

Want to see your name in print? Here's your chance. Or you'd prefer not to, so we'll call you Anonymous.

Quite a while ago, actually a several years ago I sent out an email to everyone in my address book asking for some stories about sergeants. My thoughts were to publish another book entitled "Only a Sergeant," which was a spinoff from a chapter of the same name in my book. I received about ten.

Since the lock down in an attempt to use my mind, I dug into my Word program and started deleting files from 20 years ago—yes, I've had them that long. And lo and behold I came across the folder with the Sgt stories some of you sent me.

If you read my book, one of the takeaways you should have had was beginning with my days as a corporal and sergeant and throughout my career, I firmly believed sergeants need to run our units, not the staff sergeants or the gunny's, or God forbid the lieutenants. The sergeants are where the rubber meets the road. The sergeant holds reveille, orders clean up, falls them out for formations, etc. CMC can publish all the policies and orders he desires, but it is the sergeant who carries them. I know I am telling you something I hope you already know.

I would like to publish another book, note I said "publish," not write. I want you to write it. I'm asking for stories about an incident where a sergeant exercised a leadership trait or principle to the degree where you were impressed. Perhaps, you were that NCO, so tell me about it.

On the flip side, maybe you witnessed a sergeant who was not a good example for others to follow. As a young Marine, I personally had lots of those types early on, but I also had a load of the great ones who taught me leadership. Not every Marine is an exceptional Marine, in fact, there are a few that aren't worth a shit—my book points that out very well.

I envision a story per chapter. Each chapter could be about 1,000 words, which isn't much—this email is 983 words. PLEASE do not worry about such trivial matters as spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. Publishers use one reference bible, the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS). So regardless what you send, it will be gone over multiple times by me and Denny, my editor arranging it IAW the CMOS. So, let the us worry about those things. Just open a word document and PUT WORDS ON PAPER telling the story. It's amazing what happens when you start typing. Embellish? Of course, all "war stories" are embellished

Okay, guys gals give me something! I will hound you until you do!

I have attached another doc I have drafted as rough to open the book, which details another reason why I believe a book of this nature is needed in our Corps of today.

Here is a much-shortened version of one of the stories I received I cannot wait to publish it.

*"Our platoon was TAD to Quantico for our annual qualification on the rifle range. We were billeted at the range in a squad bay. One of our three squad leaders was a superb NCO named Sgt Bennett. After firing on prequal day, Sgt Bennett announced that anyone in the platoon who did not fire over 200 today (actually 190 was qualifying as a marksman, but shooting in the 190's was dangerously low) will muster with him at the 500 yard line berm after chow at 1800. He said, "Bring your rifle, shooting jacket, and scorebook."*

*At 1800 we were all in a school circle and Sgt Bennett began going over some of the problems he believed we were having with qualifying. As he was talking our lieutenant was walking from the chow hall to his car; he stopped and yelled, "Hey Bennett." Sgt Bennett ignored him and kept talking to us. This went on several times with the lieutenant getting louder each time. Finally, one of the troops*

*mentioned to Sgt Bennett the lieutenant was calling him. Sgt Bennett ignored him as well. The lieutenant, now fuming screamed, "Bennett damn you answer me." Calmly, he turned around facing the lieutenant and in his usual deep command voice said, "Lieutenant, there is no Bennett up here, but there is a Sgt Bennett—Sir!"*

Tell me that is not an excellent leadership story! Sgt Bennett taught that young lieutenant a great lesson that day, which I am certain he carried with him for the remainder of his career. I received the story from the young Marine who was the one who whispered to Sgt Bennett, and he admitted to me he learned a great deal that day as well—when he made sergeant he never allowed anyone to call him by his last name—junior or senior. I shortened the story quite a bit to only 222 words, it was originally 858 words, but can easily be expanded to 1000 words by explaining to the ill-informed (civilians) some details to better understand it.

Lastly, if you want to be named as the author, great. If not, we'll simply call you anonymous. If you don't want to use the sergeant's real name, just give him a bogus name. Corporal stories are welcome as we, we'll simply promote him to sergeant. The point is it's about sergeant exhibiting examples of good or bad leadership.

I would like for you to put a timeframe on, maybe just the year, name the unit, and what was your rank at the time. I'd like it to be personal, which is why I am asking for that info. Again, you can be named or not, it's up to you.

OK, there's your missions should you agree to accept! Have fun and tell a story.

Semper Fi,

Colonel Jim Bathurst  
USMC (Ret)  
Author: *We'll All Die as Marines*

[jb-bar@comcast.net](mailto:jb-bar@comcast.net)

*"Guns are like parachutes, If you need one and don't have one, you'll probably never need one again"*