

A Good Officer

There are many ideas of what a "Good Officer" is; there are many skills that make a truly excellent officer, firstly they need to be able to follow the rules as they are set out to them, without interpreting their own form of each rule and to do so without bias.

I believe one of the most important qualities for an officer to possess is compassion; many of the prisoners (woman in this case) have extremely damaged back grounds and have suffered traumatic childhoods, which require very diverse teams of officers to lead them and to lead by a good example as well.

I personally find I have come across many different kinds of officers in my time here, some officers like to treat you like you're a bad person, I know I/we have committed crimes and that is why I/we are here but to treat us in such a way, that makes you feel so much lower than the next person is not the way in which you would help a prisoner in wanting to change, to become a better person. I find if I am treated with respect I am so much more likely to act in a respectful way.

In saying that I believe for an officer to treat prisoners with mutual respect is a good quality. It will also help prisoners reform. I also believe that if a prisoner puts in a certain request and it is a viable request and is within the officer's power to help with that request, then the officer should do what they can to help with the request and not reply with a yes and then completely discard it.

It is also extremely helpful for the officer to have at least some understanding of mental health problems that so often arise in prisoners. To also be able to observe and detect when a prisoner is at risk of self-harm or suicide, and to promptly report such sightings to the relevant senior officers. Far too often these problems could have been avoided or at least helped with the right intervention.

Another quality that an officer should possess is the ability to talk with a firm yet also a calming and understanding tone of voice, far too often you end up feeling spoken down to when it is maybe not even their true intention to make you feel like that.

If I were to compile a list of desired qualities for an officer it would look as follows:

- ✦ Compassionate.
- ✦ Mutually respectful.
- ✦ Helpful.
- ✦ Able to uphold required/adequate discipline as needed.
- ✦ Able to follow rules.
- ✦ Non bias.
- ✦ Non racists
- ✦ Able to see the good in prisoners as well as the bad
- ✦ Encouraging

A lot of the time we just want someone to listen when we cry for help. I realise there are many prisoners don't even want to be helped but for the select few that do in fact want help to change our lives on a permanent basis fall through the net of help and end up staying in our same lonely scared patterns and its very disheartening when I myself truly require a lot of mental health help and just help in general life skills which if trained

Correctly the general officers could help with. I live in hope of things changing until then maybe the officers here could read this and it may inspire them to seek training and things might in fact change.