and convictions have been the cornerstone of our profession of arms since the Army's birth in 1775. The focal point of these remarkable documents focuses on discipline, professionalism, and selfless service to our nation and our fellow Soldiers. The Warrior Ethos is merely a synopsis of what these historic documents and credos represent. As senior NCOs and leaders of Soldiers, it is OUR duty to ensure that we instill these principles into everything our Soldiers do on a daily basis. We must ensure that our Soldiers possess the mental and physical toughness to sustain themselves during the chaos of combat. It is our responsibility to teach ALL Soldiers that courage is not the absence of fear, but the ability to control that fear and continue on with the mission. All noncommissioned officers must instill in their Soldiers that integrity and honor



must NEVER be compromised, regardless of the situation in which they may find themselves. Without either of these character traits, they will never learn to trust each other in combat. The Warrior Ethos, simply stated, is a moral and professional standard that we must hold our Soldiers accountable to. However, in order to do this, we must first be able to hold ourselves accountable to that standard. Leaders must continuously immerse themselves in the history of those who have fought before them and adopt their leadership qualities into their own styles of leadership. We must continuously be seeking ways to improve the way in which we take care of our Soldiers. We should ask ourselves, "Are our Soldiers mentally and physically prepared to endure the rigors of battle? Are they proficient in their MOS? Are our Soldiers proficient in basic combat Soldier skills?" The answer to these questions rests first and foremost with every Soldier that wears the rank of the NCO. The Warrior Ethos must be the daily guidepost that all NCOs adhere to. As NCOs, we are the vehicle that will provide the next generation of Soldiers the means to become proficient in their chosen profession and survive on the battlefield.

As the deployment rate for all components of the United States Army (Active, Reserve, and National Guard) increases, the depth in which we train our Soldiers has never been more crucial. Sergeant First Class Gallagher, an IET trainer stationed at Fort Benning, said, "We don't have the luxury of time right now. We graduate Soldiers, and a short time later they are deploying ... When Soldiers arrive in Baghdad and get off the planes and into HMMWVs, they are immediately thrust into combat operations ... They have to go in with a mind-set that they will engage and kill the enemy on their first day in country."

This is an excellent example of why we must instill the Warrior Ethos into our Soldiers NOW. Leaders cannot afford to wait until arrival in a combat zone to realize that their Soldiers are not prepared to fight. As soon as they step off that airplane, Soldiers must be confident in their ability to perform their wartime mission, take care of their comrades, and return safely home. The Warrior Ethos gives us the ideals that we must teach our Soldiers to accomplish this.

Failure to teach our Soldiers to survive in combat is not an option. We are at the crossroads of one of the most critical periods in the Army's history. A quote from Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston's swearing in ceremony relates closely to this essay. He said, "Our entire Army is at war and not just the infantryman or tanker. We are an Army of Warfighters and EVERY Soldier is a rifleman first. I have seen the Warrior Ethos alive and well in the souls of all our Soldiers, Active, Guard, and Reserve. We must continue to instill the warrior spirit in the souls of all our 1.3 million members."

We cannot, and MUST NOT, fail in this endeavor.

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SOLDIER'S CREED

I am an American Soldier.
 I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.
 I will always place the mission first.
 I will never accept defeat.
 I will never quit.
 I will never leave a fallen comrade.
 I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.
 I am an expert and I am a professional.
 I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
 I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
 I am an American Soldier.



"We are, have been, and will remain a values based institution. Our values will not change and they are non-negotiable. Our Soldiers are Warriors of character. They exemplify these values every day and are the epitome of our American spirit. They are the heart of the Army."

— General Peter J. Schoomaker
 Chief of Staff of the Army

WARRIOR ETHOS

"Embedded in the Soldier's Creed is the Warrior Ethos — the very essence of what it means to be a Soldier:

- I will always place the mission first.
- I will never accept defeat.
- I will never quit.
- I will never leave a fallen comrade.

The Warrior Ethos describes the frame of mind of the professional Soldier. It proclaims the selfless commitment to the Nation, mission, unit, and fellow Soldiers that all Soldiers espouse. When internalized, it produces the will to win ...

At its core, the Warrior Ethos is the refusal to accept failure and instead overcome all obstacles with honor. The Warrior Ethos moves Soldiers to fight through all conditions to victory, no matter how long it takes and how much effort is required. Army leaders develop and sustain it through discipline, realistic training, commitment to the Army Values, and pride in the Army's heritage."

— Field Manual 1, The U.S. Army