

THE PLATOON SERGEANT (SERGEANT FIRST CLASS)



THE POSITION TITLE OF PLATOON SERGEANT IS CONSIDERED KEY IN THE COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE ARMY. THE PLATOON SERGEANT GENERALLY HAS SEVERAL STAFF SERGEANTS WHO WORKING UNDER HIS OR HER DIRECT LEADERSHIP.

THE PLATOON SERGEANT IS THE KEY ASSISTANT AND ADVISOR TO THE PLATOON LEADER. IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PLATOON LEADER, THE PLATOON SERGEANT COMMANDS THE PLATOON. DURING THE VIETNAM ERA, THE PLATOON SERGEANT WAS AFFECTIONALLY REFERRED TO AS THE "PLAT-DADDY" AND ALTHOUGH THE TERM HAS SINCE FADED, THE ROLE REMAINS THAT OF THE FATHER OF THE PLATOON.

THE SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MAY SERVE IN A POSITION SUBORDINATE TO THE PLATOON SERGEANT OR MAY SERVE AS THE NCOIC OF THE SECTION WITH ALL THE ATTENDANT RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE PLATOON SERGEANT.

WHETHER PLATOON SERGEANT OR SERGEANT FIRST CLASS, THIS IS THE FIRST LEVEL AT WHICH THE TERM SENIOR NCO PROPERLY APPLIES. THE PLATOON SERGEANT OR SERGEANT FIRST CLASS GENERALLY HAS 15 TO 18 YEARS, OR MORE, OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE AND IS RIGHTFULLY EXPECTED TO BRING THAT EXPERIENCE TO BEAR IN QUICK, ACCURATE DECISIONS THAT ARE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE MISSION AND THE SOLDIER.

THE PLATOON SERGEANT IS EXPECTED TO EMBODY ALL THE TRAITS OF A LEADER. WATCHING A SUCCESSFUL PLATOON SERGEANT OPERATE ON A DAILY BASIS IS AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE. THERE, HE/SHE IS TRAINING THE PLATOON OR SECTION IN THEIR COLLECTIVE TASKS, HERE, HE/SHE IS CHECKING MAINTENANCE. THERE, HE/SHE IS PLANNING, EXECUTING: PERPETUAL MOTION: A BLUR: THE PERSONIFICATION OF A MILITARY LEADER AND HOT STUFF.