Organizational Behavior

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Organizational Behavior in the Army

In civilian jobs, there is no job requirement for employees to gos above and beyond the expectations of regular job duties and have a positive contribution to the organization, for example staying late without out extra pay to complete a task or helping others by switching schedules. This type of behavior which is called organizational citizenship behavior is voluntary (Rose, Herd, & Palacio, 2016). However, in the army, this behavior is expected of all soldiers through a set of values ingrained in them from the day they enter the service. These values are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, and personal courage. Failing to live by these values, just one, leads to bad ratings and even possible discharge.

All soldiers must learn many technical skills that pertain to their job in the military, ranging from marksmanship, movement techniques, battle drills, to first aid. However, to become an expert soldier, it is more important to learn skills not taught in a classroom, such as communication, teamwork, and leadership (how to motivate others), etc. As a soldier, it is required to always put the mission first (duty, selfless service). The values engrained in soldiers, their behavior, or attitude toward the unit and each other (loyalty) is what makes up the organizational behavior in a squad, platoon, and company.

Being able to put others before yourself (selfless service), primarily as a leader, is key to having a working team. The men and women rely on their leaders, and if they feel like soldiers they don’t matter, the team will fail. For that reason, getting to know the soldiers, such as their hobbies, goals, and families is essential, giving each soldier a sense that they matter, and in return, they will be more than willing to stand up and fight. It is because they know their leaders will be there for them if they get wounded or worse killed.

As a soldier in a unit, be it a squad, platoon, company, or higher, it is essential to refrain from any unethical behavior, especially as a leader. When leaders participate in the unethical behavior, it shows their subordinates that it is ok and leads to them behaving the same way, since they see their leaders as role models, also known as the social learning theory (Joosten et al. 2014). Such behavior, like sexual harassment/assault, hazing, bullying can lead to the soldiers not trusting the leaders or each other. This type of behavior has even caused soldiers to commit suicide, which affects not only unit readiness but the families of those soldiers. These forms of unethical behavior affect unit cohesion, but most importantly, it prevents the unit from completing its mission.

Organizational behavior in the army is mandated by instilling in soldier a set of values that dictate their behavior. These values drive soldiers to give all if necessary to complete the mission, be there for one another, and know each other personally. Unethical behavior such as hazing effects the cohesion of the team and their ability to perform their mission. By living the army values, every soldier helps to maintain the organization.

References

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