SPC Williams, Daniel

A Good NCO

My experience with a truly good leader and Noncommissioned Officer started when I transitioned to Active duty. I had started my career in the Georgia national; Guard and had recently transitioned to Active duty and was promptly sent to Rose Barracks Germany. Starting off your Active career in a foreign country as a Specialist but not having the knowledge base equivalent was a hurdle that I did not overcome alone. My first team leader was Sergeant Heenan and as his gunner, I had a lot to learn about being on a Stryker with a MK19 and how to be an effective Soldier in general. My lack of expertise in these fields was a hinderance to the platoon and to the vehicle crew. Seeing this Sergeant Heenan immediately started by instilling discipline and informing me of the standards he expected of me. This was extremely crucial in giving me the objective I needed to work towards and the standard I was expected to perform at on a day to day basis. The point at which Sergeant Heenan really stood out was at my first gunnery, I was expected to be able to do a “call for fire” before my truck went onto the range. I had not done a “call for fire “in a considerable amount of time and the first time I struggled with it. After this Sergeant Heenan decided to train and instruct me on this for as long as it took to make me proficient. At this point Sergeant Heenan would sit outside with me and continuously go over “call for fire” along with other crew commands with me for hours at a time. The dedication towards helping me excel was easily demonstrated at this time but only a small fraction of what he taught me. The overall mentorship that Sergeant Heenan demonstrated for my time in Germany was tremendous, the work ethic that he instilled and cultivated in me was tremendous. At the end of the day Sergeant Heenan truly demonstrated all of the characteristics that are valued in a Noncommissioned Officer and is still my mentor to this day providing me with the knowledge and wisdom to prepare me for entering the ranks of the Noncommissioned Officers.