



**THE ARIZONA CORRECTIONAL PEACE OFFICERS
ASSOCIATION
CHECK AND MATE NEWSLETTER
NO. 2**

*A bi-weekly
newsletter to
inform Union
members on
important
grievance results,
trends,
procedures and
important
information
relevant to a
better quality of
work life.*

In this Issue:

*-D.O. 514 – MAP
Entries: Tactics to keep
you in the lead*



The “Check and Mate” Newsletter No. 2

(A bi-weekly newsletter to inform Union members on important grievance results, trends, procedures and important information relevant to a better quality of work life.)

D.O. 514 – MAP Entries: *Tactics to keep you in the lead*

OK.

So, let's talk about MAP entries. It's almost psychological isn't it. One hears MAP entry and the first thought that crosses one's mind is “the Negative MAP entry”. Very few equate a MAP entry with a positive one.

Why is that?

Could it be that the majority of times you are asked to sign Your MAP and/or are told that you are getting a MAP entry is for something negative? Could it be that it is easier to see and react to the negative things that happen in prison than to see and acknowledge the good? Could it be pure laziness? Lack of training? Lack of caring?

Probably, to some of the reasons or to all. Your choice. Reasons vary from unit to unit and this shouldn't be, correct? Fair, Firm and Consistent, shouldn't it be?

But in all fairness, there are plenty of supervisors out there who are meticulous about employee work performance and actually view the MAPS as a supervisory and staff maintenance tool, but the sad reality is that there

are even more who use it as a canvas upon which only the negative in life is painted and becomes a godawful exhibit about one's life.

Shameful but true nonetheless.

D.O.514 is very clear about the purpose and goal when it comes to the MAP system.

Have you read it?

Go read it if you haven't yet because knowledge is power and lack of it will kill you faster than a bullet!

I'll wait here until you're finished.

Are you done? Good!

Lets just analyze one little section like we were examining a chess game:

D.O. 514.01.1.2 and 1.3 read in part

1.2 MAP is primarily intended as a method of providing employee performance feedback. The first line supervisor gives the employee regular feedback on the quality of work being performed by documenting performance utilizing MAP Notes.

1.3 MAP shall also be used to document substandard performance. The ratings and the accompanying documentation for a performance appraisal may be used to support discipline, certain personnel actions or termination of an employee for performance reasons.

Peachy. Sounds good, right? As you read the rest you can't help but notice that there's really no helpful information concerning your right to respond to the MAP entry with comments or viewpoints of your own.

In fact, most staff don't even bother making an entry at all even when the MAP entry is positive.

But what if it is negative or worse, an unwarranted negative MAP entry that you didn't have coming?

Let's reiterate here and now the following crucial thought: Knowledge is power and lack of it will kill you faster than a bullet!

So, being that we are looking at this from the perspective of a chess game, let's define two important subjects that needs to be carefully defined and understood by you, dear Union member. Knowledge of both these subjects is what allows Master Class chess players and soldiers in the field of battle to successfully engage, defend and defeat the opposition no matter how tough they may fancy themselves to be.

The two subjects are strategy and tactics.

What are they and what are the differences?

Let's use the good old K.I.S.S system shall we.

K- keep

I- it

S- simple

S- stupid

Like that? Thought you would. I learned it at Fort Benning Georgia and It has guided me through life and D.O.C. with a minimum of fuss.

Let's define strategy:

“Strategy is the big picture for any task or subject, to include its goal and purpose.” Simple. The everyday strategy of all institutions is to start with a number of living and breathing offenders and at the end of the day finish with the same number and for all staff to return home safely to their loved ones.

Period.

Feed them, rec them, work them and then secure them back home with no casualties. That's a great day!

But what if one of them attempts an escape, or starts a fight, and disrupts the orderly ritual of the institution?

That's where tactics come in.

Let's define what a tactic is:

A tactic is defined as "a move, thought, or process, that takes advantage of a weakness in the opposition or the strength of your team to restore order or accomplish a task."

Simple.

Tactics are the watchdogs of strategy.

For example: an inmate attempts to assault a staff member. That's the dirtbags strategy.

We respond with chemical agents and additional staff to stop him cold. That's our tactic.

For supervisors, the strategy of the MAP system is to create long term goals and documentation of a staff member to either praise or admonish.

The tactical priorities for the staff member is to:

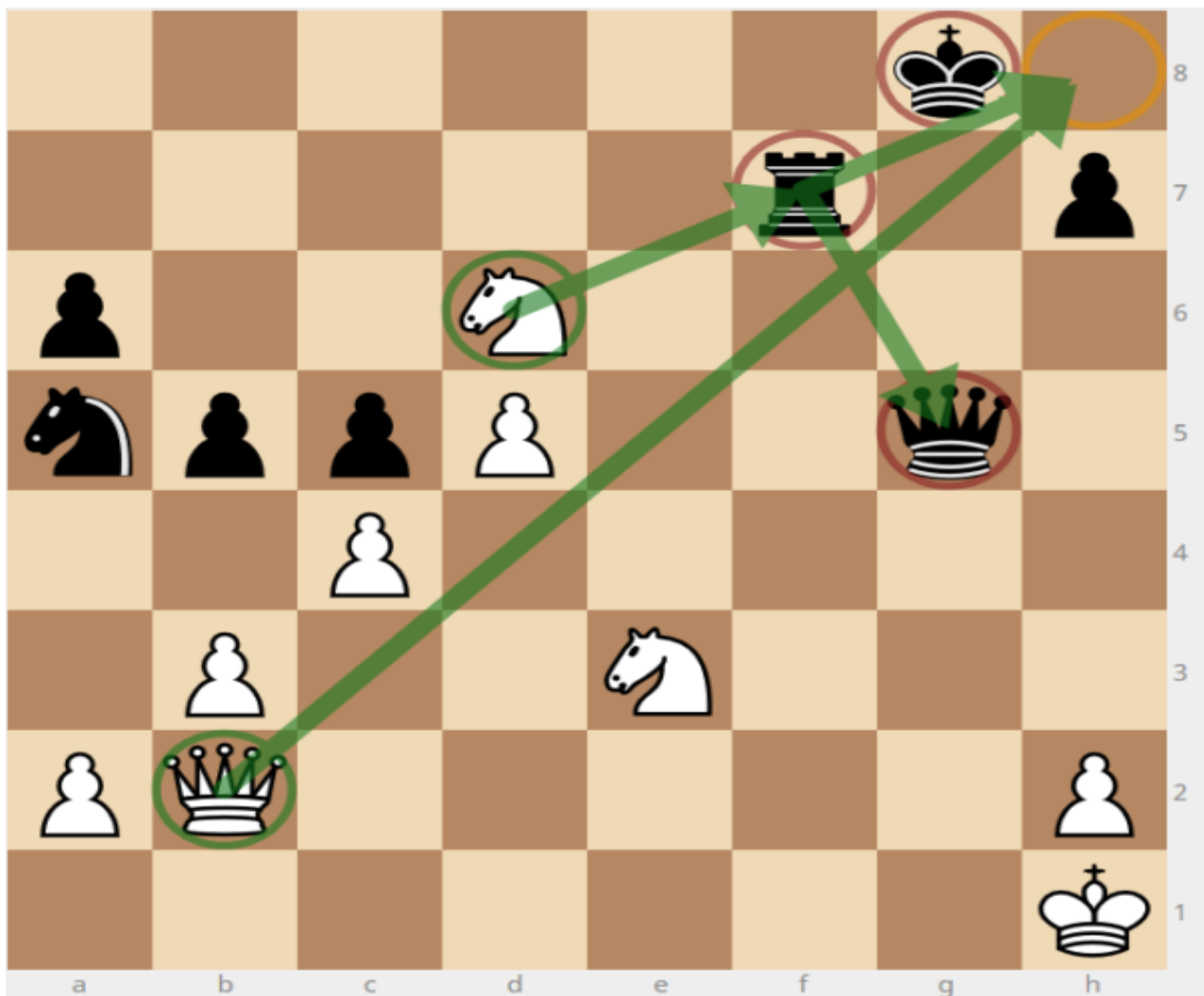
-ensure that the supervisor is following the policy and maintaining the MAP correctly and timely.

-ensure that all entries are responded to in a timely manner

-ensure that all entries are formatted to benefit the employee no matter if positive or negative

Whether it's a great MAP entry to praise or a negative one to admonish or an unwarranted entry, there are a few tactics that you need to be aware of that can benefit you in any and all cases.

So, let's talk tactics, shall we?



The Great MAP entry:

This is a no brainer. If you receive a great MAP entry for some outstanding feat, feel free to toot your own horn. Don't leave it blank and undermine the entry with a mute voice. Let them know that the reason you perform well is because you are motivated and have a vested interest in the department and that one day you intend to be in front leading this battle. Dig?

This tactic alone can become relevant in the future when you are being considered for that SSU or K-9 position you may be gunning for because the interviewing team may just look at your MAP entries to see where you stand.

This tactic can also make a critical difference during an investigation when administration is trying to determine your character, understand?

So, don't underestimate the use of this frequent tactic when reviewing and making comments on your MAP.

Recap: a "no move" is a horrible move. passivity accomplishes nothing when engaged in any battle. Even if there is a lull in the battle, (that great MAP entry) don't rest. Move! Feel free to toot your own horn! (give yourself a positive entry as well) This tactic is an investment in your future and allows for the deployment of more aggressive tactics if need be.

The Negative MAP entry:

So, you received the dreaded negative MAP entry.

Could happen. Face it: in this line of work, its only a matter of time so be prepared for it. Its not the end of the world if you are prepared for it and think reasonably and logically.

First things first. Let's take a neutral look at ourselves first before we deploy a tactic here. Ask yourself the following questions:

-Do I have this entry coming?

-Was I wrong?

-Was I aware that I erred?

-In other words, was it a mistake or just plain misconduct on my part?

-Are "they" wrong or just being malicious, vindictive or just plain wrong for giving me this entry and can I prove it?

Let's address the first four questions. The fifth question will be the subject of the next tactic so we'll deploy there if we have to for, you see, the deployment of tactics is no different than the use of force continuum and you can jump into any level at any time as the situation dictates.

It's extremely important, if we strive to survive in this business, to take a critical view at ourselves at all times. Let's adopt the United States ARMY Rangers view that states in their orders the following: "Tell the truth about what you see and what you do. There is an army depending on us for correct information. You can lie all you please when you tell other folks about the rangers, but don't never lie to a ranger or officer."

We may joke all we want but we cannot be immoral and unethical and survive in this environment at the same time. Taking ownership for a

warranted MAP entry takes real strength of character and that's an outstanding quality to possess. If you did it and you're wrong, own it. If you have it coming, take it. If this sounds like convict knowledge, it is. We can take lessons from them just like they take lessons from us. They learned the hard way that blowing smoke all the time eventually chokes everyone out including yourself so don't do it!

With that said, it is not the end of the world. Always respond to a justly deserved negative MAP entry with an entry that clearly states that you are now aware of the error and will take steps to rectify the offending action. Let them know that, if it was a mistake on your part, that you won't be repeating it. Let the supervisor who made the entry know that you are taking responsibility for your actions and that you will make it up to them because they are a good supervisor and you shouldn't have put them in this position to begin with.

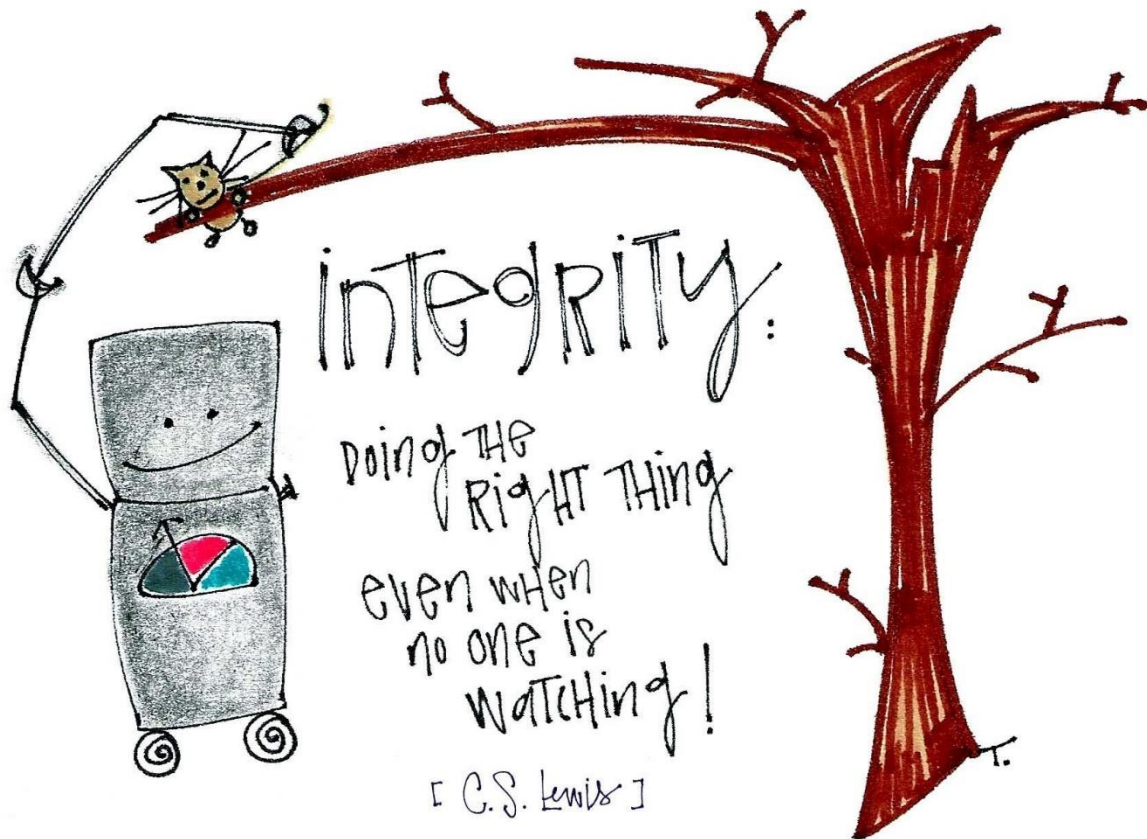
Ownership is a powerful tactic. Don't underestimate the power of throwing yourself under a bus when you have it coming.

Recap:

If you're wrong, own it. If it was a mistake, admit and correct it. Don't lie and then expect the world to come save you because you don't have the moral character to face yourself. This behavior is dangerous, unethical and will eventually catch up to you in an unpleasant manner.

But everyone acknowledges and admires a standup guy, sort of speaking. A person who admits when they are wrong are sought for higher level positions because it is recognized that this person can be trusted to do the right thing, dig?

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF INTEGRITY AND HONESTY. It may be the most powerful tactic in your arsenal.



The Unwarranted MAP entry:

And now we finally arrive at the demons of all demons: the dreaded, unwarranted, MAP entry.

It happens more often than not and it can be exhausting and redundant having to deal with this kind of management style.

We've all either seen it or have known someone affected by this dreadful beast of pure incompetence, vindictive behavior.

If it happens to you, first things first:

"There's more than one way to skin a cat!"

(My dad always told me that part of the origin of this saying came from the South where "Catfish" was simply called "cat" and had to do with removing the scales. Don't know if this is true and I'm not even researching it but I like the saying and what it stands for.)

Every move in chess, whether good or bad, are treated the same by the masterclass player. If you're attacked, don't panic. Instead think: How can I turn this aggressive move against the attacker and have it benefit me instead? This is the hallmark of tactical thinking.

Let's examine a case that actually just transpired involving two staff members and how they dealt with it tactically, efficiently, intelligently and beneficial for the staff involved.

If you recall from the last newsletter, we discussed a case in which two staff members won a grievance by having a Letter of Reprimand rescinded during the Step II Review of the grievance process only to have it replaced

by a Letter of Instruction in its stead. The Letter of Instruction was worded exactly the same as the Letter of Reprimand was.

What an absolute embarrassment of management style and/or skill demonstrated by the issuing administrators involved.

No matter how they try to paint this picture or sugarcoat it with their sorry explanations, this was an inappropriate and vindictive abuse of power.

So, what is one to do?

We looked at this tactically and took advantage of the strategy involved in the maintenance of the MAP.

So, here's what we did and, in the meantime, put this tactic in your back pocket for now, for future use, as we consider this case.

We knew that the supervisors had to enter the Letter of Instruction in the MAP. Even if they didn't have to document it in the MAP, we would have insisted on it anyway. It is, after all, our record and we can make entries ourselves, you know!

But luckily, the supervisors did at least one correct thing and actually documented the letter in the MAP.

Perfect!

See, this now allowed the employees to place the following entry as a response to the unwarranted MAP entry and expose to all who looked at this entry the real shenanigans involved in issuing such a sorry example of leadership skills:

"This Letter of instruction reads word for word exactly as the Letter of Reprimand that it is replacing after administration agreed to remove said Letter during a grievance that I filed for an unreasonable disciplinary sanction that I received. Even though I technically won the grievance, it appears that administration won't be happy to admit fault entirely, hence this Letter of instruction, that smacks as

nothing but a cheap shot because they didn't get their way. Either way, let it be known that that I won my grievance and had the Letter of Reprimand overturned and removed from my file so the only thing that I am acknowledging in this unnecessary MAP entry is that an unnecessary document was utilized to replace an equally unnecessary and overturned sanction. As I already proved in my grievance, I didn't do anything wrong or against policy. "

We then took this tactic one step further.

The staff members made copies of the MAP entries and went down to Human Resources and asked to see their personnel file. A copy of that Letter of Instruction will be placed in their personnel file.

They then attached a copy of the MAP entries to the letter in the file to ensure that no matter from what angle this letter is viewed, all can see the shenanigan involved.

Let's make one thing clear: as long as you stay professional, it is your MAP and you can comment and discuss anything placed in your MAP in whatever manner you wish to express yourself to let it be known that you are in disagreement with an inappropriate comment.

Your MAP is a tool that should benefit you as well as administration and you have the right to not have your reputation marred just because someone wants to utilize it as an instrument of sabotage.

Let's recap:

- an unwarranted MAP entry is annoying, unbecoming and unprofessional*
- stay calm and discuss the entry with your Union representative for tactical decisions*
- always make a counter comment and get creative in exposing the entry*

-make copies of the entries and prepare to discuss the entries with upper management. Entries don't need to be confined to paper alone: they can easily transition to the vocal realm as well

-remember that the Director and Rods have open door policies if your immediate chain of command want to dismiss the entry as trivial

-remember: it is your MAP, your reputation and your career that is on the line. Fight for it! We'll help you.

Don't wait for supervisors to make positive entries for you. Take ownership of your work and self-document if you have to. (I used to make entries in my MAP to my supervisor all the time advising him that he was neglecting my MAP and that he needed to get with the program! Funny but true story.)

If after correct and clear tactical thinking you determine that this matter is of extreme importance to your reputation and to you, then it should be just as important to your leadership as well.

As a final FYI, your merit raises, in part, are calculated using your MAP as a gauge to determine what you will get so it is of extreme importance, from a tactical point of view, to primp up this document to its fullest potential.

And again, don't hesitate to involve and seek counsel from your Union.

We absolutely, positively, and undeniably will get involved.

A Special Tactic for Supervisors and Administrators

This tactic is exclusively for you, the supervisor or administrator, no matter what your rank is.

If properly and neutrally deployed, it will make you shine in the eyes of your subordinates like nothing else you can ever do.

The tactic is simple and requires only a genuine concern for your staff and their development.

I'm talking about laying to rest the myth that when an otherwise exemplary subordinate is transferred from one unit to another, that you must immediately lower their MAP score because you are not familiar with them yet.

It is really a despicable practice and demonstrates a lack of ownership in your decision-making skills and furthermore, and more importantly, goes contrary to the MAP policy that clearly states:

1.4 Performance documentation made in the MAP Notes may be used as support for nomination of an employee for awards or special recognition.

1.5 Monitoring performance, providing feedback and coaching are critical components of the MAP system.

Did you catch that? Used to support for nomination of an employee for awards or special recognition?

How can it be possible, for another committee to recognize your excellence through the medium of MAP entries, if they don't actually know you?

Because they believe in the MAP entries, the policy and they believe in what the supervisor documented, that's why.

So why should you not follow suit and believe that the last supervisor did their job and accurately documented the new staff members performance accurately?

This is what true teamwork is all about, correct?

Then don't lower their scores please! Don't be part of the herd! Follow policy and do the correct thing. You wouldn't want this happening to you as a supervisor who works hard, transferring to another unit, so break the circle of ignorance and don't do it to your staff!

Let's put an end to this sad practice that is transmitted, like an infection, amongst supervisors, and do the correct thing supported by policy.

Support and accept MAP scores and merits that are already in your employees MAP.

Honor them. They'll respect and love you for it.

They earned it, and just like a savings account, nobody wants to transfer their account to another bank and find out that their funds were reduced because the bank doesn't know them and must therefore charge them.

Ridiculous!

Enough said.

Yours in Solidarity,

Carlos Garcia

Executive Grievance Coordinator

Deeds not Words!

