

# Hazing in the marine corps essay sample

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The United States Marine Corps is unfortunately involved in an underlying issue within its own ranks called hazing. Hazing is an overlooked problem being dealt with today in the military as it is enforced and prevented. As hazing is becoming more commonly identified, Marines are being held accountable. As you read this paper you will find out about this issue. You will be engaged in the Marine Corps order that covers this very topic.

General James F. Amos scrutinizes the act of hazing in saying, “ Hazing is contrary to our core values of honor, courage, and commitment and is prejudicial to good order and discipline.”

He continues to explain that hazing greatly reduces morale, esprit de corps, pride, professionalism, and unit cohesiveness. General James F. Amos states that hazing is commonly associated and is present in Marine Corps’ activities such as hails and farewells, promotion and graduation ceremonies, mess nights, dinings in/out, and other similar events. Hazing has been misconstrued as “ rites of passage” as to promote loyalty and tradition.

Hazing in the United States Marine Corps will continue to be scrutinized and supervised to ensure all marines are treated with dignity and respect. The definition of hazing is any conduct whereby a military member or members, regardless of service or rank, without proper authority causes another military member or members, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to any activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning or harmful. Soliciting or coercing another to perpetrate any such activity is also considered hazing.

Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature. Actual or implied

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consent to acts of hazing does not eliminate culpability of the perpetrator. According to the hazing order, any violation, attempted violation, or solicitation of another to violate this order, subjects involved members to disciplinary action under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. In reference to that order, hazing does not need to involve physical contact and anyone in a supervisory position may be held accountable if he or she, by act, word or omission knows or reasonably should have known hazing was going to take place. There are definitely a lot of descriptions that accurately describe the act of hazing according to the definition. It is important to know the specifics and intricacies of hazing in order to fully understand it. Of course hazing is not exclusive to the United States Military, it has a wide effect on civilian life like college students, band members, high school upper-class men, and professional athletic teams are also involved in some form of hazing. Hazing is not something to be ignored, countless of overqualified honorable service member's careers have been destroyed for times when hazing has turned into a bad situation even lives' have crumbled due to being involved in such a heinous offense.

The definition of cruel hazing is able or disposed to inflicting pain or suffering, examples include mass punishment for the “ wrong-doing” of one individual to be included in a team, group, or members of any certain party. Another example of cruel hazing is making harmful or abusive threats to an individual. Over a period of time, telling threats can emotionally damage the person. Hazing through physical means is not uncommon. It is called violent hazing and it is the most common form of hazing. Most people involved are coerced, intimidated or manipulated into being hazed physically, some

examples are beating, paddling, being coerced or forced into ingesting vile substances or concoctions, water intoxication, public nudity or any other degrading forms of it. Bondage, being exposed to cold weather or extreme heat without appropriate protection, branding, abductions, kidnappings and expecting legal activity are all examples of physical hazing.

Harassment hazing can cause emotional or physical discomfort. Harassment hazing confuses, frustrates, and causes undue stress for the victim.

Examples of harassment hazing are verbal abuse, sleep deprivation, sexual simulations, being expected to harass others, threats or implied threats, being asked to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire. Harassment can also be considered violent in some instances. Subtle hazing may be hard to analyze as hazing because it seems “harmless” therefore it is taken advantage of. Subtle hazing is a behavior that emphasizes a power imbalance between new members and other members of a group or team. This act of hazing breaches reasonable standards of mutual respect. Some new members often feel the need to endure subtle hazing to feel like a part of a group or team. There are myths and there are facts about hazing, myths that make hazing seem “okay” and there are facts about those myths that dispute them. “As long as there is no malicious intent, some hazing should be okay.” Even if there are no malicious intent safety may still be a factor, hazing activities that are considered to be “all in good fun”, although people may think that accidents may still happen and so it has no place in serving to promote growth and development of group team mem

bers. The second myth is “ Hazing is an effective way to teach respect and develop discipline.” First off, respect is earned not taught. Victims of hazing rarely ever report having respect for the ones who hazed them. Just like other forms of victimization, hazing breeds mistrust, apathy, alienation. The third myth is “ if someone agrees to participate in the activity it cannot be considered hazing.” In fact, in some states, they have laws against hazing consent. The victim’s consent cannot be used as a defense in a civil suit. It is because even if an individual or group agrees to participate in a potentially hazardous situation or action, it may not be true consent when considering the peer pressure and coerciveness by the hazer, hazers, or people who allow hazing which are considered “ hazing enablers”. In these myths and facts that I have mentioned, I disagreed with the misconceived notion that hazing can be used to teach respect, instill discipline or to improve the development of a team. Instead, it destroys cohesiveness. Sometimes it is hard to determine what is hazing and what is not hazing. It is such a gray area sometimes but if common sense is used and one ask themselves some of these questions, it will become clear if it is or not hazing. Is alcohol involved? Will active/current members of the group refuse to participate with the new members and do exactly what they’re being asked to do?

Does the activity risk emotional or physical abuse? Is there risk of injury or a question of safety? Do you have any reservation describing the activity to your parents, or to your commanding officer? Would you object to the activity being photographed for the local newspaper or filmed by the local TV news crew? If you answered yes to any of these questions, it is probably hazing. Marine Corps Order 1700. 28 states that “ no Marine..... may engage

in or consent to acts of hazing being committed upon them”, and even asking to have a hazing ritual or tradition performed on you doesn’t make you seem hard it just makes you plain stupid. To be a hard Marine or even a good marine doesn’t mean you have to go through these traditions or rituals, a good Marine is too be well-rounded. You don’t have to be a high shooter, you don’t have to be perfect at physical training. A good marine can touch on all bases.

When you are getting hazed or you are hazing somebody keep in mind that when someone sees it, it is not your perception that is reality, but it is the perception of the people that are viewing you that really matters. Your intention is one thing, the perception is reality. One past hazing tradition in the United States Marine Corps is “ the gauntlet.” It has been conducted amongst Marine noncommissioned officers as a Marine entered the noncommissioned officer ranks. The procedure for this hazing tradition is that the newly promoted noncommissioned officer would get continuously kneed in the thigh by his fellow marines causing deep dark bruising running up and down his leg as to create a literal “ blood stripe.” The only type of “ gauntlet” we Marines should ever participate in is boot camp.

Not all hazing is so blatantly obvious some are very subtle and most men and women are very elusive when they commit hazing so they keep the risk of getting caught to a minimum. An example of this very sly act of hazing is performed by marines include punching, hitting, or pushing a newly promoted Marine’s collar chevrons into there chest may be a congratulatory gesture, but the perception could be that there are no backings on the

chevron and the intent is to pierce the Marine's skin and cause minor bleeding. A more adult and professional way of congratulating someone for a job well done would be a normal handshake.

Now that a little about hazing has been explained take it into consideration and stop hazing wherever and whenever it takes place. No one should do it, no one should talk about doing it, and no one should think about doing it. Leaders should educate their Marines on what hazing is and let them know that it will not be tolerated by them or their Marines or anytime down the future of their career. Hazing does not belong in the workplace or any company, job or business and anywhere professionalism is practiced. It will relinquish companionship, destroy the teamwork, combat readiness, and the trust and confidence central to unit cohesion. Without those factors what good can a group or a team be going towards the same goal if one or more of the many get exposed to hazing?