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Dear Ronke,

I hope you are doing well. I will like to talk to you about the challenges I am going through in the United States Army as a discourse community. You might be wondering what discourse community means or what it has to do with the United States Army? According to the linguist John Swale, he define discourse community as "groups that have goals and purposes, and use communication to achieve their goals." However, a discourse community can simply be a group of people speaking the same language, or in other words, sharing the same concern on

a particular topic, a body of comprehension on the issues, and have common terminology for discussing these topics.

Growing up together with me about ten years ago, you know I am big with respect and how I relate to people, especially those older than me. After joining the United States Army, I met people from different backgrounds, cultures, and traditions. This diversity has made me compromise my values and personality with respect to the way I communicate in other to fit into the organization I currently find myself. At first, it feels like I am gradually losing myself. But, as time went by, I came to a logical understanding that it seems necessary for me to conform to the way, rules, and communication pattern because that was the only way I could fit in the discourse community. For example, the training officer will yell at us at every opportunity they have while trying to pass a message across; to an outsider, they will see this as an act of wickedness. But to fellow soldiers and me, we see it as our means of communicating effectively. However, I attempted to ask if it was really necessary to treat us harshly or yell at us while trying to pass a message across. The military training officer said that it breaks us from our old civilian habits and builds us to the military standard. It is more like taking away our old personalities and planting new ones into us. Ronke, communication in the Army community is very different from that of the civilian settings. For instance, we use

terms like "disregard this transmission out: this means forget this message, it was sent in error." "Wilco over: use to indicate receipt of – and compliance with – the sent instructions." "Roger-out: use to confirm message well received," and not the least "word twice: use to say the words twice to make a message more easily understood."

Another significant issue is duty. Duty to so many people means performing an assigned job. But in the United States Army, commitment goes a very long way. It exceeds just doing a given task. It includes going beyond the expectation by performing other activities that could value the Country's interest and make a clear report about the job you just accomplished. Many soldiers do not uphold their responsibility and fail to make a report of any task completed. Thus, affecting the organization's progress as a whole because, in the United States Army, we are all connected like an electric circuit. If there is a break in the circuit, it affects the performance or the flow of electric current. A report is essential after every task because that is the only means of communicating to the next team, which just reports for duty in the morning after the night shift is done. That is the only way they can keep track of what to watch out for and what not to get themselves involved with because, unlike other safe jobs, the United States Army jobs involve greater risk such that one minor mistake could lead to the end of the entire team's

life. For example, we were assigned a mission sometime last year to go retrieve classified data. As a unit, we operate by subdividing ourselves into groups (alpha team and bravo team.) The alpha team was assigned to go in and survey the location and prepare the bravo team for extraction. While we were waiting for the alpha team to perform their duty, we ended up realizing that the alpha team failed to make a report of their findings; it's more like they came back with no intel because there was no report available for the bravo team to work with. As a result, we (the bravo team) couldn't perform our task, which affected the whole operation and the safety of the Country's citizens at large. This made me feels so sick to my stomach as to why the alpha team got so complacent hence failing to accomplish their duty.

Lastly, as much as I love to serve and protect the life and property of people. Unfortunately, I have to do this at the cost of being away from my family for a long period of time with little opportunity to communicate to them. While I was serving in Afghanistan four years ago, there was no internet connection provided for soldiers because, according to intelligence, the enemy could infiltrate the database and attacked our base. The only means of communication was an encrypted two-way radio device. In the absence of communication, I was at a great

disadvantage of losing touch with family back home while on deployment; this explains why I haven't communicated with you more often.

In conclusion, United States Army as a discourse community has made a lot of significant impact in my life both negatively and positively. It has provided me the skills of communication that can apply to the civilian sector after completing my time with the United States Army. I hope that you find this letter informative and at the same time refreshing. Thanks for reading my letter Ronke, hoping to hear back from you soon.

Sincerely,

Adekunle David Daodu

Greg, S. "Military Radio Communication Tips and Tactics." Blog, Uploaded by Military Alphabet for precise military communication. January 01, 2021.

https://militaryalphabet.net/military-radio-communication-tips-and-tactics/