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BEHIND THE BADGE

OFFICIAL INFORMATION SOURCE FOR THE AIR FORCE RECRUITING PROFESSIONAL



Battlefield Airmen, DEP Swear in

1st Lt. Scott Dammon and Tech. Sgt. James Hanni from the 66th Rescue Squadron, administers a Delayed Entry Program swear in ceremony for Jared Bell, Michael Johnson, and Dwayne Kennedy, in front of an HH-60 helicopter at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, July 8. Kennedy a prior service applicant, and Johnson are both scheduled to join the Special Operations pipeline. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Honest Feedback---When Cheerleading isn't Enough

By: Master Sgt. Lashundra Howard, Air Force Recruiting Service Staff Judge Advocate

While enthusiasm and positivity are great leadership traits, so is the ability to provide constructive and honest feedback. Not providing it can have unintended negative results.

Think about your first week as an enlisted accessions recruiter. As you know, Enlisted Accessions is the first tier into many other positions within Air Force Recruiting Service. You arrive at the new job, your uniform is crisp and you're ready to take on any challenge you may encounter. However, what you don't realize is that your first big challenge would begin within the first week.

Imagine your first day on-the-job. Your office partner has been in the position for over a year. Within the first week, you begin noticing the strengths and weaknesses of each of your office partners. One of your office mates is not thrilled about being vectored to be a recruiter through the Developmental Special Duty process. He is not enthusiastic. He leaves at 4 p.m. daily and he is not concerned about making contacts, school visits, or face-to-face requirements. His only concern is getting home and making vacation plans. He has not made goal for three consecutive months.



Courtesy photo

The flight chief is well aware of his attitude. Several letters of direction have been provided to this unmotivated recruiter, but the flight chief really likes him as a person and refuses to elevate the issue to the production superintendent. Therefore, the flight chief constantly tells this recruiter how much improvement he is showing and praises his good customer service skills. What the flight chief is not doing is providing factual, honest feedback.

However, your flight chief really takes notice of your work performance and immediately turns to you to get your coworker on track. You meet the added expectations and enact a strategy of teamwork which ultimately leads to a group production award.

At the presentation of the award, the group production superintendent asks how your struggling office partner made such a drastic change. The flight chief indicates it was her guidance and leadership that ultimately led to this recruiter's increased performance. As a result, she was nominated for a Gold Badge and Senior Noncommissioned Office of the Year recognition.

In this likely scenario what your office partner really needed was constructive, honest feedback from leadership. This feedback would have helped him develop and mold his skillset in order to grow as a leader and Airman. Unfortunately, the false praise and compliments only masked the problem – it didn't solve it; and it led to a flight chief being rewarded and ultimately promoted while you stood by and watched from the sidelines.

The unintended consequence of the flight chief's constant "positive encouragement" was that you, and many others left behind, lost a little faith in the system and an unsuspecting squadron gained a problem rather than a solution.

If you accept and reward mediocrity, you will consistently be disappointed. Honest feedback is essential. People instinctively desire boundaries. They want to be told what is expected of them and genuinely want to succeed in their endeavors. They need honest leaders to do so. There are many styles of leading as there are leaders, but good leaders have the courage to provide honest feedback in a timely manner and can recognize when being a constant cheerleader, versus the coach, is detrimental to the mission and to the people who perform that mission.



**Flag Ceremony/
DEP Swear in**
 ABOVE: 333rd
 Recruiting Squadron
 Delayed Entry
 Program members
 participated in a flag
 ceremony for the
 Orlando Predators
 arena football game in
 Orlando, Florida, June
 24.

RIGHT: Maj. Marcus
 Smith, 308th
 Rescue Squadron,
 administered the
 Oath of Enlistment to
 the 333rd RCS DEP
 members before the
 event. (U.S. Air Force
 photos)





Hill Air Show Dep Swear-in

Members of the 368th Recruiting Squadron Delayed Entry Program are sworn in by U.S. Air Force Thunderbird #1 commander, Lt. Col. Christopher Hammond, during Warriors over the Wasatch air show at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, June 25. The Oath of Enlistment ceremony took place in front of over 300,000 attendees as the Breitling Jet Team performed in the background. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Air Time

Master Sgt. Dawn Roznos, 368th Recruiting Squadron flight chief, and Tech. Sgt. Dominic Hardimon participated in a radio broadcast with 97.1 ZHT radio station at the Ogden Municipal Airport, Salt Lake City, Utah, June 23. Roznos and Hardimon spoke about the Hill Air Force Base air show and invited the public to visit the Rapid Strike during the show. (U.S. Air Force photo)





TV Interview
Tech. Sgt. Michael Bennett, 368th Recruiting Squadron, gave a live interview with ABC affiliate, "Good 4 Utah" at Hill Air Force Base, June 24. Bennett spoke about the air show at Hill AFB and the Rapid Strike mobile marketing asset that would be available for the public to see and visit. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Color Guard detail

Staff Sgt. Karina Reyes, 319th Recruiting Squadron A-flight, along with other members of the U.S. Armed Forces, took part in the color guard detail during the open ceremonies at the New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon, July 17. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Math and Science Award
Staff Sgt. Pierrri Fitzhugh, 317th Recruiting Squadron F-flight, presents Steven Benton the Math and Science Award during the Students Awards and Scholarship Breakfast at Hermitage High School library, Richmond, Virginia, June 10. The event honored students that have received college scholarships and to showcased the educational benefits that applicants will receive in the Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo)

HS Graduation
Tech. Sgt. Justin Devenow, 319th Recruiting Squadron E-flight, attends a high school graduation to support Delayed Entry Program members, Robbie Consiglio and Mathieu Poirier-Herrington, at HC Wilcox Technical High School, Meriden, Connecticut, June 16. (U.S. Air Force photo)





PJ Salute
 Master Sgt. Jordan Perry, 336th Recruiting Squadron E-flight, presents an Air Force Recruiting Salutes Plaque to Craig Teeters, prior Air Force pararescueman, at the recruiting office in St. Augustine, Florida, June 21. Teeters has assisted Perry in providing guidance and support to Special Operations applicants. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Historic Send-off

Lt. Col. William Parker, 368th Recruiting Squadron commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Carmelo Vega, 368th RCS superintendent, present Tech. Sgt. Walter Hinds with his going away gift from the squadron during his retirement ceremony at the Hill Air Force Base museum, Utah, July 6. Hinds retired after 20 years of service in the Air Force. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Celebrity sighting

Staff Sgt. Tyler Woolverton, 347th Recruiting Squadron, stands with actor John Cusack after the 347th RCS presented colors during the Cubs game at Wrigley Field, Chicago, July 6. (U.S. Air Force photo)

X-1 Supercar

From Left, Master Sgt. Timothy Aldigner, 368th Recruiting Squadron E-flight chief, Tech Sgt. Jordan Lloyd, and Tech. Sgt. Michael Bennett pose in front of the X-1 Supercar with students during from the Clearfield Job Corps Center in Clearfield, Utah, June 30. (U.S. Air Force photo)





Final Farewell

Members of the Air Force Recruiting Service Headquarters participated in Col. Marcus Johnson's Farewell Golf Tournament at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, June 29. BELOW: From left are Maj. Adam Klemens, Maj. Gen. Garrett Harencak, Col. Marcus Johnson and Senior Master Sgt. Bradley Burton. (U.S. Air Force photos)





Triathlon

Tech. Sgt. Phillip Allen, 339th Recruiting Squadron, poses with race competitors in front of his booth to promote Special Operations at the Inter'Rockin Triathlon at Interlochen State Park, Interlochen, Michigan, July 10. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jesse Emmons)



Ragnar Run

The 368th Recruiting Squadron and their families participated in the Ragnar Relay Wasatch Back Run at Soldier's Hollow, Midway, Utah, June 18. The team completed the course in 36 hours and 8 minutes. From left in the front row, Tech. Sgt. Jeremy McLane, Tech. Sgt. Ronnie Iglesias, Austin Parker, Bayleigh Parker, and Master Sgt. Rebecca Composano; and in the back row, Tech. Sgt. David Levine, Staff Sgt. Carolina Mundy, Tech. Sgt. Carl Ybarra, Lt. Col. William Parker, Master Sgt. Jese Baysinger, Master Sgt. Gary Poulin, and Brody Baysinger. (Courtesy photo)