

Hints for New Warrant Officers

1. You have earned the right to join a group of officers unique in the Army with a long and distinct history. Congratulations. The members of the Corps are distinguished by the fact that they are the Army's "Subject Matter Experts" in their fields. Build on this history by establishing your own reputation for competence and professionalism within the Corps.
2. Maintain proper relations with people senior in rank even if they are younger in age than you. Never give cause to be "put in your place."
3. Study continuously. Continuous job related research is essential to add to your store of knowledge. It's a sad day for the warrant officer if he or she doesn't learn something each day.
4. In your spare time, read every good book you can find. In addition to expanding your general knowledge base, it is an excellent way to improve your command of the English language.
5. Be fair but firm with your soldiers. Back them publicly when they are right and criticize them privately when they are wrong.
6. Expect and get a lot from your NCOIC. If he or she can't cut it, take action to replace him or her, but only after careful consideration and after having made every effort to guide and teach.
7. If you are responsible for a shop, be on top of the operations full time. Make every effort to know more about your work than any other individual, for you have full responsibility.
8. Watch your paperwork. Reports must be accurate and on time.
9. When reporting to a new unit, get to know the people. A friendly word will pay off later. Don't fail to communicate. A few minutes from time to time with operations, supply, or with your security people is time well spent.
10. Form your own opinions about people. Another's opinion may not necessarily be accurate.
11. Be prepared for your share, and sometimes more, of additional duties. They will vary from unit to unit, but they are always there.
12. When you are a duty officer, study regulations instead of reading magazines. The junior WO1 in the unit can be the sharpest officer. It pays.
13. In some cases, you may have to "carry" your boss. Do not be resentful of this; in fact, it's an unwritten part of your job description. However, if you cannot be honestly supportive of your boss, seek a transfer.
14. If you have a support mission, there is no substitute for getting out to see your customer units. Don't make it an inspection, unless they have requested it, and even then keep your findings out of command channels. Send a letter and keep a file copy after every visit.
15. Sometimes there will be conflicts over how something should be done. Stand up for your views; however, if you are overruled, proceed to complete the mission the best of your ability.
16. Search for methods to improve the unit to which you are assigned. Stay within command channels (which might be sometimes difficult). Be able to support the validity of your suggestions and prepared to present an implementation plan.
17. Expect and get the best from your soldiers. This is what they also expect from you. They will be proud to be on the best team in the unit.
18. Become familiar with other warrant officer MOS. This may save your career in the long run if you must reclassify or in force reduction situations.
19. Broaden your experience by getting into every school, accepting every additional duty, every inspection trip you can manage.
20. Don't hesitate to ask for technical advice if you need it. Form the habit, however, of looking things up for yourself. You will remember it longer and it will be more accurate.

21. Require your soldiers to improve their technical knowledge. This can be integrated into your normal workload. Have them use available manuals. Your shop is not the place for radios, electronic games, or comic books.
22. Stay out of soldiers' clubs, except by invitation only on very special occasions.
23. Be concerned for the welfare of your soldiers in every possible way, but don't coddle them. It is often a pleasant surprise to a younger person to find himself treated as an adult.
24. You may occasionally find yourself with an uncomplicated and undemanding assignment, or one that you do not consider challenging. Do not permit this to cause you to lose initiative or your interest in improving and contributing to the betterment of our forces. Invariably the next assignment will be rough and you should remain constantly prepared for it.
25. On every assignment, begin and maintain a list of your significant achievements. It will be valuable at OER support form time, and, you can use it to monitor your progress.
26. Avoid extended "bull sessions" with enlisted soldiers. This practice invariably leads to over-familiarity and tends to be abused by some individuals.
27. Try to get a job as a MOS proponent school instructor at some time in your career. You are a trainer and teacher by the nature of your job. Why not polish this professional skill?
28. Daily, seek to look, act, and think as a professional military leader. Never lose sight of the fact that you are a professional officer and soldier.
29. Using vulgarity and coarseness, in an attempt to be popular, will be at the expense of your self-respect and does nothing to improve your image. No amount of schooling or experience will provide the character and integrity expected of you, it must come from within yourself.
30. Devote a lot of thought to morale - that of your soldiers, the unit, and your self. Remember that this intangible varies considerably from one unit to the next and from one supervisor to another. Do your share to keep morale high in your unit and, if the situation is such that you must do it on your own, then do so!
31. If an individual's performance is deserving, do your best to obtain recognition for him or her, such as an award or citation. A letter of appreciation to a deserving individual is worth many letters of reprimand.
32. Do not degrade the Warrant Officer Corps by failing to maintain a neat appearance. Pay attention to your military appearance and bearing daily.
33. A positive attitude and healthy frame of mind are absolutely essential to any mission. Yet they are the most difficult character traits to keep up to par -- especially when the going gets tough. Keep a sharp eye out for whatever you can do to help in these areas, beginning with yourself.
34. Never become involved in or condone, by word or deed, any illegal act for any reason. A supervisor or subordinate who suggests committing an illegal act to avoid punishment or discovery of an error (such as signing a false official document) is violating the trust and faith you share as coworkers and, in the case of warrant and commissioned officers, their oath of office.
35. Don't sell yourself short. If you study the ideas listed herein and adopt them as part of your personal code, you will find that the Army does in fact "take care of its own."
You can be proud to wear the Eagles of an Army Warrant Officer. The Warrant Officer Corps seeks to also be proud that you wear the Eagles.

=====
*This document was originally published by the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career Center, Fort Rucker, Alabama.
It is provided as a public service by the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association, 462 Herndon Parkway, Suite 207,
Herndon, VA 20170-5235, 703-742-7727, fax 7728, 1-800-587-2962, usawoa@erols.com, www.penfed.org/usawoa*

[Use the back button to return to previously viewed page]