

From the SMA



Are you leading by example?

Leaders, Our Soldiers, and especially our noncommissioned officer corps, are the envy of every Army in the world. This kind of respect does not happen overnight. However, this respect and trust breaks down when we, as senior noncommissioned officers, fail to meet the charge to uphold the Army standard and live the Army Values.

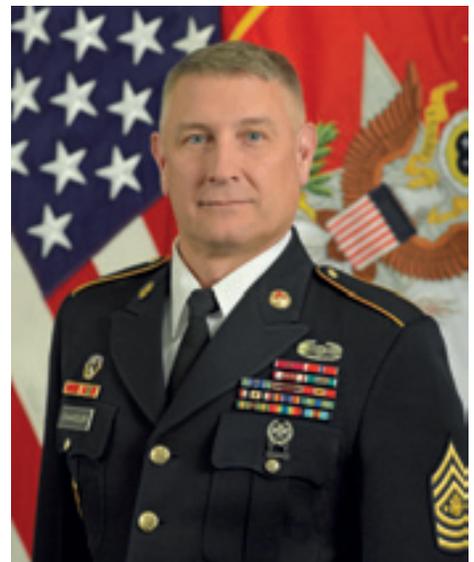
Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage are not just a group of individual ideals, but a collective ethic. These values are at the core of what makes us a profession and serve as our moral compass.

This is why it pains me to see senior noncommissioned officers punished for gross incompetence and negligence. Sexual assault and harassment, driving under the influence, and contract fraud are just a few of the major issues I see across my desk on a daily basis. These are not junior NCOs breaking the law. It is our senior NCOs with many years of service — the ones our junior Soldiers look to for guidance, mentorship, and counseling — who are not upholding our Army standard.

I do not doubt for a second that most of these incidents could have been stopped earlier in the process. Most of the time, a peer sees or hears something, but turns a blind eye. It takes Personal Courage for an NCO to pull a peer aside and say, “I saw what you did, and it needs to stop now. You are compromising your values.” “I will not leave a fallen comrade” does not just apply to the battlefield. This part of the Warrior Ethos applies to our everyday life. We must police our own.

We cannot expect our Soldiers to live by the Army Values when their leaders and mentors are not upholding the standard. These values form the framework of our profession and are nonnegotiable. Values, plus the Warrior Ethos, guide the way we conduct ourselves as an Army and as a profession of arms. We must be the uncompromising standard-bearers for our Soldiers. Leadership is the key ingredient. Are you leading by example?

Army Strong!



Raymond F. Chandler III
Sergeant Major of the Army