



With Pride & Distinction

Junior Officer Advisory Group

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Giving and Receiving

I remember how excited I was during OBC to transition from wearing the combination of black pants with a white dress shirt into the uniform of a Commissioned Corps officer. At the uniform shop, I filled my hand basket with all the required uniforms and their components. As I waited in line to pay, I made calculations about what my uniform allowance would cover and started second guessing some of my purchases. I had been gifted a bunch of devices from other officers, so I thought to myself that I did not need all of the items that I picked up. My facial expression led one of the officer volunteers to approach me to ensure everything was okay. I informed the volunteer that I was gifted many devices and didn't think I needed many of the gathered items. The officer reassured me that it is better to have these items on hand, in the event I need them, rather than not have them and need them. I made the original intended purchase, although I was still apprehensive over what I thought at the time was "throwing money away." In retrospect, I am glad I took the advice to buy the items. The issue wasn't wear-and-tear, but rather many of the items were for females. Now, don't get me wrong, I was extremely grateful for the items, but I assumed an active duty officer would pass along devices and accessories which are relevant for me, as a new officer. Needless to say, there was some confusion on my end. I recall picking up the female shoulder boards for the summer whites and trying to figure out how to get them attached on the male cut shirt. After some time, I realized that there are female and male versions of the shoulder boards. It got me thinking what other components

and items were different. I continued to sort through the bag and pulled out a female Combination Cover as well as a beret (both which will phase-out and will no longer be authorized on 1 January 2020), which looked nothing like the male version, a skirt, cross-over tie and a number of maternity items, all of which shouldn't be worn by a male officer.

Going through these items made me realize that I need to be careful when it comes to obtaining second-hand uniforms and devices. It also made me think about some of the other differences in our uniforms between genders, like the cut on the dinner dress jackets being different. In recent years, there have also been updates to the design of the PHS device, which is found not only on the device pin, but the shoulder boards. It is important to keep up to date on current policy and know the different components and the variance between male and female uniforms.



Little differences may not be noticeable to civilians, but one of the elements in wearing the uniform is representing our service with pride and distinction. Taking shortcuts to save a few dollars isn't worth it, so please be mindful of the regulations and ensure your uniform components are serviceable and follow the current policy. This applies to giving as well as receiving uniform components. As a uniformed service, our uniform reflects on each member so let's ensure the correct uniform devices are utilized across our service.

Which side to walk on?

Do you have trouble remembering which side, as a junior officer, you should walk alongside of a senior ranking officer? If you can remember the history behind the reason, it might make it easy to recall which side to fall into step when walking with a higher-ranking officer.

Historically, when soldiers were attacked in the open and carried swords the junior officer would stand on the side where the defense would be weakest. A right-handed person carrying a sword (typically on their left side), would draw their sword and have their weapon to protect their right side. The junior officer would walk on the left, to intercept any attacks or danger from that side.

Today, walking according to regulations allows someone to quickly identify the senior person in a group without having to search the collars. This provides a means to easily glance at the highest-ranking officer to determine if rendering a salute is appropriate.

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