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Letter of introduction army

By Scott Shaw and Chad Foster Writing introductory letters to their future battalion or brigade commanders has been one of the pillars of the basic course and career since we were lieutenants and captains (and before our time as well). This honorable tradition went from an envelope and stamp to a well-written email. Whatever the medium, the purpose is still the same – to tell who you are and who is excited to enter the unit. So they matter? The short answer is yes. We both recently completed battalion command, and over that period we've seen many emails enter our lieutenants' inbox in their basic courses and captains in their career courses. These emails typically came to us before their ORBs, so they were our first impressions of these new officers. Below are some tips for writing an introductory letter to your future commander. Remember that this is your first impression. Your ability to communicate matters. Make sure that your spelling and grammar are correct, and that your letter is coherent. Tell us about yourself – Please tell your future commander about your commissioning source, your major, your family [very important – and send contact information if your family wants to be contacted (which we recommend – it can be difficult for a soldier's spouse to move to a new facility)]. Remember that you are joining the unit – not the other way around. The unit was there long before you and will continue long after you're gone. If you have the mentality that this is about the TEAM and not about YOU, there is a very high probability that you will be successful. Be careful in providing a list of your achievements. This is a fine line to walk. We would like to know if you have been an honor/distinguished graduate of your commissioning source. However, do not get carried away. Usually, less is more. You'll have plenty of chances to show off your talents when you arrive. If it is your goal, express your intention to earn the chance to serve in a specific position. For example, let your commander know that you are ready to work hard with the goal of proving yourself worthy of running a company or, if you are a major, serving as an S3 battalion or executive officer. However, emphasize that you are ready and willing to serve the team in whatever capacity is required. Be sure to get the correct drive name and motto if you will mention it. Be brief, but be complete. This is a delicate balancing act that can be assisted to the next point. Have someone who is articulated and write the proof of your letter well. Note – Don't trust someone based on your patent. We know many senior officers who are very poor writers. Also make sure you give that person some time. The hasty evidence is not a good Think about the moment of your letter. If you are wanting to influence where where going (write to a battalion commander to go to the vice of your unit sending an introductory letter) then send earlier than later. If you received a welcome letter or email from the unit, please reply when you receive it. Don't try to be funny. We want you to have a personality, but first of all we want you to be a professional. One of us found an introductory letter where an incoming officer actually wrote I like long walks on the beach and stimulating conversation. But seriously...yes, that was actually in a cover letter. There will be a time and a place to let your sense of humor shine, but don't do it right at the gate. Ask for a specific timeline to enter the command or a key development position. Everyone wants to get into their key jobs as soon as possible. Many factors go to determine when this will happen. Your future commander should look at the overall picture when determining or recommending timelines for the company's command and KD slates. If there are extenuating circumstances, save this for a face-to-face discussion when you arrive at the unit. Remember that brigade commanders determine the company's commands and the commanding generals determine the KD lists for the field notes, but the entry of battalion commanders is often decisive in the formation of these decisions. Press hard to get your gain unit to help you take it to a follow-up school. Commanders have a lot on their plate with the units they're already commanding, so calling a school on their behalf may not be a priority in most cases. This is especially true if you are applying for a school that doesn't really translate well into preparing you for your duties in the kind of unit you are joining. For example, a request to participate in air training when you are going to an ABCT is less likely to receive enthusiastic support from the commander. In addition, upcoming unit training events and/or deployments are a big part of your commander's decision about whether or not to support any type of non-essential (or good to have?) school. A better individual to get involved in this theme is the S3 battalion. This Iron Major will have a good understanding of the training schedule, the requirements of the unit, and the commander's intent on these things. Contact unit S3 and have this conversation separately. This will allow you to get a better idea of the situation and determine the best way to proceed. Bring your conversations and correspondence closer to S3 in the same professional way you would with the commander. This is another opportunity to make a positive first impression on another key leader with whom you will work closely in your new unit. all this, by all means will participate in the courses that will contribute directly to your unit. Don't jump out at Ranger School, Cavalry Cavalry Of course, or another branch-specific course. Send a letter full of typos or ramblings. Don't use flowery language. In fact, we read a letter where an officer called himself an old soul. This is not the kind of impression you want to cause. Once again, have someone review your email before sending it. Closing thoughts Like most things, there are some potential pitfalls with an introductory letter, most of which usually result from the tone of the note. If you come across as humble and motivated, your letter will be well received. It will take you to a good start that you can build on once you arrive. If you seem arrogant or entitled, your reputation will have a significant impact before you even arrive. There's a fine line between being bold and being foolish. There is a lot of good that can (and will) result from a quality introductory letter. A good one shows that you are focused and care so about the team. If you're not sure about something, it never costs to call the S1 drive and ask. Above all, take the time to make it right. This will help prepare the stage for the rest of your experience in unity. Colonel Scott Shaw is an infantry officer and currently the Director of Legislative Affairs for U.S. Forces in Afghanistan. He commanded the Cottonbalers of the 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry. Lieutenant Colonel Chad Foster is an armor officer currently assigned to the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. He commanded the 4th Squadron, the 10th U.S. Cavalry at Fort Carson. 678 Views 0 Likes 0 PIEs You like it You sent some PIE! Part 7 — Phase 4: Report to your First Unit. Warriors, we continue our discussion in the Student to Lieutenant series. This week's post takes us to our final destination, phase 4: Reporting to your your First Unit. There are three small pieces of experience that I want to cover in this post, and we will do it chronologically. First, send an introductory letter (attached templates). Second, managing expectations for your reception. Finally, getting to know your team. This part is easy. Send a cover letter. Enter your earned units social media or official website. find a point of contact, call the personnel service and ask who to the email address of XO or S1. send an introductory letter. What if I send it to the wrong person? It doesn't matter, they're going to refer you to the right person. Send a cover letter. What if it's not well written and I make a bad first impression? It has a bold member you trust to read it first, poorly written is probably still better than not written at all (you took English Comp 101 in college, didn't you?). Send a cover letter. Send a letter. Send a letter. The good officers will. Mediocre officers will find a reason which they couldn't. Now you're there. You're at the base... Let me You're a story. There I am. new-looking 2LT walking from BN HQ where I just signed with S1 to the Company where I just been assigned. In the short 100-m walk to the Company I pass a company commander, All the Way, Sir! He responds, Image of Pixabay F'ck, another new lieutenant. After I shrink this and join the company, I do some administrative things in processing and then tell me that I'm going to get a chance to meet the Company Commander. Well, guess who it is. A few things, so let's look at the numbers. First of all, the army doesn't owe you a good reception. You'll get a good one in a good unit and good leaders, but this can be personality and dependent day of the week. Welcome to reality. Even good leaders have bad days. Even the good units have some bad leaders. My experience was that 50% of my battalion commanders are excellent. The remaining 50% varied between toxic and it was nothing incredible, but I would work for it again. So we're at 50% at battalion level. Now, maybe 1:12 of company commanders will even have the opportunity to be battalion commander. So statistics suggest... Don't get too dark with me. You won't have a company commander, what you'll get is a good person and a good leader with a high probability of still being a little light on experience. So, up to the original point, managing expectations for your reception to your first unit. Your Brigade/Battalion/Company wants to give you a positive reception for the unit. They know it's important. But all this good intention may not be much the moment you greet your first company commander on the sidewalk. Focus on the part of your reception you control to make it a positive experience. Appear ready to do an APFT for registration. Appear with a copy of all your important administrative paperwork (in triplicate). Be prepared to demonstrate an immediate willingness to work and contribute to team efforts. Depending on your mission, you may be meeting with a Platoon or an Employees Section. You can be in charge of this section or a wizard. Regardless, you will have some kind of nco partner. Get to know them quickly and informally and LISTEN. Then come back in about 72 hours with initial advice (if you are in a position to be the RATER of the NCO). Enter all the distros, read all the things, grab a copy of each calendar, find out what's going on. I'm going to tell you another story. I had a mission where I was an assistant operations officer. But the operations officer was a machine. Nonstop, nose down, hard load from 6am to 11pm (we were triggered). When I got on board, he had no time or desire to find out what could me I spent two weeks asking for unsuccessful work. It was the wrong approach. I wasn't contributing to the team. Team. by Pixabay So I put myself on a reverse schedule. I arrived at 1pm and spent the afternoon updating the morning activities. So when the operations officer finally dropped at 11:00, I took over. Whatever was left unfinished, I'd start working by 6:00 a.m. I kept the working copy, so if I screwed up, he could go back to the starting point. So I would try to make the product better or more complete, or whatever. When the operations officer arrived at 6:00, I told him where the updated drafts were and where the originals were, and I left the office at 7:00. Eventually, I became a valuable member of the team. I'm going to tell you another story. My first platoon was without a Platoon Leader for six months before I got there. Platoon Sergeant did everything and did all his duties. I was objectively superfluous to that team on the first day. But a platoon needs a platoon leader. So I looked at everything the platoon did (and couldn't do). I figured out where I could help. It didn't matter if it was official stuff or NCO stuff or joe stuff. That part didn't matter. What mattered was that I needed to be seen as a valuable member of the team before there was any chance that I could be seen as a leader on that team. I worked hard as a leader does to set a good example. I made decisions with confidence when there were decisions to be made and took full responsibility for those decisions. Here's the moral: find a way to be useful in your first team, whether it's a team or a platoon. You have enthusiasm, energy and aspiration. Dive, resent hard, learn. Three steps to get to know your first unit. Good luck! What an incredible opportunity! Attachments: Intro-Letter-Memo-TEMPLATE.docx Writing-Assignment-1-Prompt1.docx GENERIC-Intro-Letter.docx GENERIC-Intro-Letter-v2.docx Sample Letter of Introduction.pdf – Jeff 2 Attachment(s): Attachment

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