

If I were a lieutenant today in the 101st Military Intelligence Battalion (CEWI)

I WOULD work hard to “LEAD BY EXAMPLE!”

Lt. Col. James R. Riser

Editor's Note: In continuation of the historical retrospective that began with our 50th Anniversary Commemorative Compilation, every quarter, the Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin will highlight an article from the past that is still relevant today. This article first appeared in the July–September 1985 issue. The doctrinal and regulatory publications referenced in this article have either been superseded or rescinded.

WITH REGARD TO MY ARMY AND PROFESSIONALISM

I WOULD feel personally honored to serve my country as an officer in the United States Army.

I WOULD always remember that my mission is to provide intelligence support to the 1st Infantry Division. I would make sure that my troops know the critical importance of their contributions to the division's combat readiness and that they are physically and mentally prepared to go to war at any time.

I WOULD know the doctrine prescribing how intelligence “works” within a division. (Get copies of, and read, FM 34-1, *Intelligence and Electronic Warfare Operations*; FM 34-80, *Brigade and Battalion Intelligence and Electronic Warfare Operations*; and FM 34-103, *Division Intelligence and Electronic Warfare Operations*.)

I WOULD spend a part of each day studying some aspect of the proud institution in which I serve, the United States Army. (Read some history about our country and our army at war. It will give you some perspective on why intelligence and unit readiness are so vital. Start with *The Leavenworth Papers* from the Combat Studies Institute, Command and General Staff College: Number 3. *Not War, But Like War: The American Intervention in Lebanon* and Number 5. *Fighting the*

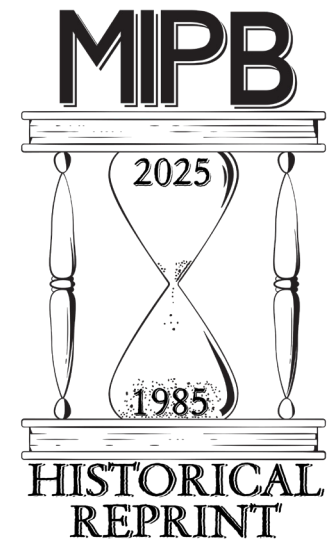
Russians in Winter. Additionally, S.L.A. Marshall's books are super. Try *Battles in the Monsoons* to get an accurate picture of combat in Vietnam.)

I WOULD get my own personal copy of FM 27-1, *Legal Guide for Commanders*, and study up on the administration of military justice and administrative law at the company level. Also study, and get for each of your soldiers, FM 27-14, *Legal Guide for the Soldier*.

I WOULD acknowledge that senior officers and many NCOs have already experienced many of my problems, so I would seek their advice and help. (Make sure, however, their advice and help is based on a correct understanding of *your* particular problem.)

I would inspect myself thoroughly and frequently:

- ◆ Do I need a haircut? (Lieutenants should get haircuts before they need them – it helps in making captain.) If I wear a mustache, is it properly trimmed?
- ◆ Are my boot heels run down? (Good lieutenants and lieutenant colonels should wear out lots of boot heels. We need to replace them often.) Does my uniform fit? Buttons, nametags, patches okay? Hatbill clean? Field gear—would I



be in uniform if I went to the field today? Overweight? Out of shape?

- ◆ How is my military bearing—do I stand up straight? How do I “shape up” as an officer? Good? Not so good? (Remember: Your troops are inspecting you whenever you are in their presence. You are expected to and must set the example. You can start with AR 670-1, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*. Also be aware of and comply with appropriate command policy letters.)

I WOULD establish and maintain an open line of communication to my company first sergeant and my battalion command sergeant major. (These professional soldiers can take a lot of misery out of your life if you will let them.) I would not take myself too seriously nor get bogged down with worry. (No one will shoot you if you display a fleeting imperfection once in awhile.) I would have a pen or pencil and a notepad with me at all times and I'd develop a habit of writing notes to myself. I would write down good ideas as I thought of them or when someone else mentioned one. (Then you should use all the good ideas you have notes on, if you can. It also helps to jot down bad habits you might need to work on.)

I WOULD assemble my own up-to-date working tools for immediate use: ARs, FMs, SOPs, DA pamphlets, checklists, policy letters, and soldiers manuals. (Also get copies of IG and Command Inspection reports to see if your areas of responsibility passed or flunked—good place to start work. Also get appropriate policy letters published by higher headquarters—at least to division level. You can tell which ones you need by reviewing lists of published letters. Your company commander and battalion adjutant can help you on this one. Also, frequently review DA Pam 310-1, *The Consolidated Index to Publications and Forms*, to see if a new publication or change is available to help you in your work.)

I WOULD strive to become technically proficient in my principal and additional duties. I would, in addition to my principal duty, organize each of my additional duties with a mini-chain of command to ensure that each duty is, in fact, fully carried out. (Know the purpose of each additional duty and who or what the target is. Check feedback to see if your additional duty is on target.) I would coordinate with battalion staff officers having functional responsibility for my principal and additional duties to make sure I am meeting their requirements and expectations. I would also get with the IG inspector for each of my duties for guidance, direction, sympathy, or whatever help I may need. At the very least, I would get the list of references (to include dates of publication) used to inspect each area. (This works well for all duties, and it helps to show your commander that you've got it together and are professional.)

I WOULD not “look the other way” if I saw a uniformed soldier improperly dressed, sloppy, or who didn't salute. I'd correct him on the spot and report it to his commander if appropriate. Never pass by a mistake! I would require all subordinates to practice good military courtesy in my presence (for example, “Yes, Sir” or “No, Sir,” proper responses

to my questions, standing up when addressed by me, and so forth). I would not allow junior soldiers of any rank to call me by my first name or nickname. I would insist on military courtesy. (And don't address your subordinates or superiors by their first names. Use correct military titles in your professional dealing with others.)

I WOULD position myself to the left of any senior officer with whom I might be walking and I would require subordinates walking with me to do the same. (This is an old Army custom. Do your part to keep military traditions and customs alive in our Army.) I would return subordinates' salutes with a cheerful and hearty verbal greeting as well as a snappy return salute. (Remember, your soldiers expect you to speak when meeting them and how you speak is their clue to your attitude.)

I WOULD make sure that my word is my bond. I would take pride in having a reputation for truthfulness and honor that would allow my troops to say, “It has to be true, Lieutenant... said so.” (Follow through with anything you tell your troops you will do and ensure feedback gets to them. Your credibility is in jeopardy if you don't.)

I WOULD be “up front” with my evaluations of subordinates. Don't “lay back” and let your subordinates think they are doing just fine and then destroy them with poor OERs or EERs. You must develop the courage to constructively inform others of their shortcomings. Do this in a timely manner so your subordinates will have time to react before an evaluation is written.

I WOULD recognize that I won't be a lieutenant very long and that I need to scope out my future on a time line. Career planning and development should be a topic of discussion with MILPERCEN and with senior officers in my branch. (Include your family development. Your family will have a big impact on your career as it progresses.) (A current list of MI Branch contacts was printed in the

April–June Issue of *Military Intelligence*. You should personally visit MILPERCEN at your earliest opportunity and establish an “eyeball” relationship with your assignment officer.)

I WOULD keep handy, and frequently review, a list of leadership actions which I should be accomplishing as a professional leader. I would, at the very least:

- ◆ Lead by example.
- ◆ Be considerate.
- ◆ Tend to the needs of soldiers.
- ◆ Maintain loyalty up and down.
- ◆ Make quality a habit.
- ◆ Build “staying power.”
- ◆ Cultivate credibility.
- ◆ Reward the deserving.
- ◆ Develop pride.
- ◆ Follow through.
- ◆ Be ready.

Look beyond these “bullets” for the *meaning*—then develop your own operating style which lets you carry out the actions in a way which is natural to your personality. Read your feedback constantly and carefully; it'll show you where you need to do some work in the leadership area.

I WOULD maintain a personal working file on all finance and personnel actions that pertain to myself. (You might want to put your important papers in a commercial depository for safekeeping.) I would make sure my checking account stayed straight and that I could do basic arithmetic. (Don't be careless with your finances and be especially watchful if a joint account is involved.) I would program periodic leave and take it. (Encourage your subordinates to do likewise. They need to “get away from it all” once in awhile just as you do.)

I WOULD continuously evaluate my professional strengths and weaknesses as a participating member of my own chain of command. I would ask myself, “Have I gained the trust and respect of my soldiers?” I would recognize that I have only

four categories of resources: people, equipment, time, and operating funds. (Most of your resources are fixed at your level. Your professionalism will be measured by how efficiently and economically you convert your resources into mission accomplishment.)

I WOULD not intentionally embarrass a fellow soldier in public. (Let the Individual know in advance when you plan to bring up a matter pertaining to his area of responsibility.) I would carefully avoid saying or writing anything I wouldn't want quoted back to me later. (And don't allege more than you can prove—you may be asked to do so someday.) I would understand that I live in a "fishbowl." Both my on-duty and off-duty conduct must be impeccable and beyond reproach at all times.

I WOULD learn how to write. I would be embarrassed professionally if my boss had to rewrite my correspondence. (Get AR 340-15, *Preparing Correspondence*; AR 310-50, *Authorized Abbreviations and Brevity Codes*; and a good dictionary and a good thesaurus. Use them all. Other useful books: **Harbrace College Handbook**, 7th Edition, and **Elements of Style**, 3rd Edition. I would require my subordinates to develop good writing techniques and I would proofread everything before sending it forward. (Extra training may be required; if so, lay it on.)

I WOULD make sure that I (and a spouse, if applicable) learned basic social graces, such as "RSVP" and "Regrets only." (Several books are available to help you in this area; check with your company commander or battalion adjutant. DA Pamphlet 600-60, *A Guide to Protocol and Etiquette for Official Entertainment*,

contains good information and an excellent bibliography.) I would teach my spouse basic Army organization, the names of key people, and something about my job. I would keep my spouse informed and encourage social participation.

I WOULD evaluate my civilian education and seek opportunities for improvement, keeping in mind that my first goal is to be a good, solid leader.

I WOULD ensure that my personal affairs are kept in order, including finances, personnel records, will, and emergency data card. (JAG officers can help you with this one. Also, commercial organizations can be of great help. Carefully evaluate your own situation to determine if you need assistance. DA Pamphlet 360-531, *Your Personal Affairs—A Checklist*, should be part of your package.)

WITH REGARD TO MY COMPANY

I WOULD thoroughly know my company Emergency Deployment Plan, as well as the installation Emergency Deployment OPLAN, and be sure my subordinates know the plan and can execute it in a professional manner.

I WOULD fully and openly support the company commander and first sergeant, even if I might privately disagree. (You may express disagreement in private but, if overruled, then give 100 percent support. After all, they just might be right. And then, *issue orders in your own name*. Don't tell your troops they have

to do something because "the old man" is making it happen. You lose respect and authority if you don't issue orders as if they were of your own initiative.)

I WOULD openly honor and respect the position of the company first sergeant. (He doesn't outrank you, but his unique title and position warrant your special professional consideration.)

I WOULD learn as much about the company structure that supports my platoon as I could. (To be really effective, you need to know about your unit supply,

motor pool, orderly room, training, NBC, arms room, reenlistment, safety, and so forth.)

I WOULD make sure that what I think I am supposed to be doing is what my boss thinks I'm supposed to be doing. (Then see that you're "doing more doing" than "thinking about doing." A periodic joint review of your OER Support Form 67-8-1 can be helpful here.)

I WOULD actively support the unit sports program, both as a participant and observer, when possible.

WITH REGARD TO MY PLATOON

I WOULD use troop welfare, morale, pride, and esprit de corps as common denominators for every action I took in leading my troops. I would work hard to maintain an excellent working relationship with my platoon sergeant and I would openly support him. (You set the standards and policies to guide him, then let him function as an NCO. Ask for and consider his advice in your decisionmaking process and don't ever

"put down" your platoon sergeant in front of your soldiers.)

I WOULD know what my NCOs are supposed to do, then I would see to it that they do it in a professional manner. (Don't do it for them—let them earn their titles and pay.) I would ensure my NCOs are maintaining high levels of order, discipline, and cleanliness in my troop work and billet areas. (Be especially attentive to the billets on weekends

and holidays—a few uncaring soldiers can make billet living an unpleasant experience. Don't let that happen in your platoon—check it personally and frequently.)

I WOULD pay special attention to NCOs in section sergeant level positions and help them in their leadership roles. (Many of your junior sergeants are in their first leadership positions and will need help. Don't assume they know a

great deal—they may not, and it is simply a function of experience. Be patient, but make them study and work hard at being good leaders.)

I WOULD get my own copy of AR 623-105 and AR 623-205. (These ARs prescribe the evaluation reporting systems for officers and enlisted soldiers. Study them and evaluate your subordinates properly. Also, know how *you* are being evaluated.) I would establish and watch closely the rating scheme and submission times of OERs and EERs for my subordinates. (You can quickly get behind in this area. Pay attention to the paperwork aspects of your personnel management actions—most key personnel moves will generate multilayer EER or OER requirements.)

I WOULD insist on absolute control over the people and property allocated to me by the MTOE for my mission responsibilities. I would then lay out my platoon organization, match my people and property to it, and firmly fix responsibility and accountability for both through my chain of command. I would have secure areas constructed to store my platoon equipment. Field gear for off-post personnel would have to meet the same availability, cleanliness and storage criteria as for on-post personnel. (If you don't provide space and an SOP, field gear will be all over the place and much of it will get lost.)

I WOULD sort out my platoon equipment and make sure I have trained and licensed principal operators for every piece of equipment and that licensed back-up operators are available or in training. Reluctant soldiers, those not wishing to be honored with a military driver's license, would receive intensive extra training to help them obtain a license. (Don't let your equipment be dispatched without your control over it—could be that some untrained operator will "save" his equipment and ruin yours.)

I WOULD conduct frequent open-ranks and equipment layout inspections to

verify that my chain of command has already achieved and is maintaining my high standards. (Make sure you are in line with the company and battalion SOP. Also keep in mind that we no longer have a simple "uniform" but rather "multiform" when it comes to individual dress for our soldiers, for example, male, female, maternity, cooks' whites, and jungle fatigues.)

I WOULD study FM 22-5, *Drill and Ceremonies*, in detail and insist that drill and ceremonies conducted by my platoon were done properly. (Do it right and do it sharply.) I would learn how to prepare my platoon for inspection and how to report to a senior officer that my platoon was prepared for inspection. (Don't forget to actually prepare your platoon for inspection—you must personally check it out if you want to avoid embarrassment some day.)

I WOULD make sure my soldiers have appropriate soldier's manuals for their MOS and grade and that my sergeants know and can do everything their soldiers are supposed to know and do as outlined in the manuals. (Also ensure trainer's guides for each MOS in your platoon are on hand or on requisition and that they are being used by your trainers.) I would be able to personally do all the common tasks identified in FM 21-2 and FM 21-3. (If you don't know how to do some of the tasks, your troops will be proud to teach you if you let them. Don't worry about loss of respect if you tell them you don't know how to do something—they probably already know.)

I WOULD see that section chiefs and squad leaders make good use of available job books and, if a job book for an MOS in my platoon is not available, I would design one myself. I would get a copy of, and use, the division HIP Pocket Training Handbook. (Ensure that each of your leaders uses it too!)

I WOULD learn *The Army Maintenance Management System* (TAMMS) as it applies to my platoon. (Get TM 38-750,

The Army Maintenance Management System, DA Pam 750-1, *Organizational Guide For Leaders*, and FM 29-2, *Organizational Maintenance Operations*, as a minimum and you can get a good start on your organizational maintenance program. Also get and read the monthly issues of *P.S. Magazine*. Read FM 10-14-1, *Commander's Handbook For Property Accountability At Unit Level*, to help you understand unit supply.) I would get a copy of the "DASH 10" operator's manual for each major item of equipment in my platoon and be fully capable of performing proper Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) on that item. (The automotive and communications technicians, as well as the unit armorers, will be glad to help you.) I would ensure that when my platoon is at the motor pool, I am also at the motor pool (teaching maintenance techniques to my soldiers and ensuring the health of my PMCS program).

I WOULD set very high standards and demand compliance by my chain of command members first and then by every member of my platoon. (Don't worry about whether your soldiers like you at this point. Your first job is to set and achieve high standards. In the long run, your troops will respect you if you do.)

I WOULD try to have the same chain of command for mission accomplishment as for billeting control and personnel accountability, such as reporting in company formations. For example, I would want a maintenance section sergeant to be accountable and responsible for his section equipment and for what each member of his section does or fails to do. *His* promotion would depend on how well both technical and troop leading duties are carried out.

I WOULD inspect my chain of command personnel on every contact and initiate corrective action on the spot. I would require that persons ordered to take corrective actions report back to me at a specified time and place to verify compliance. I would not hesitate to lay

extra training on any person under my command who was slow to shape up. I would stand in the last rank of my platoon occasionally to check the receiving end of verbal information—Accusative? Inspiring? (Think morale.)

I WOULD meet with each new soldier on the day he is assigned to my platoon, ensure his immediate needs are met (family settled, bunk assigned, bedding issued, meal card issued), and ensure he is familiar with the post recreation services. (Don't "lose" a soldier due to neglect during his inprocessing—first impressions are important.)

I WOULD vigorously seek appropriate school quotas for my soldiers and ensure they are ready to attend school. (Use recent attendees to get programmed attendees ready. Develop and have ready an Order of Merit list so if one of your troops can't make it, you've got the next in line alerted and ready to take his place. This reduces no-shows and failures.)

I WOULD know how to communicate in a tactical situation—for example, how to use automated CEOI, how to prepare and operate FM radio sets in secure and unsecure modes, and how to lay in a field telephone system.

I WOULD personally inspect my platoon members' weapons. (Include the crew served weapons and check out the level of crew training. Remember, this is not the armorer's job, it's that of the chain of command.) I would take care of and clean my own assigned weapon.

I WOULD take PT with my platoon and watch closely the attendance of every soldier. I would see to it that everyone could pass the PT test unless medically excused. I would enforce the Army Weight Control Program.

I WOULD be tough on discipline, personal appearance, soldier training, and

organizational equipment maintenance. I would be alert for and prohibit fraternization which might be detrimental to the morale of my platoon. (Watch out for *perceived* fraternization—it can do as much harm as the real thing. Be especially careful yourself—working late with only another soldier present, riding in POVs, innocent social affairs, and so on. All of these can create a perception of fraternization. Be alert and watch your own actions.) I would keep in mind that superior or subordinate fraternization can be just as devastating as sexual fraternization. (Make sure those in your chain of command keep their professional distance from subordinates, but balance professional distance with professional friendliness; this increases respect for everyone.)

I WOULD be alert for evidence of sexual harassment. Keep in mind targeted soldiers may be reluctant to complain for fear of reprisal. Offenders won't commit sexual harassment in your presence, only in the presence of targeted soldiers. Also, don't use or condone the use of obscene language by either sex. I would also be alert for sexual discrimination. (You might have a key person who deprives a subordinate of organizational and personal justice simply because the subordinate happens to be a member of the opposite sex. Racial discrimination can follow the same pattern. You must stay alert for both forms, caution everyone against them, and take swift and thorough action when you detect discrimination. Your job here is to ensure that *all* persons under your control have equal chances to succeed.)

I WOULD watch my platoon chain of command for evidence of drug and alcohol abuse. (Remember, mind altering substances of any sort do not mix with leadership. And if you drink and have had "a few at the club," don't go to the barracks at night and try to be someone

you aren't. Go home and behave yourself. Caution sergeants living in the barracks—they are more likely to bump into such situations than you are.)

I WOULD get involved in military discipline actions pertaining to any member of my platoon and strive for absolute justice. (Take the time to discover the truth about what happened or allegedly happened—don't allow an innocent soldier to be punished.)

I WOULD know, and watch closely, the promotion process in my platoon, especially the Promotion Eligibility Roster (SIDPERS C-01). No member of my platoon would be promoted nor go before a promotion board without my personal approval and I would personally make sure that every soldier knew and understood the platoon/company promotion process. (Include NCO and warrant officer input in your decisions to promote or not to promote. Follow through and ensure your soldiers know why you did whatever you did. Keep in mind that promotions are as important to individual soldiers as your promotion is to you.) I would know how promotion points are accumulated by my soldiers and then help the deserving ones. (For example, certificates of achievement from a lieutenant colonel are worth five points, but only a total of 10 points may be used in this category, and so on.)

I WOULD know the re-enlistment status of everyone in my platoon. If I had an undesirable soldier, I would initiate action to get him barred from re-enlisting and administratively removed from the Army, if appropriate. I would then vigorously encourage every satisfactory soldier in my platoon to stay *in the Army*. I would be dissatisfied with myself if I let a good soldier leave my platoon without knowing I had done everything possible to get him to stay in the Army.

WITH REGARD TO MY SOLDIERS

I WOULD be constantly on the alert for their safety—both on the job and where they live. (Be tough, insist on safety in everything you and your troops do.) I would seek to understand my soldiers in terms of what drives and motivates them. (Soldiers represent the best that America has to offer. Get to know yours well.)

I WOULD keep my soldiers informed of everything that affects them. (This is perhaps the biggest problem at platoon/section level—don't let it happen in your unit. Soldiers need to make plans for future events just as you do. You need to let them know how and when their time is going to be affected by your plans. Be careful about how you execute changes to your plans—big potential for morale problems.)

I WOULD teach my soldiers something about personal money management. (Find out who is broke two days after payday—chances are some help is needed. Also, check your soldier's Leave and Earning Statements for problems such as pay withheld or incorrect deductions. Pass on some of your smarts, demonstrate your concern for your soldiers' welfare. If you are broke two days after payday. You may also need some help.) I would recognize that soldiers have but two resources while in the Army—their

free time and their money. I would not deprive my soldiers of either resource without full justification nor would I allow anyone else to do so. (UCMJ punishment locks in on these two resources—make sure personal, organizational, and military justice prevails.)

I WOULD ensure that my soldiers are receiving constructive counseling and I would personally review their counseling statements. I would frequently visit my soldiers in their billets during off-duty hours and take the time to stop and chat with them. I would make sure that I spent time "listening with them" rather than "talking at them." I would frequently visit and eat meals in the dining facility. (Sit down, chat, and have your meal with your soldiers. Although your presence might give them indigestion, it also gives them something to write home about. And don't "buck the line." Your own soldiers may be on a tighter schedule than you are. Bucking the chow line is no way to win friends and influence people—especially your own.)

I WOULD be aware of signs of alcohol and drug abuse in my soldiers. (If abuse is detected, take immediate action, remembering to balance disciplinary action with professional medical help, as appropriate.)

AND FINALLY...

I WOULD recognize that the above "I woulds" deal with setting high standards for myself and my soldiers. And, Lieutenant, always remember that the day you compromise a standard, you've set a new one—lower. ✨

Lt. Col. James R. Riser graduated from Pennsylvania Military College as a distinguished military graduate in 1967. Commissioned as a second lieutenant in Military Intelligence, he initially served a two-year combat arms detail in Armor. His previous assignments have included: Tank Platoon Leader and Battalion S2, 1/13th Armor, 1st Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas; Cavalry Platoon Leader, 2/17 Cavalry (ABN), 101st Airborne Division, Vietnam; Special Security Officer, HQDA, the Pentagon; Assistant Brigade S2, 2nd Brigade and Assistant Division G2, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Ky.; Detachment Commander, 2nd MI Detachment, 2nd Infantry Division, Korea; Senior Combat Intelligence Instructor, The Infantry School, Fort Benning, GA.; Research and Development Project Officer, Center for Systems Engineering and Integration, Fort Monmouth, N.J.; Battalion Executive Officer and Battalion Commander, 501st Military Intelligence Battalion (CEWI), 1st Armored Division, Ansbach, Germany; Chief, Intelligence Division (ASIC), G2, VII Corps, Stuttgart Germany. Riser is a graduate of the airborne and Ranger courses, Armor Officer Basic Course, MI Officer Advanced Course, and the Command and General Staff College. He received a master's degree in Public Administration from Western Kentucky University in 1975. Riser currently serves as commander of the 101st MI Battalion (CEWI), 1st Infantry Division (M), Fort Riley, Kansas.



These tips were adapted from a similar version originally authored by Col. Robert H. Pratt who developed them as a guide for his officers in 1982.