

Case Study: E-5 Cheating on CDI QAR Exam

Description:	Avionics technician E-5 caught cheating on the closed-book portion of the CDI exam. During the exam, the clerk proctoring the exam observed the E-5 referring to a partially concealed paper. The clerk reported the incident to the QA chief who confronted the E-5. The E-5 admitted to using his notes.
Background:	The unit maintenance officer charged the E-5 with a violation of the UCMJ and he was taken to captain's mast. The captain found him in violation of the UCMJ but suspended punishment for six months under the conditions of good behavior. He was removed from the QA work center. The commanding officer directed an informal inquiry to determine the behavioral failures in this incident.

Findings:

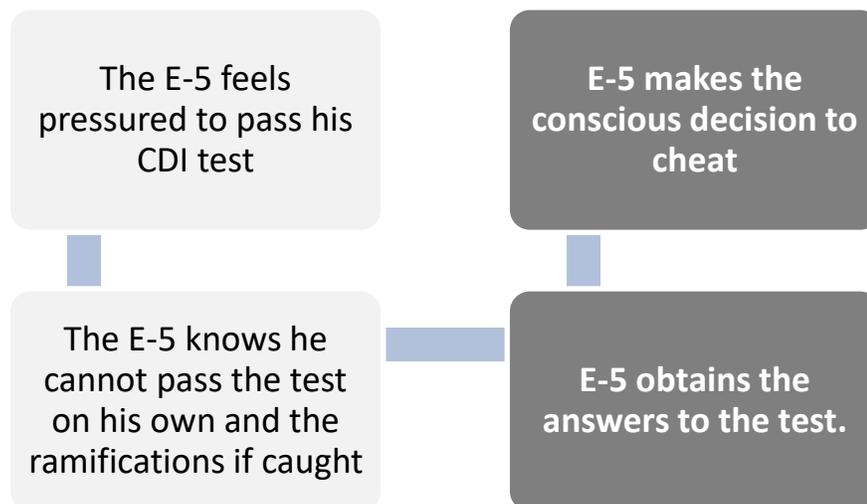
1. The E-5 had recently returned to the fleet from an extended disassociated tour.
2. The squadron QA division was undermanned and short of CDI qualified petty officers.
3. The E-5 said he felt pressure from both the division officer and division chief to get his CDI qualifications as soon as possible.
4. The division officer and division chief agreed that they were putting pressure on the E-5. They said it was no more pressure than they put on any E-5.
5. When the CO asked if they took into account the fact that the E-5 had been gone from the fleet for so long, they said they had not.
6. When the CO asked if they provided any training or extra help for the E-5, they said they had not.
7. When the CO asked, "Is your program rank-based or qualification-based?" the QA officer could not answer.
8. When the CO asked for the written guidance on how the division selected CDIs, the division officer said that it was being updated.
9. The E-5 stated that he knew he was not completely prepared to take the exam. He said he felt like he had to study for the test rather than actually learn the systems. He said he was trying to memorize rather

than actually learn. He felt once the CDI had been granted, he would then have the time to brush up on systems and procedures.

10. E-5 stated he was embarrassed to have to “shadow” junior maintenance personnel in the work centers to see how they performed the various maintenance tasks. He said he felt especially weak when in-depth trouble shooting was required.
11. E-5 stated that when he realized he was not prepared to pass the test, he approached a fellow CDI for help who gave him a “gouge” sheet.
12. The CDI in question said he did it because the more CDIs within the division, the less work each had to do. The CDI was stripped of his qualification and removed from the squadron.
13. The QA officer and QA chief re-wrote the squadron’s CDI instruction.

Facilitation Questions:

1. Diagram the thought-to-action chain for the E-5.
 - a. The E-5 is not prepared and feels a need to cheat on his CDI test. He knows the ramifications if caught, but believes the odds are in his favor of getting away with it.

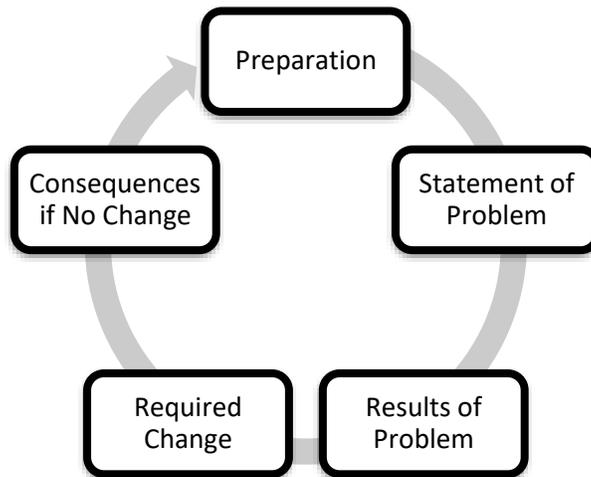


Questions:

1. What is the point of the critical incident?
2. Have you ever felt you were behind your personal “power curve” and needed to fudge the rules a bit?
3. Discuss the QA CDI qualification process. Although it is not prudent to make excuses for the E-5, does a weak process sometimes enable misbehavior?
4. What was the complicit CDI doing with the “gouge”? Is it possible the test has been compromised? Would you have everyone re-qualify?

Social Constructive Confrontation Discussion:

1. The first opportunity for constructive confrontation is internal. In this case, the E-5 would benefit from a constructive confrontation with himself. He is having issues with the fact that his rating knowledge is short of his expectations and the expectations of his leadership. He does not want to admit this deficiency. Have you ever been in a situation whereby you did not possess a level of knowledge or experience expected of you? Given the nature of the Navy’s “Jack of all trades, master of none” career model it is likely that you have. What did you do? What would you suggest for the E-5?
2. A next opportunity for confrontation might come from a friend or colleague. These “on-lookers” often know about or strongly suspect instances of difficulty or potential misbehavior. Have you ever been in such a situation? Approaching a friend or co-worker in such a situation would be very difficult and you would have to be sure that real, negative consequences were likely. Using the case study, your own observations, or a hypothetical example, how would you realistically handle such a confrontation? Look at the wheel below for a template.



Preparation:

1. Put yourself in the position of a shipmate with the E-5. He has discussed his problems with you and says he has a plan to “pass” the test. Do you engage with him on cheating? If so how would you prepare? In what setting would this type of confrontation best take place?

Statement of Problem:

1. What is the problem (or likely result) of the misbehavior? What problem is it for you? What problem is it for the unit, etc.?
2. How would you state this to your colleague/friend?
3. Listen.

Results of Problem:

1. Using the example, what are the likely results or negative outcomes from the problem and how would you state that to the friend?
2. Listen.

Required Change:

1. What change in behavior do you want to see?
2. Listen.

Consequences If No Change:

1. Hopefully, by this point in the confrontation you are having a discussion and not a shouting match. The understanding of consequences would be something that both of you agree to vice you listing them

Case Conclusions:

1. What main points did you take from this case study?
2. What are your concerns as a facilitator with this case study?