

What did he say ???

## THE ARMY IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

The story goes that in 1910 the Army chain of command worked like this:

### *Operation Halley's Comet*

A Colonel issued the following directive to an executive officer: "Tomorrow evening at approximately 2000 hours, Halley's Comet will be visible in the area, an event which occurs only once every 76 years. Have the men fall out in the battalion area in fatigues and I will explain this rare phenomenon to them. In case of rain we will not be able to see anything, so assemble the men in the theatre and I will show a film of this."

Executive officer to the Company Commander — "By order of the Colonel, Tommorrow at 2000 hours Halley's Comet will appear above the battalion area. If it rains, fall the men out in fatigues, then march them to the theater where the rare phenomenon will take place, something which occurs only every 76 years."

Company Commander to Lieutenant — "By order of the Colonel, in fatigues at 2000 hours tomorrow evening the phenomenal Halley's Comet will appear in the theater. In case of rain in the battalion area, the Colonel will give another order, one which occurs every 76 years."

Lieutenant to the Sergeant — "Tomorrow at 2000 hours, the Colonel will appear in the theater with Halley's Comet, something which happens every 76 years. If it rains, the Colonel will order the comet into the battalion area."

Sergeant to the squad — "When it rains tomorrow at 2000 hours, the phenomenal 76-year-old General Halley, accompanied by the Colonel, will drive his comet through the battalion area theater in his fatigues."

So what else is new.

Communication is the key between supervisory personnel and the man actually doing the job. Sometimes it is extremely difficult to understand how orders or instructions are so thoroughly misunderstood. There are occasions when you have been thinking about a job so much that you feel that you have told your foreman all the details and then you wonder why your orders have not been followed accurately. Also, your foreman may not fully understand, and rather than admit lack of knowledge he doesn't ask questions for clarification. A good idea would be to write down the job and its requirements and review them with the foreman to be sure that your communication has been received.

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