

The importance of proper accountability



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AR-735-5 defines Accountability as the obligation of a person to keep records of property, documents, or funds. These records show identification data, gains, losses, dues-in, dues-out, and balances on hand or in use. In my own words Accountability is one's personal responsibility to track and maintain property that is entering, or leaving your possession. Why is accountability important to the Army? Accountability is a very important part of an enlisted and a noncommissioned officer job.

The enlisted soldier is responsible for all items issued to him whether it be a weapon, night vision goggles, uniforms, a vehicle, or some TA-50, a field manual, medication, basic initial issue, or other personnel. The noncommissioned officer responsibility is to make sure that the soldier is accountable for and the soldier has his or her items, and has actual eyes on these items. Accountability of other personnel is a very sensitive item, probably the most sensitive item for anyone. Accountability is also a way for a key leader to see that he has everyone he is responsible for.

Accountability is being dependable, arriving to work and appointments on time, meeting deadlines, being in the right place at the right time, and doing the right thing at the right time. Morning formation is the most important formation of the day, which is sometimes PT. It is made to get accountability of everyone and put out any information that needs to be dealt with. Without having accountability there is no knowledge of where everybody is located or what's going on. Accountability needs to be gathered, so that S1(Accountability Officer) can report it to his or her higher command.

Accountability in the army is important because soldiers as well as equipment, ammunition, food, water and other various supplies are vital to the operation and proper function of the army as a whole. To start with, soldiers must be accounted for because they are the responsibility of their team leader, squad leader, platoon sergeant, and so on. If you don't have accountability of soldiers then when you attempt to conduct a mission you may not have all the soldiers you should have and that could cost you not only failing your mission but your life and the lives of the soldiers with you.

Having accountability of each and every soldier at all times lets the leadership know how many soldiers they can spare for various details and still continue with the mission at hand. Another thing that is very important to keep accountability on is equipment. If your soldiers don't have the equipment they need or the equipment they were issued then it could cause a major problem in the mission possibly causing you to fail the mission and lose lives of your soldiers for not having proper equipment. Not only is accountability of equipment highly important but making sure all the equipment works how it is designed and intended to be used.

Accountability of ammunition is important as well, if you are on a mission and not all of your soldiers have ammunition then it could cost the mission and lives. Keeping accountability of your soldiers, your soldiers equipment status, and ammunition status are very important to completing a mission successfully without any problems. Also keeping track of soldiers equipment as well as ammunition can help save the army funds to put to better use to help soldiers with retirement, their benefits, various programs and classes.

Another thing in the army to keep accountability on is food, it is the most important thing to accomplishing a mission successfully. If whoever is charged with the accountability of food fails his or her task, soldiers will not have nutrition. The lack of nutrition can damage a soldier's physical well being along with soldier's morale. As a 25 B it is a responsibility to sign for and maintain a lot of sensitive equipment. The type of equipment that if lost or misplaced could result in jail time. This is another reason accountability is important.

When the mission relies on a key piece of equipment to relay the message and a signal soldier has not maintained proper accountability of said equipment, the mission could fail and cause catastrophic results. In basic training we had the Soldier creed drilled into our minds. One of the lines reads “ I will always maintain my army my equipment and myself”. What this passage implies is that it is our responsibility to maintain accountability and proper maintenance of what we are charged with, be it a weapon, a computer or even a tool box. It is a task that all soldiers must have the willpower to accomplish.

The way to keep proper accountability of equipment issued (or signed for) is through DD form 2062, the army hand receipt. A DD form 2062 is a form used to track who is in current possession of certain items and who the original holder of the equipment is. In theory no army items should ever change hands without the proper use of a DD 2062. From personal experience this is not always the case. Soldiers have a tendency to lend equipment or items to fellow soldiers without using DD 2062's believing that

they will not have anything to worry about for the reason that they know and trust who they are letting borrow said equipment.

This is not a safe practice. If for example SPC Blue is signed for a SINGAR radio and his buddy SPC Red is is tasked to test radios for the battalion. SPC Red asks his friend SPC Blue if he can borrow his radio. SPC Blue does not use a hand receipt but lets SPC Red borrow it believing he will get it back. If SPC Red goes out and loses that radio SPC Blue will be at fault because he is the one signed for it. Not properly filling out a DD2062 has now cost SPC Blue a lot of money and probably terrible corrective actions which could include Article 15 UCMJ, Separation if that radio had comsec possible jail time.

When you as a soldier sign for army equipment or other resources it is a good practice to not let someone take it without your knowledge. while easy in the office environment to store all of the teams signed for items it is not good for the individual. Another practice that happens that is not punished but is unacceptable is when someone else signs for an item to do maintenance on, after maintenance is completed if the original owner comes to turn in the handreceipt to pick up equipment if the soldier who signed for is it is unavailable you should not take it upon yourself to return the equipment.

When signing for a item and properly filling out a DD2062 it is the signer's responsibility to make sure the quantity and the serial numbers of the thequipment match what is written in the DD2062. Failure to do this can cause a lot of confusion and unaccountability. When signing a DD2062 after annotating different items it is a good practice to write on the next empty

line “ NOTHING FOLLOWS” this can avoid extra items to be added in after signing. On the “ A” line after the correct number of items you are signing for is where you print your full name, rank and the days date.

On the top of the DD2062 there are “ To” and “ From” Boxes. in these boxes it is good practice to print ranks and names of individuals involved in the transfer of equipment, for accountability purposes. After form is complete make a copy of the DD 2062 and the one who is giving the equipment keeps the original copy and the one receiving equipment gets the copy of the DD 2062. Both parties should keep these papers safe and easy to reach in case of any problems. As a leader it is a responsibility to lead by example.

Keeping poor accountability of issued equipment or government property shows a lack of organization, personal initiative, motivation, responsibility, and is a poor demonstration of the army values. It is a leader's mission to train future leaders. A successful leader can not afford to be lazy when it comes to accountability. A leader must demonstrate professionalism. The soldier's creed tells us this “ I am a professional”. A professional is wary of accountability and understand the responsibilities inherent in this. The average soldier signs for thousands of dollars worth of government property.

From weapons, armor, gas masks to printers, computers and radios. Most of the equipment is bought with unit funds. When a unit is always having to replace lost or missing items the unit is unable to spend its funds on the proper training of the troops. Troops that are unable to get the proper training become incompetent, and could cause injuries, or more loss of government equipment. this make it very important to the individual soldier

to maintain vigilance over his accountability for his individually assigned equipment.

In conclusion, i have explained the importance of maintaining your equipment and always knowing where it its. The consequences of failing this basic soldiering task could in some situations be catastrophic. It does not matter what you sign for the minute you write your name on that DD Form 2062 that item becomes your responsibility entrusted to you by the US military. It is a simple task you agreed to when you raised your right hand and swore the oath. every time you recite the soldiers creed you are affirming that you will “ always maintain my army my equipment and myself”.

Accountability is a fundamental necessity for leadership and training new soldiers for the future. You can not teach new soldiers that losing equipment is acceptable and tolerated in this army. I have also explained the financial damages it can effect on the unit, how it can damage the units funds for training and preparing its soldiers for task essential for mission readiness. how not keeping proper accountability can cause mission critical tasks to go uncompleted because the equipment needed is not accounted for.

Accountability is a big part of military life. everyday we need to be vigilant.

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