

# ENCLOSURE A23

**Forbes, Michael J SFC USARMY USSOCOM USASOC (USA)**

---

**From:** Brunson, Tavi N COL USARMY USSOCOM USASOC (USA)  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 1, 2022 9:30 PM  
**To:** Forbes, Michael J SFC USARMY USSOCOM USASOC (USA)  
**Cc:** Vargas, Sandra A CSM USSOCOM USASOC (USA)  
**Subject:** RE: long Thank you, apology, goals and some personal background  
**Signed By:** tavi.n.brunson.mil@mail.mil

SFC Forbes:

Thank you for your thorough and comprehensive feedback.

I will respect your request and excuse you from this team-building event. While I regret you not being there, I am glad that we still have one senior leader at the headquarters to handle any emergencies.

COL Tavi Brunson  
CDR/528SB  
BB: 910-882-3389  
Off: 910-432-4649

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
(www.blackberry.com)

---

**From:** Forbes, Michael J SFC USARMY USSOCOM USASOC (USA) <michael.j.forbes.mil@socom.mil>  
**Date:** Thursday, Dec 01, 2022 at 18:15  
**To:** Brunson, Tavi N COL USARMY USSOCOM USASOC (USA) <tavi.n.brunson.mil@socom.mil>  
**Cc:** Vargas, Sandra A CSM USSOCOM USASOC (USA) <sandra.cruz@socom.mil>  
**Subject:** long Thank you, apology, goals and some personal background

Sir:

We only had one Office Call when I was Acting OIC, so I thought you deserved a little more of my history after yesterday's interactions.

**BLUF: 2 THANK YOUs, an APOLOGY and GOALS; WARNING: Passive voice writing and background information is prevalent below. I recommend a cup of coffee before you continue.**

**Thank you** for your time during our impromptu meeting that CSM Vargas summoned me immediately after MAJ Racaza left your offices. Your understanding of my concerns regarding being forced to engage with a third-party corporation and agree to their "Terms of Service and Privacy Policy" re: what could be perceived as a behavioral health assessment, is appreciated. You demonstrated your understanding by verbally allowing me to not participate in the data-gathering event or the in-person sharing of the insights contained in the personalized produced reports from, Dr. Elias Porter's conceived, SDI 2.0 by corestrengths (an outside Corporation).

**My background – a little about me** - Unlike CSM Vargas inferred, I rarely make un-researched decisions or assumptions without real data. A tertiary look at corestrength's website totaling 6 hours has been conducted by me (on my own time over the past two nights; 3 hours per night since your email). I have concluded that the empirical data gathered about a user's preferences in various behavioral weightings in SDI 2.0 is a Perception-Based model and can easily be faked by a user to create a result that the user believes the sponsoring agent (in this case our unit) would prefer. In short, its often

unreliable; especially when the identities of the users is public to the sponsoring agent. This is evident by the core strength's example report displayed on their website with every individual users name on it, per the example.

Perception-Based models have the same problems any subjective profession that requires oaths or creeds as certification. To wit, it is only the ethical nature of the individual Doctor or Attorney that can determine if the consumer of their services is getting reasonably authentic advice or guidance; a moral compass must be working for the consumer. In contrast, a biased or, worse yet, ignorant, malicious or criminal actors in a position-of-trust can have devastating effects on consumers lives and/or careers. Moreover, perceptions are individually based and typically affected by one's frame-of-reference. For instance, MAJ Racaza's characterization of my request to understand the scope and regulatory basis of the mandatory nature of the SDI 2.0 was inaccurate. Yet, she followed me up the stairs to report to you that I was angry. She misperceived my demeanor and speaking characteristics, which typically include fast talking, complex sentences, confident conversations with quick transitions. In fact, without taking the SDI 2.0 but being somewhat self-aware, I am likely a Red-Green on the SDI Triangle (if that helps the group). I am all about performance and procedure with a judicious and competing nature. That is why I have expended so much energy in attempting to have our unit lean-forward with the PSAP program because we are a tip-of-the-spear SOF Support Element and we should be performing at a professional level when it comes to non-discretionary regulatory requirements that is better than most units in our Army. Simply, I want our S2 to be one of the best when PSAP goes live in PHASE 1; not one of the many units that will have repeating failed quarterly 'report cards' because they will likely need to reinvigorate their Clearance Suitability Programs and the known published procedures therein. We are all different and I except everyone's idiosyncrasies without judgment unless they affect my livelihood or health; I have gathered enough empirical data in my life to conclude that people sometimes don't practice what they preach and accept mine. I am 54 years old and though I am not done learning there are certain aspects of my life and communication that are likely 'baked in the cake,' by now.

Having developed a multi-platform (consisting of Value- and Logic-based) survey in my Graduate work at the University of Pittsburgh, when I was tasked to support Adtranz (a light-rail airport tram manufacturer) in 1996. We were tasked to design a custom-made survey of their massive engineering staff at their Corporate Headquarters location. They wanted my team to determine why their employment turnover rate was high. We purposefully considered not to employ a Behavioral-Based criteria model as we determined the weakness of perception-oriented data. We chose more intrinsic Value-Based criteria questions dealing with compensation, benefits, workplace environment, etc., coupled with a second survey that used Dr. Thomas L. Saaty's Analytic Hierarchy Process; a decision-making framework used for large-scale, multiparty, multi-criteria decision analysis. AHP uses Pairwise Comparison matrices to derive the priorities for a set number of alternatives. This method of estimating criteria weights take the comprehensive Values-Based results and applies the engineering staff's weighted preferences to them. It produced comprehensive prioritized results. But how did we get comprehensive results we could rely on? We preserved the anonymity of the participants, which produced an incredible 90% participation rate. This success was due to, 1) our promise to the highly educated staff that the raw data would not be released to the management and 2) fully explained the method of the survey. Moreover, Corporate Management expressed their appreciation for the breadth and depth of this two tiered survey, because it significantly enhanced the data's worth to them more than any prior attempted survey had (the university sent a team of graduate students to annually for years prior and after our visit). Our unique approach was something they could rely on and base corporate Human Resources policy decisions on. They liked it so much that upon leaving the location, (the day of the out-brief), a few of the Human Resource executives followed me to my car and requested that I give them the raw user surveys (that I stupidly commented were in my trunk during the brief). I refused, citing the promise that they and the rest of their leadership team agreed to. We had garnered written signatures that the participant understood that their answers or handwriting would not be provided to anyone in the company. My Professor, asked for the data on the last day of class and was given the same response by me. This was the only C grade I received in my Graduate work that culminated in a 3.47 GPA (on a 4.0 scale). I am still proud of my decision to this day, because we gave them quality results that far exceeded their expectations and we kept our promises to the staff.

I considered the subjective grade I was given for that project, retaliation, but had no proof; life moves on and this was inconsequential to me. In my Army Career I have been retaliated against for starting a Derogatory Incident Reporting Program at a BN that was in a BDE in which no element of the entire BDE had reported one 5258-R (Derogatory Report) in years. That's right, Sir; years! It took two years and an IG complaint, a Congressional Complaint and Article 138 for me



to expose this retaliation to the appropriate level to have it all unwound with the clicking of a print button which produced a singular memo from a MG. I have experienced such unprofessional behavior in my career, yet I remain positive and carry no grudges. That said, I have been there, done that, and 'ate the cookie.'

I am sorry that I am uncomfortable with this training and respectfully wish to not participate. The logic based brief lab that you provided to your staff last year was excellent and I would jump at the chance to participate in any of their advanced training.

I have proactive goals for your BDE S2 PSP. I don't want to "die on [any] hill," in fact, I want to take this opportunity to let you know how I admire your leadership style and your dedication to all of us. I have always been proud to serve this unit and, more importantly, to serve you and CSM V. I would do so again in a heartbeat; a unit is its people and the two of you have consistently stuck your reputations on the line on behalf of all of us. It is because of that I have always given you and your staff, leaders and SMEs my personal best. I have always provided guidance in an effort to do the right thing to serve you and our unit; even when it has been resisted by others. Having the opportunity to serve you at a BDE S2 echelon has provided ample opportunity to make myself and our unit better every day. Your tenets are paramount to an individual's success and I have come to practice them. It is my hope that I will continue to be able to serve you for the remainder of my tenure of my current assignment.

My top 3 goals prior to my PCSing in SEP23 are as follows:

- 1) Thorough (Step-by-Step) Continuity Flow Charts for every conceivable multistep process in the Personnel Security Program (PSP). We have circa 50+ Task Flowcharts in various stages of development, which will be tested and put in a hard copy "Go-Book" for S2 at all echelons and replicated on Digits for USASOC to distribute to every CSU BDE S2 for distribution.
- 2) BDE Reportable Activity (formerly Derogatory Incident) Reporting Policy rewrite, which we agreed to use 1SFC S2s policy, which we agreed needs more detail. Our work will become SOP at their level, which will impact 11 CSUs and become the 1SFC standard for Reportable Activities reporting, going forward.
- 3) Vibrant Reportable Activity Command Team education (with outside SMEs) in preparation for Personnel Security Accountability Program transition from Pilot Phase to Phase 1 --Phase 3 (full implementation).

Thanks again for your time. If you happened to make it through this proactive explanation, I hope you found it enlightening and worth it. I pride myself in making no rash decisions, only principled gambles with as much data as I can garner in the shortest amount of time: sometime based on hunches. I am intel after all.

Always Out Front, Support to the Utmost,

Michael J. Forbes  
528<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade (SO) (A),  
S2, NCOIC  
SMO: W0GKAA6  
☎ NIPR: (910) 908-8788  
☎ BB: (910) 929-7078  
☎ Staff Office: (910) 908-8787  
☎ SIPR: 239-3425  
NIPR: [michael.j.forbes.mil@socom.mil](mailto:michael.j.forbes.mil@socom.mil)  
SIPR: [michael.j.forbes.mil@socom.smil.mil](mailto:michael.j.forbes.mil@socom.smil.mil)

**"In peace there's nothing so becomes a man As modest stillness and humility: But when the blast of war blows in our ears, Then imitate the action of the tiger; Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood, Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage; Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;" – William Shakespeare**

Recommended reading from LTC Hamman's farewell email to 528<sup>th</sup> staff:  
<https://fromthegreennotebook.com/2019/08/23/the-map-on-the-wall/>