COMMANDING GENERAL'S

PHILOSOPHY OF COMMAND AND LEADERSHIP

Philosophies of command or leadership vary from individual to individual. They are developed over time, and like fingerprints, identify our individual traits, tell a little bit about who we are and where we have been. This short document is my effort to articulate some of those things that are personally and professionally important to me as I assume command of the Third Marine Division.

People and the Mission. Our mission is the same mission Marines have performed throughout our history--to go anywhere, on short notice and fight and win. The mission has and always will come first. However, without the people, ready, willing and able to accomplish the mission, the mission will remain undone. In order for the mission to truly come first, our Marines, Sailors and their families need to be properly taken care of in a way that allows them the confidence and freedom of action needed to accomplish the tasks they tackle every day. This requires that they be placed in positions commensurate with their skill and experience and trained to the highest degree possible. The desired end state is a force able to rapidly deploy anywhere in the world, operate successfully across the spectrum of conflict and return home to tell about it. To facilitate this end state, all Marines must be respected, mentored, encouraged and provided the proper example to follow by their leaders. Every Marine in this command has value as a human being and has the potential to be a contributing member of the command. We will do everything we can to allow everyone make the maximum contribution to the accomplishment of the mission. Hazing, "special" initiations, or any sort of mean spirited behavior is inconsistent with this end state and will not be practiced.

Teamwork. "We" is a much better word than "I." The Marine Corps is built on the foundation of teamwork and cooperation. It is the essence of our war fighting capability. From the day we first don our uniform we are taught to subordinate our personal ambitions and desires to the needs of our unit. This applies from the fire team to the Regimental level. We are all in the Third Marine Division. This is "OUR" Division, and whatever successes WE achieve will be OURS together. Only responsibility for any lack of success will be mine. There is no ME in TEAM. Membership in gangs, militias, special clubs or any other type of illegal organization is not part of our team building focus.

Plan Your Work. Everything we do must start with proper planning. We must rapidly analyze the mission, develop courses of actions and implement them. Time and money will always be in short supply, therefore, we cannot afford to go anywhere or do anything without adequately considering the options. If you want to "WIN," you cannot "just show up."

Personal and Professional Development of Marines. All leaders have an obligation to the Marines in their unit to develop their individual potential to the maximum extent possible. This is not limited to just their PME and MOS training, but also includes their personnel development as citizens of the United States. We join Marines into our ranks still in their adult formative years. We have an obligation to shape and influence all aspects of their life to include: ethical, spiritual, financial, marital, and character development. We will strive to develop the Marines of this Division into combat ready warriors, who, when their service to the Nation is complete, will return to the civilian community as loyal and patriotic American citizens prepared to take their place as productive members of society.

Inspections and Standards. It has been said, "To get what you expect, inspect." Truer words may have never been spoken. When one considers unsuccessful evolutions that we may have been party to, in most cases, the failure was due to a lack of supervision during the preparatory phase. In these instances, for whatever the reason, we did not adequately supervise and check on things our selves and in the end, our expectations were not met. All units need to have established standards of performance. Higher headquarters has already established many of these. These standards are verified and validated through inspections, formal or informal. If you do not inspect on a regular basis, whatever standards you set, either for yourself or your unit, are meaningless. The implementation of "trust tactics" does not mean leaders will abrogate their responsibility to "check on things."

Train and Maintain. We need properly functioning equipment to train and fight. Without proper maintenance this will not happen. All too often, the maintaining and training functions are separated, both in our minds and in our training schedules. These two things are inter-related and cannot be separated. We cannot train or fight if our equipment is "down." Maintenance of equipment just doesn't take place in garrison. Actions addressing maintenance must be integrated into every field operation. Proper maintenance includes pre, during and post operational checks. Maintenance, like camouflage, is continuous. Learning how to maintain our gear once we arrive in the combat zone is too late.

Ethical Behavior. We, as Marines, strive and profess to hold ourselves to a higher standard of performance and behavior than the rest of the services and certainly the rest of society. This is the expectation we have of ourselves and the nation has of its Marine Corps. It will continue to be the expectation as long as this nation desires to have a "Corps of Marines." It is also one of the primary reasons people wish to join our ranks—to be better than the rest—a cut above. Nevertheless, Marines still make mistakes. The distinction that must be drawn is between honest errors and deceitful behavior. We need to teach our Marines the difference between short cutting processes and procedures out of operational necessity and the circumvention of established standards of conduct and morality. The former is, on occasion, forgivable,and the latter is not--never. Whether or not we, as Marines, "Do the right thing," should never be questioned. Our institutional credibility demands this.

Accountability. The Marine Corps prides itself on its accountability. We are all accountable--to ourselves, to our family, to our unit and ultimately to our God. Accountability includes having the moral courage to stand up when things are not going

right and accept responsibility. A better way to accept accountability for one's actions is to consider the consequences of an act before committing it. All members of Third Marine Division will be held accountable for their actions, personal and professional. Reward and punishment will be administered accordingly and in a timely manner.

Fitness. From day one, Marines are taught to be concerned with their physical health. We have very good reasons to be fanatical about physical fitness, since the battlefield is no place for the physically weak. Everyone Marine has an obligation to be physically fit in order to function effectively on the battlefield. Physical training is something we should plan to do every day. Our immunizations and dental care are also a critical aspect of our fitness. We must be organizationally and individually focused on maintaining our medical and dental readiness. Excessive use of alcohol and tobacco are counterproductive to our health and should be avoided. **Use of illegal drugs is an unhealthy act, is contrary to being a Marine and will not be tolerated.**

Professional Fulfillment. Being a Marine is a challenging profession. It is demanding and tiring to go to the field and train hard, or to put in the hours in the office needed to do what needs to be done. Is this fun??? Some times. Is it rewarding and satisfying? Almost always. I will do all in my power to make you look forward to coming to work every day. To facilitate that I will provide feedback on the tasks you undertake—good, bad or otherwise. I ask you to share your ideas and problems with me—maybe I can help implement your proposals or provide some insight into possible solutions. I cannot do this is if I do not know what is on your mind. I will ask you to work as long and as hard as it takes to accomplish the mission—no longer and no harder. By doing all this it may be possible to raise the fun meter a few notches.

The above are some thoughts to let you know something about what my perspective is. This is not a stand-alone document. Additional letters addressing other areas of importance, such as training and expectations of performance and behavior, will supplement it. Eventually, the Division will publish a campaign plan that will provide guidance and direction on the way ahead as we collectively undertake the task of fulfilling the demanding missions assigned to this command.

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