



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

United States Trial Defense Service
Fort Rucker Field Office
5700 Novosel St., Room 345
Fort Rucker, AL 36362



Good Soldier Book

This information is designed for Soldiers under suspicion of misconduct. The good Soldier book is essentially a record of everything important you have ever done for the military. The purpose of this “book” is to give the judge (or other designated people who will decide your fate) an idea of who you are and why you aren’t just “a number” or just “another Soldier.”

The more time you put into this book, the better image you will convey to the decision maker about who you are. Sometimes judges and people sitting on boards may become desensitized about what it actually means to impose adverse actions (confinement, punitive discharge, separation from the service, reduction in grade, forfeitures, etc.) on a Soldier. The purpose of this book is to help ensure they refocus on what they are doing and it’s impact. The more personal insight into your life you can provide the decision maker to think about, the better.

What to do:

1. Obtain a good quality three-ring binder that is suitable for presentation.
2. Create an index page with at least the following sections:
 - a. Military awards
 - b. Skills tabs, certificates of completion, certificates of accomplishment, etc.
 - c. Enlisted Records Briefs, NCO Evaluation Reports, etc.
3. Military awards section:
 - a. Get a copy of every award you have ever earned. Also, you need to find the double-sided sheets that accompany the award. It’s a DA Form 638-1, or Recommendation for Award. Pair up the award certificates with each recommendation form.
 - b. Make copies, double sided are preferable, of all documents. Retain any originals and don’t put them in this book.
 - c. Organize the copies of awards and the respective DA Form 638-1s in the following order: highest award to the lowest award, highest being on top. If you have more than one type of award, then organize chronologically from most recent on top to oldest on bottom.
4. Skills tab, certificates of completion/accomplishment, etc., section:
 - a. Assemble this section, again making copies of your originals, and order this section from most significant accomplishment to least significant.
5. ERB, NCOERs, Academic Evaluation Reports section:
 - a. Update your ERB early and fix everything so that you are not scrambling at the last minute.
 - b. Organize your NCOERs chronologically from most recent to oldest in time.
 - c. Organize all of your AERs, also chronologically, from most recent to oldest.

Another section that might be helpful if you have enough time is “character references.” Character references are statements from people that you currently know and work with or have

done so in the past. Simply put, these are statements by these people stating what kind of person you are. They should say something along the lines of, "When I worked with (name) he/she was a great Soldier." or "I have never had a problem with him/her." or "I would always have (name) on my team when I deploy if I had the choice." or "(name) always puts forth his/her best effort." These statements will show that you are a professional Soldier and have much more to give the Army.

At the end of your work, you should have a professional looking book to take with you to trial or to your board.

For further information, contact the Trial Defense Service at (334) 255-3919.