

## Chief Chat Episode 3 Transcript

Hey , what's up teammates ? Welcome to the Chief chat podcast . I'm Chief master Sergeant , Eddie Diaz Command Chief at the United States Air Force Academy . I'm a student of life followership and leadership . You know , throughout my military career , I've discovered that within every organization , there are enlisted airmen and guardians with lots of experiences who are wanting to share their examples on followership and leadership with you . In this podcast , we'll delve into the dynamic world of enlisted life and the US Air and Space Force giving our enlisted members a voice . So join us as we explore the intricacies of followership , leadership , technical expertise , and the unique experience that shape the journey of our military community . Get ready for engaging discussions , personal stories and a deep dive into the heart of the enlisted experience together . Let's uncover the untold stories and valuable insights that make our military community strong . Welcome back to another episode of Chief Chat in the booth with me today is none other than my wing man . My teammate , Chief Jeremy Shane . Boom , the command chief for the 10th airbase wing , best known for team 10 . Welcome to the show chief . Thanks , Chief , appreciate you . Thanks for the invite . Hey , real quick . What , what is this whole team 10 thing all about team 10 , right ? So uh an identity is important . Um People need to belong to , to the tribe they're connected with the most . Uh We , we work on branding at the tent air base wing a lot . So we built a , an acronym assigned to 10 and put it on our shoulder . We think it's important to that . We can clearly identify how we associate with the mission here . So team 10 is acronym 10 . Uh team of teams is our team . Awesome . Right ? We are a team of teams . That's how we get things done . We bias to action , we get after things . Uh we can't get tied up in the bureaucracy uh in a hierarchical uh you know , structure that we are um it's important but uh but we have to be able to uh work independently . We , we are also engaged at every level . That's our E man . So true . Team 10 is everywhere . Absolutely . Uh We are a customer service organization . Um our customer being the cadets and , and everybody up here at Yafa . So uh we need to be engaged with our customers , see what their needs are . Are we meeting their needs ? Uh can we do it better when you be engaged with each other ? So , every level , right ? Um we need to see what we can , what we can do to help each other . Uh accomplish the mission and the last one is our swagger . Uh , as , as Colonel Glisson likes to , to coin . Um , nothing happens without team 10 . That's our end . Um , which is absolutely true here at ya . A no matter what's going on , we operate probably a dozen air show level events every year , which is pretty incredible . Um , but none of that , none of that is able to happen with that team Ten's efforts , man . I'm glad to be on your team of teams engagements and nothing happens with that . Yeah . Yeah . So we are here today to talk about leadership and follow . Most importantly , I really want to get after your thoughts on a few things . Um because of your levels of experiences , you know , chief enlisted airmen and guardians serve in various roles with unique responsibilities from the flight line , uh all the way up to the wing and everywhere in between , you know , there's differences in scope varying from tactical operational and strategic levels of followership and leadership , right ? As a command chief , you've now served in every level of responsibility . Which level did you find the most rewarding and why ? And what stands out most , I would say the uh serving at the tactical level is probably the most instant gratification you're gonna have . Um That's , you know , that's one of the reasons I really love deployments , uh especially as a young NCO . Um I always found it uh rewarding to be working with my , my small group , my team um getting after the mission , it was clear what we had to get done and just going for it and then getting to know each other , your , your peers , your subordinates on , on a really personal level and connecting . That's probably the most rewarding experience I've had , you know , your journey also as an airman has brought you many opportunities , like you just mentioned , like a deployment is an opportunity to go and serve our nation . You've answered that call and your path has brought you to where you are today . I mean , a Comanche , that's incredible . Um Being a Comanche for our 10th air base wing team 10 , who ,

who if you were to go back and chart your journey chief , what do you think it would look like today ? I don't think I would change too much today . I would , I would make more informed decisions um about my career path or more deliberate decisions while I , I don't regret walking through those doors that popped open those opportunities that presented themselves . I think I would have done a little bit more research into them before walking through that door kind of blindly , you know , in its simplest terms , chief , you know , operational leadership is focused on the day to day management and execution of tasks in order to meet , you know , those short term objectives within any organization . You know , it involves overseeing processes , managing resources and ensuring the efficient functionality of daily operations to achieve immediate goals and maintain organizational effectiveness . I mean , that's the textbook , right ? Those are things that you do that you've done that you've been doing . You know , this is normally where we find our master sergeants that when we think back chief , when we were master sergeant , these are the things that we were doing with all your experiences today , chief . And now as a strategic leader , how would you best lead your master sergeant self to be effective as an operational leader ? That's a really good one . So when I speak publicly , uh I use the phrase credible airmanship a lot . And I think that is absolutely the most critical thing for our senior NC Os . Um We've got to be credible at , at a technical level . We have to know our job inside and out . You're the master sergeant , you know , you're supposed to be the master of your , of your technical expertise . Um However , your airmen are watching everything you do . Uh So you know what , whatever you're expecting them to do at an operational level , um You need to be demonstrating that credibility and you know , and speaking of credibility , there's a lot of credibility that comes to what we do as chiefs , you know , not all chiefs , either guardians or airmen serve at the strategic level and not all senior NC Os or NC Os serve at the flight or at the tactical level . And when you were a tech sergeant were you ever on an assignment where you served at the wing or higher level ? And if you did , what experiences did you gain to best prepare you for where you are today ? Mostly in the uh NCU IC realm , you know , running a work center . There were some uh projects I was afforded the opportunity to work on um that were more of a strategic level impact . Uh There was one aircraft , they were working on putting a camera ball on an air certain aircraft which is outside of the uh normal scope of what a civil engineer does . And I'm a civil engineer by trade . I wa I was able to participate and something like that and it just completely blew my mind the impact that a tech start , it can have that I can speak into creating a ground piece of a brand new mission that is doing no kidding war fighter operations . Um in the A or so , I thought that was pretty cool that , that definitely stuck with me . Yeah . You know , for me , chief , when it was , when I was tech Sergeant Diaz . Now imagine that like tech sergeant , Shaman , tech sergeant Diaz that quite a long time ago , I feels like it was five weeks ago maybe . And , and I really enjoyed that time . You know , I found that rank and the responsibilities as a technical sergeant at that technical level to be the most rewarding . It's where we're able to maximize our technical expertise and lead small teams like you mentioned earlier . Although serving at both the operational and strategic level is very rewarding . In this case at the group uh on up to the numbered Air force where I was most happy . Uh serving was at the flight level . I I really enjoyed my time there . I if there's one assignment that impacted you most chief , what was that assignment ? And what responsibilities did you have ? Why was it so rewarding ? So I got a , a kind of couple , couple answers on , on that one . The first one as a , as a tech sergeant , it , it , it was the most rewarding . I , I also am an advocate of the belief that tech sergeant rank is probably the most frustrating rank in the air force because you are probably at the peak of your technical game , um , or getting there very quickly . Uh But nobody seems to listen to you or it feels like that sometimes , right ? And so you put that rocker up top and then , you know , you walk in the room and all of a sudden everybody cares about your opinion or at least that's how it felt for me . And I'm like , I'm the same dude . I was five minutes ago running to work center as a texter was great . The most rewarding experience I had was my time as a first sergeant . Um , the most impactful in my career and really was like , uh I guess AAA reb blueing or a

trigger in my brain . That , ok , I'm not just doing 20 years . I'm gonna continue doing this because I really love it . And my first start in time , um , I was attached to my first unit was a maintenance unit . That was great . It was a lot of fun . It felt kind of traditional first sergeant lifestyle . Um , I had , I was afforded the opportunity . Uh , like I said , the Air Force caters to my short attention span , right ? I get bored quick . So , uh moved on to a TP unit out of Fort Carson . And that was , that was an incredible experience . They allowed me to deploy , uh with them , the , uh the group uh first started in downrange . Uh so I got to fly all over the a or seen them , do , you know , strategic level operations , you know , and , and watched how all the mission pieces come together . So my time that I spent as a NCO in the intel world and uh in the uh air control world , um that was more of a , a staff level but , uh , you know , kind of seeing all those pieces come together and sitting in a strike cell and then watching them call in an air strike using all of those assets that I had seen , operate at a different capacities throughout my career , just seeing it come together and it just kinda all clicked for me . That's incredible . You know , the amazing thing . That we get to do as command chiefs is that we get to just sit back and watch the amazingness that our airmen and Guardians do every day . I mean , that was us years ago . You know , it's absolutely incredible . The versatility of our enlisted airmen and guardians and their adaptability to serve at , you know , at the headquarters level all the way down to the flight level . Our technical expertise and varying and diverse experiences is what really makes us so great , you know , time and again , we , we continue to see um that the one thing that our adversaries fear most are enlisted because there's no other country out there that can perform . Like we can w what are your thoughts on that impactful that our enlisted bring to the fight ? I'm gonna , I'm gonna come back to my credibility statement . Our NC OS are amazing . So first off , they're far better than I ever was as an NCO . Uh when I watch these NC Os operate these days , they , they are , are far more knowledgeable , uh far more motivated . And I think I was back then and that's inspiring to me like we're , we're continuing uh as a force to build better leaders . So I think , I think the reason they're , they're so effective is is we invest time in ourselves and , and each other are our NC Os need to be smart and they need to be credible in their expertise . Uh We spend a lot of time developing their skill sets uh , over the years . Yeah , they are quite amazing . You know , I thank you so much for your leadership and what you do . You know , I'm curious to know Chief . What's the most embarrassing and unusual thing that has happened to you during your career ? I'll be in a public speaking event and sometimes a bad word will slip out . And I'm like , oh , I need to be more Polish than that . I'm a command chief . You know , I'm better than this . If I can control it . Uh And , and every time I have to kind of go , OK , we can get through this , you can cover it up now . You gotta , you gotta feed that credibility math , right ? So you just , you just lost , you got a minus one , you gotta get a plus three , you know , so you gotta make up for it . So that , that's an embarrassing piece that , that I continue to fight . But it's , it's the one of those things where you gotta continue to make yourself better and I'm ok with that . I'm glad you're OK with that chief . You know , it's been great to sit down and chat with you . I really appreciate you being with me here today . Appreciate it . Thank you so much for the invite . This has been an awesome experience . We want to express our gratitude to our dedicated listeners and the incredible enlisted airmen and guardians who are the backbone of our services . Your commitment to followership , leadership , technical expertise , and sharing your experiences is what makes our military community stronger . Remember your stories matter and your contributions are vital too . So until next time , stay resilient , stay inspired and keep making it count . This is your chief Steve . Thanks for tuning in .