



Safety: At the core of Army values

After 33 years in this great Army, I've had a lot of time to think about values and what they mean to our force. I'd like to share some of those thoughts with you now, specifically regarding how safety enhances the values we live by as Soldiers. I hope you'll see how seamlessly safety fits into each value, and how it can affect our Soldiers' decisions for the better when framed in the context of how we live as professional Soldiers.

Loyalty: By always thinking and acting with the safety of themselves and their battle buddies in mind, Soldiers ensure their continued service and reinforce loyalty to each other, our Army and our Nation. Making smart risk decisions is one of the most loyal actions a Soldier can take throughout his or her career because it demonstrates commitment to both leadership and one's brothers and sisters in arms.

Duty: Every Soldier, regardless of rank or branch, has a responsibility to fulfill his or her obligations safely. We have a duty to mitigate the hazards that threaten mission success and an obligation to bring everyone home, whether it's at the end of a tactical mission or the conclusion of a night out with friends.

Respect: Safety is a great indicator of respect, both for one's self and others. When Soldiers insist on operating as safely as possible, they not only demonstrate personal courage — they are letting their battle buddies and leaders know they respect them enough to do the right thing, all the time.

Selfless service: Because risk-informed and assessed actions strive to secure the common good, safety is inherently selfless. Soldiers who commit themselves to safety, both on and off duty, positively add to the Army's efforts.

Honor: Viewed in the context of this value, nothing is more honorable than efforts to preserve our Soldiers, Civilians and Family Member's lives. Not only does it keep them in the fight, it sets an honorable example for others to emulate.

Integrity: The very foundation of integrity is always doing what's right. By always working to achieve the harder ("safer") course of action, method or choice over shortcuts or temporary "fun," Soldiers build integrity into everything they do. The additional byproduct — essential to mission command — is trust.

Personal courage: It's not always easy to do the right thing, especially when a decision might prove unpopular. But, by standing up for safety as an imperative to how we do business,

Soldiers show a tremendous amount of personal courage and respect for themselves and their battle buddies.

As I hope you can see, safety can be one of the core elements to our Army values. Engaged leadership has made it so during the past few years, and we've worked hard to meet the chief of staff's intent and focus in instilling risk management as an integral part of our warrior culture. As we move forward, we should keep driving safety as part and parcel of everything we do — operationalizing safety. When assessing your safety programs, planning missions or carrying out simple mundane tasks, measure them using values-based questions like what could happen and why. It's not lost on Soldiers that "mission accomplished" adds value to what they do — in fact, it validates their service and sacrifice. When they see safety as part of the Warrior Ethos, they'll treat it as an unimpeachable value as well.

I couldn't have asked to end my Army career on a better note than advocating for Soldier safety and working to assist you in one of our most noble efforts. Thank you all for your engaged leadership, and the work you do daily for our Soldiers, Family Members and Civilians. I know you'll welcome your new director of Army Safety, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Farnsworth, with the same warmth and enthusiasm you've shown me. In his and your capable hands, the Army Safety Program is sure to flourish. Thank you again, and God bless you all.

Army Safe is Army Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Timothy J. Edens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

TIMOTHY J. EDENS
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding