



MCWP 6-10

Leading Marines



U.S. Marine Corps

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FOREWORD

Since our 30th Commandant, General Carl E. Mundy, first published *Leading Marines* in 1995, it has positively impacted Marines throughout our Marine Corps. It has generated spirited discussions about what it means to be a Marine and how to lead Marines and is the base document for the leadership curriculum in all our resident schools. Our leadership philosophy, as described in this publication, is in consonance with our rich and storied past.

That said, the time has come to update *Leading Marines*. As Marines, we lead by example, often instilling values using stories. During the past 20 years of continuous combat, Marines have added to our legacy, some of their stories superbly illustrating our leadership philosophy. You'll recognize many of those stories herein. We speak in this publication about those timeless attributes that form the soul of our Corps; those attributes that carried Marines forward through the wheat fields of Belleau Wood to the strongholds of Fallujah and Marjah. Additionally, our core values, leadership traits, and leadership principles are given added emphasis in this edition. The intent of this revision is to better describe our timeless leadership philosophy.

Simply put, this publication describes the leadership philosophy that distinguishes the U.S. Marine Corps. This publication is not

meant to be a “how to” guide on leadership, rather, it provides broad guidance in the form of concepts and values.

Additionally, *Leading Marines* is not designed as a reference manual; it is meant to be read from cover to cover. Its three chapters have a natural progression. Chapter 1 describes our ethos—who we are and what we do for our Nation. Building on that understanding, Chapter 2 covers the foundations of Marine Corps leadership and Chapter 3 addresses overcoming leadership challenges.

Once you read this publication, I charge you to discuss it with your peers, subordinates, and seniors. As General Mundy laid out in his foreword to the original publication in 1995, leading Marines is the most important responsibility in our Corps, and thus, we must educate the heart and mind to prevail across the battlespace and in the barracks, in war, and in peace.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric M. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

ERIC M. SMITH

General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps

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LEADING MARINES

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Introduction

To effectively lead Marines, we must first understand what it is to be a Marine; we need to know who we are and what we do for our Nation. Our core values and traditions lie at the heart of our Marine Corps ethos and form the basis of the first chapter. The second chapter focuses on the foundations of Marine Corps leadership—the relationship between the leader and the led and the leadership traits and principles taught to every Marine—and addresses morale, discipline, and courage. The third chapter describes some of the challenges to leading in uncertain conditions and how to overcome them.

The act of leading Marines is a sacred responsibility that cannot be perfected. As Marines, and leaders of Marines, we must perpetually seek to better ourselves and be deliberate in our leadership. This publication describes a leadership philosophy, a way of thinking, which speaks to who we are as Marines. It is rooted in the bond between the leader and the led and cemented in common experiences and shared hardships. It is through this bond, forged in the foundry of combat, training, and deployments, that the undefinable spirit and character of our Corps was born.

MCWP 6-10, Leading Marines

Leading Marines is not meant to be read passively; as you read this publication, think about the material. Reflect on, discuss, and apply the concepts presented in this publication. Furthermore, leaders at all levels are responsible for mentoring and developing the next generation of Marine leaders. The goal of this manual is to capture the heritage of the Marine Corps' leadership approach. It is not prescriptive because there is no formula for leadership. It is not all-inclusive because to capture all that it is to be a Marine or to lead Marines defies pen and paper. Instead, it is intended to provide those charged with leading Marines a sense of the legacy they have inherited, and to help them come to terms with their own personal leadership style.

Chapter 1

Our Ethos

Resolved, that two Battalions of marines be raised...that particular care be taken that no persons be appointed to office or [e]nlisted into said Battalions, but such as are good seamen, or so acquainted with maritime affairs as to be able to serve to advantage by sea, when required...That they be distinguished by the names of the first and second battalions of American Marines.¹

—Second Continental Congress on 10 November 1775

For the mission's sake, for our country's sake, and the sake of the men who carried the Division's colors in past battles—"who fought for life and never lost their nerve"—carry out your mission and keep your honor clean. Demonstrate to the world there is "No Better Friend—No Worse Enemy" than a U.S. Marine.²

—General James N. Mattis



World War II-era Marine Corps Birthday Poster

Before there was a United States, there was a Marine Corps. The Marine Corps legacy began with a resolution of the Second Continental Congress on 10 November 1775 and continues through today. Our predecessors passed down the rich heritage that shaped each succeeding generation of Marines.

Knowing who we are as Marines is essential to understanding how we lead Marines. Marines come from all walks of life, but being a Marine transcends our differences. Being a Marine is not a job or a particular occupational specialty. It is a calling. It is a state of mind ingrained in the eagle, globe, and anchor tattooed on

the soul of everyone who has worn the cloth. It is a mark seared in our innermost being that comes after the rite of passage in boot camp, whether at Parris Island or San Diego, or initial officer training at Quantico—when young men and women earn the title *Marine*. Once they undergo the transformation, they become Marines for life.

Sergeant Major John Canley

The story of retired Sergeant Major John Canley, Medal of Honor recipient, illustrates the life-long impact of serving in the Marine Corps. Canley was awarded the US military's highest distinction in October 2018 for actions at the Battle of Hue City while serving as the Company Gunnery Sergeant of Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division. In multiple instances from January 31 to February 6, 1968, Sergeant Major Canley disregarded his



Sergeant Major John Canley

own welfare to ensure his Marines' safety and mission accomplishment. After his company commander was severely wounded, Canley took charge of the company and fought off numerous vicious enemy attacks. While under Canley's charge, the company took critical objectives in Hue City in a grueling, week-long battle. Despite being wounded, Canley rushed through

enemy fire to carry multiple wounded Marines to safety. He inspired courage in his Marines throughout the course of the fight. Sergeant Major Canley was awarded the Medal of Honor 50 years after his actions in Vietnam. After receiving the award, he traveled to Marine Corps installations worldwide to speak with Marines about his experiences and leadership.³

*You've got to take care of your Marines. If they come to you with a problem, you need to take care of that...if you take care of your Marines, they will do everything in their power to make sure the mission is accomplished.*⁴

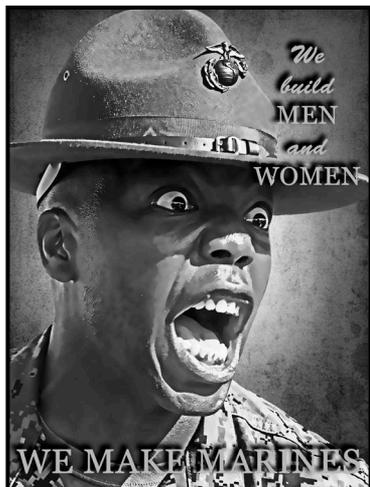
—Sergeant Major John Canley

Being a Marine is being part of something larger than oneself. There is a spirit—an *esprit*—that defines our Corps. To understand what it means to be a Marine, one must first understand how we make Marines, instilling and abiding by the core values of honor, courage, and commitment. As a Marine leader, we must also understand our naval character and expeditionary mindset, our philosophy that every Marine is a rifleman, and our commitment to selfless service, all of which are in keeping with Marine tradition.

MAKING MARINES: THE TRANSFORMATION

A sense of elitism has grown “...from the fact that every Marine, whether enlisted or officer, goes through the same training experience. Both the training of recruits and the basic education of officers—going back to 1805—have endowed the Corps with a sense of cohesiveness enjoyed by no other American service.”⁵

Every Service recruits young men and women from our society. The difference with Marines is we don't rely on bonuses and benefits to attract the best. We offer a challenge. We ask, "Do you have what it takes to be a Marine?" Not, "What can the Marine Corps do for you?" We then send those who accept the challenge to Parris Island, San Diego, or Quantico, where they receive more than just superb training; they are ingrained with a shared sense of service, honor, and discipline. The result is remarkable. Those who have what it takes undergo a personal transformation so incredible that often their parents have difficulty recognizing them. A mother of a Marine described it this way:



The Transformation is Tangible.

When my son left home, he had no motivation; he was lazy, sloppy, [and had] no pride, no self-worth. This is the boy that got off the bus March 18th at Parris Island. The man that I met on Thursday...is AWESOME. There is no way I can describe to you all the difference. He looks different, he walks different, he talks different, he has such a sense of bearing and pride all I could do was look at him in awe. Oh yes, the training is hard, what he went through is unimaginable to anyone that has not been there. They are definitely taught to

be Warriors. Let me tell you the surprise of what else they are taught. My Marine son has better values, better morals, better manners than [anyone] I know. It is so much more than Yes Sir; Yes [Ma'am] ...so much more. He cares about how he looks, he cares about what he does, and [it's] not a boastful, bad-ass thing. He is a true gentleman. I saw patience, and a calmness in him that I have never seen. I could never express my gratitude enough to the Marine Corps for what they have given my son.⁶

Those who make it through boot camp or initial officer training win our Nation's battles and return to society as better citizens. The Corps' history is full of tales of courage that exhibit the indomitable spirit of Marines in combat and in surmounting day-to-day challenges — Sergeant Major Dan Daly, Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone, Lieutenant General "Chesty" Puller, Colonel John Glenn, Captain Vernice Armour, Private First Class James Anderson, Jr., Corporal Jason Dunham, Sergeant Dakota Meyer, Corporal Kyle Carpenter, Sergeant Major John Canley, Private First Class Oscar Austin, Sergeant Barbara Barnwell, and countless others. You, as a Marine leader, have the responsibility to sustain that transformation.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our motto is *Semper Fidelis*, Always Faithful. We are faithful to our Nation, the Corps, and to each other. This is not blind faith; it is a faith guided by our values. As Marines, we share the core values of honor, courage, and commitment. As much as anything else, our core values set us apart. They give us strength, influence

our attitudes, and regulate our behavior. They bind all Marines into a band of brothers and sisters who can meet any challenge. Living these values make us better citizens when we return to a society that sometimes questions our values. Many Marines realize this when they go home for the first time and notice they are different.

Honor. Honor is the bedrock of our character. It is the quality that guides Marines to exemplify the ultimate in ethical and moral behavior; to never lie, cheat, or steal; to abide by an uncompromising concept of integrity; to respect human dignity; to have concern for each other. The quality of maturity, dedication, trust, and dependability that commits Marines to act responsibly, to be accountable for actions, to fulfill obligations, and to hold others accountable for their actions.

Courage. Courage is the heart of our core values. It is the mental, moral, and physical strength the Corps engrains in Marines to carry them through the challenges of combat and mastering their fear, doing what is right in every situation, adhering to a higher standard of personal conduct, leading by example, and making tough decisions under pressure. It is the inner strength that enables Marines to take that extra step.

Commitment. Commitment is the spirit of determination and dedication in Marines that leads to professionalism and mastery of the art of war. It leads to the highest order of unit and self-discipline; it is the ingredient that enables 24-hour-a-day dedication to Corps and Country, pride, concern for others, and the unrelenting determination to achieve a standard of excellence

in every endeavor. Commitment is what establishes a Marine as the warrior and citizen others strive to emulate.

It takes time for Marines to internalize these values and it is a leader's responsibility to live, demonstrate, and instill them in their subordinates.

NAVAL CHARACTER AND EXPEDITIONARY MINDSET

Ours is a world ideally suited for employing warriors from the sea. Its past and potential future battlegrounds are mainly the coastal regions that comprise the world's littorals. Marines must be skilled and trained with an expeditionary focus that positions our warfighters to fight and win while persisting within striking distance of our enemy.

We are a naval expeditionary force capable of deterring malign behavior and, when necessary, fighting inside our adversary's weapons-engagement-zone to facilitate sea denial in support of fleet operation and joint force horizontal escalation. Nothing could be more relevant to the [National Defense Strategy] and the certainty of an uncertain future than this.⁷

—General David H. Berger

The Marine Corps' naval character has shaped the Marine Corps since the Corps' inception. Our naval character makes us different because it combines the characteristics of Soldiers and Sailors with the unyielding conviction that we exist to fight. The historic partnership between the Navy and the Marine Corps is a heritage that continues today. The anchor in our emblem symbolizes that

the individual Marine remains a soldier of the sea. Marine officers are “naval” officers, and our pilots are “naval” aviators. Marines have always served aboard ships, and the Marine Corps has been part of the Department of the Navy since 1834.

As early as 1798, the Secretary of the Navy noted the Corps’ missions were of an amphibious nature. Though early Marines served primarily aboard ships as part of the ship’s company, they always had a secondary role to serve as expeditionary forces, whenever or wherever needed. Marine Captain Samuel Nicholas’ amphibious expedition to New Providence Island in the Bahamas in 1776 and Marine Lieutenant Presley O’Bannon’s 1804 landing in Tripoli were the first deployments of US forces on foreign soil. Since then, Marines have conducted expeditionary and sustained operations ashore in Cuba, Panama, the Philippines, Haiti, China, France, the Pacific, Korea, Lebanon, Vietnam, Grenada, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Iraq, and scores of other places.



Marines Landing on New Providence



Marines with Battalion Landing Team 3/5, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, depart from a CH-53E Super Stallion to conduct a maritime interdiction operation training exercise aboard the USS Germantown.

Although specific missions differ, what remains constant is our unyielding commitment to protect the lives of our citizens and interests of the United States. Our purpose, mandated by Congress, is to be the Nation’s signature crisis response force. As such, we *“must be most ready when the Nation...is least ready.”*⁸

As you read this, there are Marines stationed overseas and forward deployed. Some are guarding embassies, others are afloat, and still others are conducting operations ashore. To Marines, being expeditionary is more than the mere ability to deploy overseas when needed. It is an institutional imperative

that drives us to rapidly deploy and operate on arrival. Often deploying to austere environments, Marines bring whatever they need to accomplish the mission, including the means to fight if necessary.

This expeditionary mindset is the most critical contributor to the Corps' success in crisis responses and complex contingencies. Marine leaders have deliberately cultivated this mindset for generations. It is this mindset that generates combat power and the organizational flexibility to accomplish diverse missions around the world. It has created an expeditionary culture that emphasizes being fast, austere, and lethal.

EVERY MARINE A RIFLEMAN

The deadliest weapon in the world is a Marine and his rifle.

—General John “Black Jack” Pershing, US Army⁹

Our role as an expeditionary force in readiness requires making every Marine a rifleman first. Before we teach Marines to fly aircraft, drive vehicles, maintain equipment, or any of the other skills necessary in a combat-ready Marine Corps, we teach them to shoot accurately. Then we teach them basic infantry skills. During expeditionary operations, no Marine is far from the fighting; there are no “rear area Marines.” All units are capable of defending themselves and, when necessary, fighting as provisional infantry.

Captain Henry “Hank” Elrod

Every Marine a rifleman is not a new concept. The first Marine aviator to earn the Medal of Honor in World War II, Captain Henry “Hank” Elrod, was a fighter pilot with Marine Fighting Squadron-211, or VMF-211. He arrived on Wake Island 4 December 1941 and four days later was fighting the Japanese in the air. On 12 December, he singlehandedly attacked a flight of 22 enemy planes, downing two of them. Additionally, he conducted several low-altitude bombing and strafing runs on enemy ships. During one of these attacks, he sank the Japanese destroyer Kisaragi. When hostile fire eventually destroyed all US aircraft on Wake Island, he assumed command of part of the ground defense. In this role, he was responsible in large measure for the strength of his sector’s gallant resistance as he and his Marines valiantly repulsed numerous Japanese attacks. On 23 December, Captain Elrod was mortally wounded while protecting his men as they carried ammunition to a gun emplacement.¹⁰

Note: Nearly 71 years later, during an attack on Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, the following three Marines from the same squadron (redesignated Marine Attack Squadron-211 or VMA-211) would once again prove every Marine is a rifleman.

Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Raible

On the night of 14 September 2012, fifteen heavily armed Taliban insurgents dressed in US Army uniforms breached the eastern perimeter of Camp Bastion. The insurgents split into three teams of five each and commenced a coordinated attack on the airfield. Realizing the flight line was under attack, the VMA-211 commander, Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Raible, armed only

with his pistol, organized his pinned-down Marines into fire teams for a counterattack. During the fighting, he was mortally wounded when a rocket propelled grenade detonated next to him.¹¹

Sergeant Bradley Atwell

During the attack on the airfield, Sergeant Bradley Atwell, an avionics technician, immediately directed his Marines to grab their rifles and accompany him. Leading his Marines, Sergeant Atwell ran toward the aircraft and structural fires visible along the flight line as tracer rounds ricocheted between him and his Marines. “While continuing to press forward along the edge of the aircraft parking area, [he] became separated from the others when a rocket propelled grenade exploded approximately three meters from his position, knocking him down with mortal injuries. Sergeant Atwell crawled to cover and returned fire in the direction of the enemy until succumbing to his wounds.”¹²

Major Robb T. McDonald

Meanwhile, the squadron executive officer, Major Robb T. McDonald, and two other officers maneuvered more than a mile on foot through an area exposed to enemy fire. When his commanding officer was mortally wounded, Major McDonald took command. While leading a small team to reconnoiter the flight line, he killed an insurgent with a rifle he had borrowed and then expertly coordinated two helicopter strikes. Additionally, Marines from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-161, or VMM-161, killed one group of five insurgents with small arms fire as the enemy tried to advance along the flight line. After a four-hour firefight, Marine aviators and maintenance personnel, and personnel from Number 51 Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment defeated the enemy.¹³

Marines fight as riflemen with such regularity that non-Marines are often surprised to learn there are any specialties in the Corps other than infantry. This perception is part of what makes the Corps exceptional.

FAITHFULNESS TO NATION, CORPS, AND EACH OTHER

There is almost nothing more precious to a Marine than a fellow Marine. This traditional bond flows from the rigorous training that all Marines receive and the shared danger and adversity inherent in combat operations. This bond and the sense of duty instilled in every Marine is not merely a trait Marines demonstrate during combat. Marines must remain true to our character when in garrison and on leave, and fight to keep our honor clean beyond the battlefield.

First Sergeant Bradley Kasal

First Sergeant Bradley Kasal demonstrated faithfulness to our Nation and to our Corps as the Weapons Company First Sergeant, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines during Operation Phantom Fury. On 13 November 2004, First Sergeant Kasal was assisting the Combined Anti-Armor Team (CAAT) Platoon in providing a traveling overwatch for 3d Platoon, Company K, while they cleared in zone.

While 3d Squad and the CAAT Squad were clearing a building, an explosion of gunfire rang out across the street, and they saw wounded members of an adjacent platoon racing out of a building to their immediate front. They quickly learned that other Marines were still pinned down in the house by an unknown number of

insurgents. Being short of sufficient personnel to make an entry and clear the structure, the 3d Squad leader asked the CAAT Squad for assistance with clearing the building. Without hesitation, First Sergeant Kasal volunteered. He led the squad into the house, suppressing and killing many of the enemy, who were fighting from hardened positions.

After clearing the first room, First Sergeant Kasal and two other Marines saw a wounded Marine two rooms away. Entering the first of the two rooms, First Sergeant Kasal immediately confronted, engaged, and killed an insurgent. The three Marines received heavy enemy fire as soon as they entered the second room. First Sergeant Kasal and another Marine were both struck in the legs, becoming urgent casualties. From above, the enemy began throwing grenades on the wounded Marines below.

Selflessly, First Sergeant Kasal rolled on top of the other Marine to shield him. After reinforcements arrived, First Sergeant Kasal, with seven gunshot and five fragmentation wounds, refused aid until the other Marines were extracted. He continued to shout words of encouragement to his Marines while he engaged the enemy. Seven wounded men were medically evacuated from the building before First Sergeant Kasal.

Later, as First Sergeant Kasal was put into the CASEVAC (casualty evacuation) helicopter, he grabbed his battalion commander by the flak jacket and implored him to take care of the Marines. First Sergeant Kasal could have remained outside the building, coordinating support and the medical evacuation. Instead, he chose to face the enemy alongside his Marines.¹⁴



Lance Corporal Chris Marquez, First Sergeant Bradley Kasal, and Lance Corporal Dan Shaeffer in Fallujah 2004. (Photo courtesy of photographer Lucian Read.)

Sergeant Austin Cox and Sergeant Michael Vura

On 1 October 2017, Sergeants Austin Cox and Michael Vura were attending the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada when a lone gunman opened fire on the crowd from a nearby high-rise hotel. The helicopter mechanics and best friends from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Training Squadron 303 were celebrating Vura's pending end of active service when the shooting started.

The Marines' faithfulness to each other and to those around them was immediately evident as they ran toward the sounds of chaos. Both Marines exposed themselves to gunfire multiple times with

disregard to their personal safety as they gave first aid to multiple shooting victims and pulled victims from the line of fire where they could safely be treated.¹⁵ The actions of these Marines saved lives that day and for that they were awarded the highest non-combat decoration awarded for heroism by the Department of the Navy—the Navy and Marine Corps Medal.

*...being instilled in you from the get-go...as soon as you step on them yellow footprints...your whole mind-set...changes. And every day as a Marine, I think that you need to challenge yourself, find your purpose. And that day it just happened to be my purpose was to help others.*¹⁶

—Sergeant Michael Vura

First Sergeant Kasal and Sergeants Cox and Vura epitomize the Marine ethos of faithfulness to nation, Corps, and each other, which Marines continue to demonstrate in countless ways and in countless places. It is a part of who we are.

MARINE TRADITIONS

*There is nothing particularly glorious about sweaty fellows going along to fight. And yet they represent a great deal more than individuals mustered into a division. There is something behind those men: the old battles, long forgotten, that secured our [N]ation...traditions of things endured, and things accomplished such as regiments hand down forever...*¹⁷

—Captain John W. Thomason, Jr.

Marine traditions are an inseparable part of who we are as Marines. Ordinary men and women, who showed extraordinary leadership and physical and moral courage shaped and continue to shape our heritage. Separately and collectively, our traditions set us apart from other fighting forces and are the cement that bonds the Marine Corps together and gives Marines a common outlook regardless of rank, unit, or billet. Our traditions transcend the individual and are shared by all Marines.

Marines believe they should be where the fight is. In 1983, a Marine survivor of the terrorist bombing in Beirut stood amid the rubble, carnage, and despair surrounding his fallen comrades, barraged by questions from news reporters. “Should you be here? Should anyone be here? Should the United States pull out?” The young lance corporal’s answer was straightforward: “Where else should I be? I’m a United States Marine. If anyone must be here, it should be Marines.”

Lance Corporal Jeffrey Nashton

Lance Corporal Jeffrey Nashton had been gravely wounded during the Beirut bombing and was evacuated to a hospital in Wiesbaden, Germany unable to talk or see. He was visited by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Paul X. Kelley, who stooped beside the Marine to say a few words of comfort. The Lance Corporal reached up to feel the stars to make sure that the man talking to him was who he claimed to be. Unable to see or speak, weak from a concussion and other injuries, the young Marine motioned for something with which to write. He could have written anything; he could have asked for anything. Instead, he wrote, “Semper Fi”—Always Faithful. He was concerned more about his Corps and his fellow Marines than himself.¹⁸



Aftermath of Beirut Bombing, October 1983.

Individual Marines like these feed our Corps' spirit. Stories about the deeds of their predecessors are told to Marines from their first day of training to their first assignments, to their first celebration of the Marine Corps birthday and beyond. The spirit of the Marine Corps is sustained as today's Marines step forward to take their places. These Marines give meaning to the phrases, "Semper Fidelis," "uncommon valor," "every Marine a rifleman," and "first to fight."

Marine traditions manifest themselves in other ways as well. Our language reflects our naval heritage, while our birthday, hymn, and uniforms set the Corps apart from other military services.

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Much of our distinct language comes from our naval roots. Marines refer to bathrooms as heads, floors as decks, ceilings as overheads, walls as bulkheads, and corridors as passageways. We respond to verbal orders with “aye, aye,” acknowledging that we both understand and will comply with the command. Other terms are also steeped in lore. The term *Leatherneck* comes from the stiff leather collar worn by Marines from 1798 to 1872.¹⁹

Every Marine knows the birth date of the Corps. November 10th is a day of celebration and reflection for all Marines, in and out of



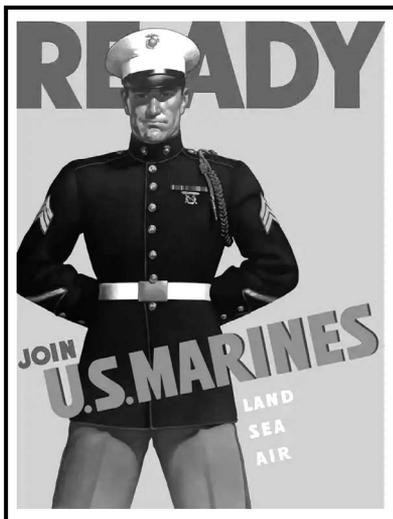
Korea, 10 November 1951. Battle weary Marines of the 1st Marine Division take time out to celebrate the Marine Corps' 176th birthday. The Leathernecks used a bayonet to slice the ceremonial cake.

uniform. For some, the day is celebrated with a special meal, the cutting of a cake, and the reading of Major General John A. Lejeune's message as part of a birthday ball. For others, the day is marked with the cutting of an MRE [meal, ready to eat] pound cake with a Ka-Bar fighting knife during a lull in the action. And for still others, it's phone calls and messages sent to former squad mates to wish them "Happy Birthday, Marine."

Among the nation's six Armed Forces, five have Service songs; only the Marine Corps has a hymn. Long before it became fashionable to stand for all Service songs, Marines always stood when the hymn was played. To this day, Marines stand at attention and sing as the hymn of their Corps is played.²⁰ There is a physical and emotional reaction as the Marines' Hymn is played or sung—the back straightens, the chest swells, shoulders move rearward, and a tingle runs along a Marine's spine—because Marines are different.

A moment in time at the Chosin Reservoir is a testament to the power of the Marines' Hymn. The 1st Marine Division had been embattled amid the snows from the moment the column struck its camp at Hagaru-ri. By midnight, after heavy losses through the day, the commanding general, Major General Oliver P. Smith, was alone in his tent at Koto-ri, mulling about it being his worst moment. The task ahead seemed hopeless. Suddenly he heard music. Outside some Marines, on their way to a warming tent were singing the Marines' Hymn. "All doubt left me," said Smith. "I knew then we had it made."²¹

Our uniforms are also rich in history and tradition. Marine officers carry the Mameluke sword, which the governor of Derna, Tripoli presented to Marine Lieutenant Presley O'Bannon in 1805. Our noncommissioned officers carry the next oldest weapon in our inventory, the Marine Corps noncommissioned officer's sword, which dates to 1859. Of course, there is no more distinctive uniform than dress blues.



From the *quatrefoil* on the officer's cover to the eagle, globe, and anchor on the collar to the blood stripes on the trousers, dress blues are steeped in history. It is not just the uniforms themselves that set Marines apart; it is the proud and disciplined manner in which we wear them. The 24th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr. received a letter from a friend of the Corps that described, as well as anyone could, the importance Marines place on their uniform and in setting the example:

Recently I was in an air terminal. Most military people there presented a pretty sloppy appearance—coats unbuttoned, ties loosened, etc. There was a Marine corporal in uniform who was just the opposite. I spoke to the Marine and pointed out the difference to him. I asked him why it was so. His answer was: "The Marines don't do that."²²

Whether it is our language, birthday, hymn, or uniform, Marine Corps traditions run deep. They are an integral part of who we are. Knowing who we are and what we represent is essential to understanding how we lead Marines.

Our history is filled with stories of Marine heroes and role models from every clime and place. Every Marine's unique capabilities and individual talents contribute to the Corps and make us stronger together. Civilians and members of the other Services know Marines as innovators who often do more with less. Marines like Captain Vernice Armour exemplify the kind of determination and dedication to service that amplifies our ethos, inspires others, and solidifies our common bonds.

Captain Vernice Armour

From the moment Captain Vernice Armour saw a woman in a flight suit, she became interested in aviation. After graduating college, she became a Nashville police officer, but she never lost



Captain Vernice Armour

her interest in flying. “I realized I could always be a cop” Armour said, “but I [wouldn’t] always have a chance to be a combat pilot.” She followed in the footsteps of her grandfather, a Monfort Point Marine and World War II veteran, and her stepfather, a Marine who served in Vietnam, and joined the Marine Corps to become a pilot. Captain Armour earned her wings in July 2001, graduating number one in her class, earning a spot on the Naval Air Station’s prestigious Commodore’s list, and receiving the Academic Achievement Award. Captain Armour then flew combat missions in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, making her the first African-American female combat pilot of all the Services. “My number one goal,” Armour said, “was to be the best pilot I could be up there in the air to protect and serve my brothers and sisters on the ground.”²³

Chapter 2

Foundations of Leadership

*Leaders must have a strong sense of the great responsibility of their office; the resources they will expend in war are human lives.*²⁴

—MCDP 1, Warfighting

The following excerpt from Marine Corps Order Number 29, published 14 August 1920, applies to all Marine Corps leaders—past, present, and future.

*...Marines respond quickly and readily to the exhibition of qualities of leadership on the part of their [seniors]. Each [leader] must endeavor by all means in [his/her] power to develop... those qualities of leadership, including industry, justice, self-control, unselfishness, honor, and courage...*²⁵

—Major General John A. Lejeune

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERS AND THEIR MARINES

Marine leaders are responsible for the physical, mental, and moral welfare of those in their charge.²⁶ They are justifiably proud when their Marines succeed, and they help them up when they fall short. Engagement between leaders and their Marines is vital to the *esprit de corps* and a strong bond between the leader and the led. In the field, junior Marines eat first, followed by the noncommissioned officers, staff noncommissioned officers, and finally, the officers. This is a simple example of how leaders put the well-being, personal, and professional development of their Marines ahead of their own. The foundation of this relationship is simple: know your Marines and look out for their welfare.

Leaders of Marines assume an awesome responsibility that requires preparation. First, leaders must be of good character as defined by our core values and leadership traits. Second, leaders must learn and understand how to lead by applying the leadership principles. Third, leaders learn through experience—both their own experiences and the lessons learned from the experiences of those who came before.

LEADERSHIP TRAITS

Effective Marine Corps leaders possess certain character traits. Developing character begins in boot camp and basic officer training and continues throughout a Marine's career. The development of Marine Corps leaders builds upon our core values

with 15 time-tested leadership traits. Memorizing the leadership traits using the mnemonic JJ DID TIE BUCKLEE is just the beginning. Good leaders develop and sustain these traits in themselves and their Marines, and these traits bear directly on the quality of our leadership. Each trait is important, and the lack of development in one or more of the traits makes for imbalanced and ineffective leaders.



Leadership Traits in “JJ DID TIE BUCKLEE” Order.

Leaders who possess the trait of *justice* gain the trust and respect of subordinates by displaying fairness and impartiality. Leaders display *judgment* by making sound decisions. *Dependable* leaders can be counted on to carry out an assigned task. Leaders show *initiative* by adapting when the situation changes. *Decisive* leaders give orders clearly, forcefully, and promptly. *Tactful*

leaders treat everyone with respect and courtesy and possess the ability to handle difficult situations with respect and decorum. Leaders embody *integrity* by being truthful and honest. Leaders build *enthusiasm* by displaying exuberance in the performance of their duties. Marines with good *bearing* look, talk, and act like leaders. *Unselfish* leaders take care of their Marines first. *Courageous* leaders do what is right despite physical danger or potential criticism. *Knowledgeable* leaders are technically and tactically proficient. *Loyal* leaders, guided by Marine Corps core values, are faithful to their country, Corps, unit, seniors, peers, and subordinates. Leaders who possess both the physical and mental stamina to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, and hardship will *endure*. *Empathy* is having a genuine interest in the lives of your Marines, the challenges they face, and their overall well-being. Good leaders strive to understand the challenges and stressors their Marines are going through in order to effectively provide support.

Instilling these traits allows Marines to lead with honor under trying circumstances and embody the phrase “Mission first, Marines always.”

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Our Nation’s citizens expect unwavering moral conduct and sound ethical decisions from Marine Corps leaders. This is what makes us “The Few.” However, being of good character is not enough to lead Marines. Men and women of character must learn how to lead. In addition to character, Marine leaders are guided by 11 leadership principles. These principles are generally self-

explanatory; however, to truly understand them, one must first examine, discuss, and study them. This can be accomplished through ethical and tactical decision exercises, vignettes, and sea stories. Effective leaders then apply these principles to their lives and decision making.

Marine Corps Leadership Principles

Know yourself and seek self-improvement.

Be technically and tactically proficient.

Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates.

Make sound and timely decisions.

Set the example.

Know your Marines and look out for their welfare.

Keep your Marines informed.

Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.

Ensure tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished.

Train your Marines as a team.

Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities.



MORALE

Morale is a state of mind. It is that intangible force that will influence a Marine to give his or her last ounce of effort to achieve success, regardless of the cost. It is the quality that enables Marines to endure and be courageous in times of fatigue and danger. Although morale is a complex and intangible quality, it must have a solid basis in leadership, discipline, and comradeship. Many factors contribute to a Marine's morale, including confidence in leadership and equipment, effective communication, promotion opportunities, and knowing their needs will be met. Perhaps the greatest contributor to high morale is *esprit de corps*.

Major General Lejeune wrote that, "*Esprit de corps* and morale are kindred subjects."²⁷ As leaders develop the individual Marine's morale, leaders must also develop the unit's *esprit de corps*—the common spirit that bonds all members of a unit through shared devotion and loyalty to their unit and fellow Marines. Leaders develop this sense of camaraderie and purpose by instilling in their Marines a deep regard for the unit's history, traditions, and honor. *Esprit de corps* expresses the unit's will to fight and win despite seemingly insurmountable odds, such as the unit *esprit* and fighting spirit demonstrated by the 1st Marine Division during November and December 1950.

Marines at the Chosin Reservoir

After 12 divisions of Chinese forces surged across the border into North Korea, the 1st Marine Division quickly became surrounded

at Yudam-ni, near the Chosin Reservoir. The 5th and 7th Marines were ordered to breakout to the south. They fought their way to a hastily built airstrip and command post at Hagaru-ri, to Colonel Chesty Puller's headquarters at Koto-ri, and to the port at Hungnam harbor. Over a harrowing two-week period, the Marines fought day and night against not only the Chinese, but the terrain and conditions as well—treacherous mountains, the frozen reservoir itself (which many had to cross on foot), snow-packed roads, and below-freezing temperatures. The 1st Marine Division, Reinforced, fought at least nine and quite possibly all 12 enemy divisions, inflicting major losses. The Marines suffered heavy losses, with more than 4,400 killed, missing, and wounded, and twice as many suffering from frostbite. Ten Marines were awarded the Medal of



**Marines March South from Koto-ri After
Fighting Their Way Through the Mountains.**

Honor for their actions in this battle. As Lieutenant Colonel Raymond Davis led the battle-worn 1st Battalion, 7th Marines into the Hagaru-ri perimeter, despite all they had witnessed and experienced, they were singing the Marines' Hymn.²⁸

DISCIPLINE

Marine Corps discipline is the state of order and obedience that functions with or without external pressure or supervision as the result of good training and intelligent leadership. Discipline is not a collection of regulations, punishments, or a state of subservience. It is not blind obedience. Discipline is executing orders out of intelligent, willing obedience rather than obedience based solely on habit or fear of reprisal. Good leaders know that intelligent and willing obedience to orders often depends on Marines understanding the “why” of those orders.

That is not to say that leaders always have the luxury of time to explain the intent to their Marines. When time permits, however, it is always prudent to explain the purpose of an order, because when Marines know why they are doing something, they are more committed and can adapt to changing circumstances. Habit also plays a part in discipline, which is why training includes immediate action drills, close order drill, and gun drills. Additionally, although punishment for breaches of discipline is sometimes necessary, it occurs only when demanded by good order and discipline.

Leaders are responsible for establishing the discipline necessary to produce orderly, coordinated action, which triumphs over the fear, fog, and friction of battle. Well-disciplined units perform well in combat. Conversely, poorly disciplined units suffer in combat. The experience of Colonel John Ripley in Vietnam illustrated that, as he later reported, “really bad units were the ones that lost magazines. My battalion had to relieve a battalion at Con Thien because they ran out of magazines. We lost Marines doing that. My Marines were lost because another battalion had such poor discipline—losing their magazines.”²⁹

The key to discipline is establishing and maintaining standards. Volumes have been written about combat leadership and discipline, but Marines most often practice leadership and discipline in garrison, in training, and in the barracks. Leaders must establish and inculcate standards well before combat. The commanding officer of 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, Lieutenant Colonel Bryan P. McCoy, communicated clear standards of discipline to his Marines prior to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The “Discipline” vignette on the next page contains a section from his expectations that he used when talking to his leaders to ensure they clearly understood his intent.

Discipline

- Do not allow graffiti on uniforms, do-rags, wristbands, or other forms of jackassery, period.
- Pre-Combat Checks and Inspections and Post-Combat Checks and Inspections are SOP [standing operating procedures] and are at the *very heart* of leadership. This is a *basic habit*. They are called Pre-Combat Checks and Inspections for a reason; they are not Pre-Combat questions and assumptions. Leaders at the squad level carry out Checks and Inspections; platoon commanders and platoon sergeants verify—*no exceptions*.
- *Prescribed Load*: Allow no deviations from the prescribed load and basic uniform—*ever*. Deviations are conscious decisions by a commanding officer based on analysis of the situation, *not* personal whims. At a minimum, Marines and Sailors will have their gas mask and weapons on their bodies *at all times*.
- Helmets, when worn, will have the chinstrap on the chin; otherwise, it will not stay on when needed most. Allowing a Marine to wear a helmet without a chinstrap is making the Marine wear useless weight on his head and is a leadership failure.
- *Communications discipline*: Enforce proper reporting and communications procedure. Use of “pro-words” (standardized radio jargon), reporting formats, and proper radio checks cut down on traffic and confusion.
- *Light discipline*: Will be strictly enforced. Use of flashlights in the open, smoking and vehicle headlights from dusk to dawn is a commanding officer’s decision, not one of personal convenience. We have Night Vision Devices (NVDs); use them. There is seldom a reason to break light discipline.
- *Hygiene discipline*: Disease will cause casualties and rob units of combat power faster than the enemy could ever hope to do. Prior to eating chow in the field, squad leaders will inspect their squads for proper hygiene, clean hands, clean weapons, and the prescribed uniforms. Poor hygiene will rob us of combat power. All Marines and Sailors will perform hygiene every day, shaving, and brushing teeth at a minimum, with periodic foot inspections by leaders. Hand washing is mandatory and monitored. Leaders at the squad level check; platoon commanders and platoon sergeants verify—*no exceptions*.³⁰

The combat success of 3d Battalion, 4th Marines fighting from Kuwait to Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom was due in no small measure to the standards set and maintained both prior to and after crossing the line of departure. Discipline has been essential to success in combat throughout the Corps' history. Our noncommissioned officers are critical to maintaining discipline. In 1960, Corporal Gary C. Cooper described it this way:

[I]f effective leadership is evident and functioning, we are strong and ready. If we are well disciplined, of high morale, possess an unquenchable unit spirit, and are efficient, we are the best in the business.

*Strive to create discipline in yourself and your Marines. Encourage high morale, foster esprit, and train for efficiency. You may never win the Medal of Honor, you may never be cited for your outstanding example, but you will have an inner satisfaction that comes only to those [who] give their all. Then, if you listen carefully...you will hear the voices of all the other good Marines who have gone before whisper the greatest commendation of them all—"Well done, Marine."*³¹

Marine leaders strive to develop self-discipline in their Marines. Self-disciplined Marines are those who exercise self-control and take personal responsibility. They subordinate personal considerations, such as convenience and comfort, to do the right thing. Self-disciplined Marines do the right thing when no one is looking, and they maintain their discipline because their fellow Marines are counting on them.

SETTING THE EXAMPLE

Leading by example is inspirational. Consider the actions of First Lieutenant William D. Hawkins while fighting on the island of Tarawa on 20 November 1943.

First Lieutenant William D. Hawkins

The first Marine off the landing craft, First Lieutenant Hawkins unhesitatingly moved forward under heavy enemy fire at the end of the Betio Pier, neutralizing enemy emplacements, allowing his Marines to assault the main beach positions. He fearlessly led his men as they fought desperately to gain a beachhead. Throughout the day and night, he repeatedly risked his life to direct and lead attacks on bunkers with



First Lieutenant William D. Hawkins

grenades and demolitions. At dawn the next day, he continued clearing the beachhead of Japanese resistance, personally initiating an assault on a hostile position fortified by five enemy machine guns. Crawling forward under withering fire, he fired point-blank into the firing ports and completed the destruction with grenades. Refusing to withdraw after being seriously

wounded in the chest during this skirmish, he destroyed three more pillboxes before he was caught in a burst of Japanese shellfire and mortally wounded.

Although First Lieutenant Hawkins was gone, his scout-sniper platoon continued their deadly work clearing out enemy bunkers. He inspired his Marines to carry on without him. They were well-trained, well-led, and believed in each other and their cause. Of First Lieutenant Hawkins, the assault commander said, "It's not often that you can credit a first lieutenant with winning a battle, but Hawkins came as near to it as any man could. He was truly an inspiration."³²

TAKING CHARGE

It is not enough, however, that Marine leaders set the example. Their followers must be equally aware of the importance of following established standards. Followers are the backbone of any effective organization because without loyal, dedicated followers there can be no effective leaders. As one leader put it, "Every Marine, from the Commandant down, is a follower. The good followers, those who can be depended on to carry out their instructions precisely, without regard to difficulty, hazard, or personal risk, are the substance of the Corps. And where combat circumstances, as often occurs, suddenly thrust upon the follower the responsibilities of a leader, those who are properly indoctrinated seize the initiative and succeed."³³

Corporal James Barrett

During the Vietnam War, Corporal James Barrett's actions clearly demonstrated how the follower's and the leader's responsibilities merge. While Corporal Barrett served as a squad leader with Company I, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines in the Republic of Vietnam, his "company came under heavy mortar, rocket, and artillery fire followed by a supported infantry assault by a numerically superior North Vietnamese Army force. In the initial attack, numerous casualties were taken and the company was forced to withdraw to a more advantageous position. Undaunted, Corporal Barrett courageously maintained his squad's position and directed accurate counter fire against the hordes of assaulting enemy. Assuming control of the platoon when his platoon commander became a casualty, he rallied his men, reorganized the platoon and led them in an effective counterattack against the enemy. With complete disregard for his own safety, he moved from position to position, encouraging his men and resupplying them with ammunition. Unhesitatingly, he aided the wounded and directed their evacuation. During the 6-hour ordeal, he repositioned his men five times to thwart the enemy advance and inflicted numerous casualties on the enemy force."³⁴

Corporal Dakota Meyer and Staff Sergeant Rodriguez-Chavez

Years later, in Afghanistan, the actions of another corporal, Corporal Dakota Meyer, while serving with Embedded Training Team 2-8, further demonstrated how followers' and leaders' responsibilities merge.

On 8 September 2009, the embedded training team was on a mission to meet with the village elders of Ganjgal. The team was organized into four elements: an observation post, a quick-reaction force, a dismounted patrol, and a security element at the objective rally point. Corporal Meyer was part of the security element at the objective rally point.



Corporal Dakota Meyer

Just after dawn, the dismounted patrol began moving up the winding one-mile track to the village. Around 0530, the element led by First Lieutenant Michael Johnson came under intense small arms and rocket propelled grenade fire, trapping them in a U-shaped kill zone. The team commander's element also came under intense fire. From the overwatch position, Corporal Steven Norman repeatedly attempted to suppress the enemy, which drew machine gun and RPG fire from multiple directions. Realizing

the situation was rapidly deteriorating, Corporal Meyer and Staff Sergeant Juan Rodriguez-Chavez repeatedly asked permission to enter the kill zone, but they were denied in an effort to prevent more people from becoming trapped in the ambush. Finally, with First Lieutenant Johnson and his Marines no longer responding to radio calls, Staff Sergeant Rodriguez-Chavez and Corporal Meyer decided to act.

Corporal Meyer, despite being junior in rank, naturally assumed the role of vehicle commander in the vehicle's turret, directing Staff Sergeant Rodriguez-Chavez around obstacles and toward US and Afghan troops pinned down in the kill zone. Without regard for the intense enemy fire directed at them, Corporal Meyer killed a number of enemy fighters, some at near point-blank range, as he and his driver made repeated trips into the ambush area.

During the first two trips, they pulled out two dozen Afghan soldiers, many of whom were wounded. When his Mk-19 became inoperable, Corporal Meyer directed a return to the rally point to switch to another gun-truck with a functional .50-caliber machine gun for a third trip into the ambush area where he provided fires to support the remaining US personnel and Afghan soldiers fighting their way out of the ambush. Despite a shrapnel wound to his arm, Corporal Meyer made two more trips into the ambush area accompanied by four other Afghan vehicles to recover more wounded Afghan soldiers and search for the missing US team members. On the fifth trip under heavy enemy fire, he dismounted and moved on foot to locate and recover the bodies of his team members. For their actions, Corporal Meyer received the

Medal of Honor and Staff Sergeant Rodriguez-Chavez received the Navy Cross.³⁵

PHYSICAL COURAGE

“Since war is a violent enterprise, danger is ever present. Since war is a human phenomenon, fear, the human reaction to danger, has a significant impact on the conduct of war. Everybody feels fear. Fear contributes to the corrosion of will. Leaders must foster the courage to overcome fear, both individually and within the unit. Courage is not the absence of fear; rather, it is the strength to overcome fear.”³⁶

—MCDP 1, Warfighting

Physical courage is the mastery of the fear of death, bodily harm, or pain. Marines overcome their natural fear of injury and death in times of battle for three chief reasons: (1) we are well-trained and well-led, (2) we have convictions that will sustain us to the last sacrifice, and (3) we fight for one another.³⁷ The stories that follow are prime examples of physical courage that all Marines should embody. These examples, as well as countless others, spur every Marine to action, to uphold our ethos and traditions, and to set the example for others.

First Lieutenant Rebecca M. Turpin

Combat Logistics Patrol 1, led by First Lieutenant Rebecca M. Turpin, departed Forward Operating Base Bastion in Southern Helmand Province, Afghanistan, at 4 a.m. for what they thought would be a standard day-long, cross-country movement to

Forward Operating Base Musa Qalah, more than 80 miles away. The mission that day was to provide logistical support including supplies and maintenance to Lima Company, 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, as well as supplies for United Kingdom troops. The 18-vehicle convoy, consisting of medium tactical vehicle replacements and mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles started heading north toward a valley after leaving Route 1 (the only paved road in Afghanistan), to begin their rocky off-road journey through sand dunes, dry riverbeds and gravel. Shortly after leaving the paved road, an improvised explosive device (IED) hit vehicle nine, destroying the driver side wheel.

The team located and destroyed two additional IEDs before pushing forward. Eight hours later, another IED exploded, hitting vehicle one of the convoy. It destroyed the attached mine roller, littering the surrounding area with metal fragments, making it impossible to sweep for secondary IEDs. First Lieutenant Turpin coordinated with higher headquarters to have a new mine roller delivered via a United Kingdom helicopter support team and ordered the immediate sweeping and clearing of a hasty helicopter landing zone. Around the halfway point of the convoy's trek, passing through a village, an incoming rocket-propelled grenade disabled their refueler. The hit initiated a complex attack—small arms fire and several more grenades rained down from multiple firing positions in covered areas of the village. First Lieutenant Turpin immediately ordered return fire and directed the lead vehicles to pull out of the kill zone, form a security perimeter, and coordinate air support. After the Marines completed repairs and tow rigging, Lieutenant Turpin moved to the lead vehicle for better visibility of the terrain and controlled the movement of direction to break contact.



**First Lieutenant Rebecca Turpin during
her 2008-2009 deployment to Afghanistan.**

She directed four separate Cobra “gun runs”, which released four 10 x 2.75-inch high-explosive rockets and two-hundred 20 mm rounds of ammunition, eliminating the enemy threat located within nearby trench lines and an irrigation tunnel complex. She broke contact and again continued CLP-1's mission. For her outstanding heroism and calm under fire First Lieutenant Turpin received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device.³⁸

Lance Corporals Kyle Carpenter and Nicholas Eufrazio

On 19 November 2010, a team of engineers, an interpreter, Afghan National Army personnel, and a squad from 3d Platoon, Company F, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines established Patrol Base Dakota in a small village in the hotly contested area of Marjah in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Around 0900 on 21 November, Lance Corporals Kyle Carpenter and Nicholas Eufrazio were manning an observation post atop the combat operations center when the enemy began engaging with sporadic small arms fire. In the ensuing hour, the enemy forces maneuvered close enough to the perimeter to throw three grenades over the compound wall.

The first grenade exploded near the west entry point, wounding an Afghan soldier. The second grenade failed to detonate. The



Lance Corporals Kyle Carpenter and Nicholas Eufrazio

third landed on top of the combat operations center. Immediately recognizing the danger and with complete disregard for his personal safety, Lance Corporal Carpenter covered the grenade with his body and absorbed most of the blast. For his courageous and selfless act, which left him grievously wounded and saved the life of Lance Corporal Eufrazio, Lance Corporal Carpenter received the Medal of Honor.³⁹

Private First Class Oscar Austin

Private First Class Oscar Austin was an assistant machine gunner with Company E, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division. On February 23, 1969, he and Lance Corporal Douglass Payne were at a Marine base in Vietnam when it was attacked. From the safety of a dugout, Austin realized that Lance Corporal Payne was lying injured and exposed to the enemy. Austin left the dugout to drag Payne to safety. He had almost reached the injured Marine when a grenade landed nearby.

Without thinking, Austin put himself between the grenade and his fellow Marine, shielding him from the blast. Despite sustaining injuries from the shrapnel, Austin continued moving toward Payne, but was again stopped when he saw an enemy soldier aiming his weapon at the unconscious lance corporal. Austin again put himself between the weapon and the injured Marine and was fatally wounded. After twice saving the life of his fellow Marine, Austin died on the battlefield. In 1970, Private First Class Austin was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his selfless devotion to his fellow Marine.⁴⁰



**Private First Class
Oscar Austin**

Marine leaders must be capable, on a moment's notice, of deploying literally anywhere and doing whatever must be done upon arrival—attacking, protecting, or assisting. Many times, Marines will have to make decisions, under the partial protection of a poncho, in the drizzle of an uncertain dawn, and without all the facts. In combat, decisions are immediate and instinctive. During those times, it will not always be possible to identify all the components of the problem or use a lengthy, formal problem-solving process to reach a decision. As such, the Marine Corps continues to prepare leaders of all ranks for this moment.

Staff Sergeant Barbara Barnwell

Displays of physical courage are not limited to combat. Then-Sergeant Barbara Barnwell was on her two-week reserve drill at Camp Lejeune in 1952. While swimming 100 to 150 yards offshore, she heard cries for help from a Marine who was struggling in the heavy surf 50 feet from her. Without regard for her safety, Sergeant Barnwell quickly swam to the near-hysterical Marine and managed to secure a hold on him, despite being scratched and pulled underwater several times. For 20 minutes, she battled the Marine and a severe undercurrent as she courageously towed the Marine to shallow water where she was met by a lifeguard. They pulled the now-unconscious Marine to the beach and administered artificial respiration. Once she realized the artificial respiration was successful, Sergeant Barnwell modestly left the scene without even learning the identity of the Marine she had rescued. In recognition of her selfless act of physical courage, Sergeant Barnwell was the first woman to receive the Navy and Marine Corps Medal.⁴¹



General Lemuel Shepherd, Jr. presenting the Navy and Marine Corps Medal to Staff Sergeant Barbara Barnwell.

MORAL COURAGE

Moral courage is the mastery of the fear of social consequences, such as being perceived as disloyal, being alienated, ridiculed, punished, fired, or lowered in social status. The Marine Corps trains us to endure combat, violence, and death—along with other less arduous situations. It trains us to make life or death decisions that impact our Marines and our enemies. In the end, our decisions must pass the test of ethical behavior, which often

MCWP 6-10, Leading Marines

requires moral courage. Ethical choices often involve a moral dilemma: the necessity to choose between conflicting obligations, where circumstance preclude them from accomplishing both. Moral courage compels us to make the right ethical decision in situations where the easiest or most expedient action fails to adhere to a higher standard of personal conduct.

Marines fight with, and for, honor, which means we adhere to defined standards of conduct no matter how hot, tired, or frustrated we may be. The following scenario is based on actual events: Imagine it is the summer of 2004 and you are part of a mounted patrol in Iraq. You are feeling the stress of the oppressive heat, lack of sleep, and an elusive enemy. Suddenly, you feel the thump of an IED explosion behind you. The patrol leader's voice crackles through the radio's speaker, directing the convoy to halt. Following the battle drill, you dismount and begin sweeping the field to your right, searching for the triggerman. With the temperature exceeding 100 degrees, the inside of your body armor feels like a furnace, your heart is racing, and you gasp for breath. You and two other Marines see a figure darting into a building. One Marine shouts that they are ready to engage, but as the senior Marine in your group, you order the Marine to wait until the figure is positively identified. As the moments slowly pass, a frightened and clearly noncombatant woman emerges. At this point, you re-cross the field to join several other Marines who have detained the proprietor of a roadside stand. It appears from the proximity of the stand and an abandoned sandal on the ground that the roadside stand's proprietor may know who initiated the attack. Understanding what is right keeps you from physically attacking the proprietor. The factors you must consider may or

may not be related: Did anyone see the possible triggerman talking to the proprietor? Did the figure who fled trigger the IED or was that person seeking shelter like everyone else? By exercising restraint and thinking critically in a high stress situation, you retain your honor, make sound decisions, and set the example of moral courage for your Marines.

Even given the best training, how well Marines perform depends on the leadership and moral courage demonstrated by their leader. A unit led by an able and aggressive leader who commands respect because he or she sets the example and demonstrates courage and confidence will perform any task asked of them.⁴²

Chapter 3

Overcoming Challenges

*A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.*⁴³

—Attributed to Winston Churchill

FRICION

Carl von Clausewitz wrote, “Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a kind of friction that is inconceivable unless one has experienced war.”⁴⁴ Friction makes simple tasks hard, acts constantly to tear down the will of the individual, and interferes with unit cohesion. From garrison to combat, friction can be caused by factors such as the physical environment, disinformation or misinformation, the nature of the mission, friendly decisions, or enemy action.

Inadequate or inaccurate intelligence contributes to friction by causing uncertainty. This uncertainty is sometimes called the “fog of war,” where things are not always what the leader expected. As

Major General James N. Mattis explained to his Marines, “This expression [fog of war] describes both the literal fog created by the dust, smoke, and debris of the battlefield, and more importantly the mental fog of confusion and uncertainty created by lack of knowledge of the enemy, the chaotic noise, mental and physical fatigue, and fear.”⁴⁵

Friction is inevitable, but leaders must understand and apply methods and techniques to manage friction as much as possible to overcome challenges. Leaders at all levels can reduce friction through realistic planning, training, and rehearsals. While there is truth to the adage that “no plan survives first contact,” we plan in order to discover risks, account for contingencies, define alternate courses of action, and, most importantly, meet the commander’s intent. That shared understanding of the situation and intent will reduce friction when it inevitably occurs, and planning lays the groundwork for adaptation.

Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Malay

The commanding officer of 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Malay, understood the importance of realistic training. In preparing for his battalion’s return to Iraq, he partnered with a local movie studio to provide his Marines with realistic training by using authentic role players, special effects mimicking the dust and noise of explosions, blood packs on amputees, and the physical sting of munitions. This immersive, realistic, and stressful training conditioned the Marines of 3d Battalion, 5th Marines to the stressors of combat and contributed to their success during Operation Phantom Fury in November 2004.

MORAL CHALLENGES

Overcoming moral challenges requires courage. As explained in Chapter 2, moral courage is mastering the fear of social consequences, such as being perceived as disloyal, being alienated, ridiculed, punished, fired, or lowered in social status. In some cases, the right choice is crystal clear. In other cases, the correct course of action is not so clear. In the end, leaders must always act with integrity and accept full responsibility for their actions and everything their unit does or fails to do. This includes supporting those in your charge, particularly when they act under your direction. Leaders put their Marines, their unit, and the mission before themselves. Gaining moral ascendancy requires subordinates to believe their leaders genuinely care for them, they are fighting for a worthy cause, and their sacrifices are not in vain.

Lieutenant Colonel Gerald H. Turley

All that stood between the North Vietnamese Army 308th Division and Quang Tri Province was the bridge at Dong Ha, defended by a company of Vietnamese Marines. Realizing that the company would not be able to hold the bridge, the senior US advisor to the 3d Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division (Forward), Lieutenant Colonel Gerald H. Turley, determined that the bridge had to be destroyed. The 308th division deputy commander would not give permission to destroy the bridge. Lieutenant Colonel Turley conferred with the Vietnamese 258th Marine Corps Brigade commander, who had local responsibility. The brigade commander said the decision would have to come from I Corps. Lieutenant Colonel Turley radioed the First Regional Assistance Command G-3 to gain permission. They

also denied the request, saying that permission would have to come from Saigon. Realizing the dire consequences of not taking action and knowing the career risk he was taking, Lieutenant Colonel Turley ordered US Army Major James Smock and Marine Captain John Ripley to blow the bridge. His decision to act prevented a regimental sized armor force from crossing the river, which blunted the North Vietnamese advance and undoubtedly saved an untold number of lives.⁴⁶

The ancient philosopher Confucius phrased it this way, “To see what is right and not to do it is want of courage.”⁴⁷ Moral courage is a private courage, a form of conscience that can often be an even tougher challenge than physical courage, particularly in peacetime. It serves not only as a foundation of our leadership philosophy; it is also a challenge that Marine leaders must face every day. If Marines do not have the moral courage in peacetime to meet consistently high Marine Corps standards and expectations, they are not likely to have the moral courage to make the difficult decisions that may determine the outcome of a battle or a campaign. Oftentimes, moral courage in a garrison environment takes the form of small actions, such as standing up to your peers, not giving in to pressure, and stepping in to stop a bad situation before it develops into something more significant.

Lance Corporal Daquota Skenandore

On a September morning at a duty station in Japan, a suicidal Marine posted on social media that he was preparing to end his life by jumping off a building. Several Marines saw the post and sounded the alarm. Military Police were dispatched to the

Marine's barracks room, while other small-unit leaders organized teams to assist in searching for him. After searching the room without finding him, they systematically searched surrounding buildings, barracks, parking structures, and rooftops. The distressed Marine was eventually located on the 4th deck of a barracks building. Military Policeman Lance Corporal Daquota Skenandore spotted the Marine on a railing preparing to jump. Lance Corporal Skenandore immediately sprinted up four flights of stairs, and without regard to his own well-being, he reached the Marine who was dangerously non-compliant, and wrestled him from the railing. The Marine made several attempts to break free to end his own life. Mindful of their precarious position throughout the rooftop struggle, Lance Corporal Skenandore restrained the Marine and prevented further harm to himself and the Marine.⁴⁸

These acts of situational awareness and moral courage saved the lives of Marines. While it may be convenient to ignore the situation and assume things will be okay or say nothing at the risk of getting a fellow Marine in trouble, making a moral decision in a challenging situation is the inherent responsibility of every Marine.

PHYSICAL CHALLENGES

The physical demands of battle encompass more than being fit, and these demands influence both the leader and the led. The draining effects of sleep deprivation, limited dietary options, and friction must be understood and must be a part of training.

No one is immune to fatigue. As Marines become increasingly tired, they often lose the ability to make sound, rapid decisions and are susceptible to being confused, disoriented, and ultimately, ineffective. Guts, pride, and energy drinks are not substitutes for fitness. A leader must be fit to concentrate fully on the mission or task at hand.

The exact limits of endurance cannot be determined, but physical conditioning is one method of reducing the effects of fatigue, increasing self-confidence, and reducing stress. The mental development of Marine leaders must include dealing with the natural fear of violence, which contributes significantly to the fog and friction of combat. Units, and unit leaders, that do not have the mental and physical strength to overcome fear will not be able to fight effectively and overcome friction. Captain John Ripley's actions at the Dong Ha bridge vividly depict the physical demands sometimes placed on individuals.

Captain John Ripley

When Lieutenant Colonel Turley ordered Captain Ripley and Major Smock to blow the bridge at Dong Ha, Captain Ripley determined that 500 pounds of explosives would have to be placed under the girders of the bridge. A chain link fence, topped with German steel tape, surrounded the base of the bridge. The two Americans quickly devised a plan. Captain Ripley would climb over the fence and emplace the explosives that Major Smock passed to him.

Emplacing the explosives required Captain Ripley to hand-walk along the beams, exposing his dangling body to the enemy. For two hours, in the face of enemy small arms and tank fire, he set the charges. Finally, using the battery from a destroyed jeep, Captain Ripley detonated the charges, destroyed the bridge, and stopped the enemy armor in its tracks.⁴⁹ Captain Ripley's superb physical conditioning allowed him to pull off this amazing feat.



Captain John Ripley placing charges at the Dong Ha Bridge, 1 April 1972.

First Lieutenant Kenneth A. Conover

In another example of the need for peak physical conditioning, First Lieutenant Kenneth A. Conover, during six days of intense combat in Afghanistan, demonstrated the physical stamina required of leaders under duress.

On 22 June 2012, First Lieutenant Conover led 1st Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines on a night air assault into the enemy stronghold of Qaleh Ye Gaz, Helmand Province, Afghanistan. As the platoon established its patrol base, the enemy attacked with medium machine gun fire, automatic rifle fire, and 82-mm mortars. During the engagement, a mortar round landed

MCWP 6-10, Leading Marines

15 feet from First Lieutenant Conover. Luckily, the soft earth absorbed most of the blast. For the next six days, multiple waves of fanatical enemy fighters attacked the platoon. Within the first two days, First Lieutenant Conover led his platoon despite the loss of two Marines, the serious wounding of another, and the evacuation under fire. He continued to lead his Marines through 23 direct-fire engagements, one grenade attack, two indirect-fire attacks, and 10 enemy attempts to overrun his position. In relentless pursuit of the enemy, he directed the employment of 38 tank main gun rounds, four artillery rocket strikes, four close air support strikes, five AT-4 rockets, and two anti-personnel obstacle breaching systems. His efforts resulted in clearing two square kilometers of enemy fighters and the capture of a high-value Taliban leader along with two other fighters.⁵⁰



First Lieutenant Kenneth Conover on Patrol in Afghanistan.

The Marines throughout the fight in Helmand Province were wearing on average 80 pounds of armor, weapons, and necessary equipment. The physical requirements of operating six days in heavy gear, assaulting through multiple structures, evacuating wounded personnel, and conducting food, water, and ammunition resupplies cannot be accomplished without prior physical preparation and stamina.

Not every Marine will face the same physical challenge as Captain Ripley nor lead a platoon in combat like First Lieutenant Conover, but some will. Marine leaders understand this and work continuously to condition the Marines under their charge to overcome the physical challenges presented to them. A critical responsibility of every leader is to ensure that members of his or her command have every survival edge that can be provided.

Marines who lack the conditioning that comes from long, varied, and rigorous preparation will lack cohesion in action, experience higher combat losses, and uselessly expend much of their initial momentum. The gain in moral force deriving from physical training is intangible. Willpower, determination, mental poise, and muscle control all contribute to the general health and physical well-being of an individual.⁵¹

ADAPTABILITY AND INNOVATION

Adaptability has long been our key to overcoming challenges. Although it is synonymous with flexibility, adaptability also embraces the spirit of innovation. Marines constantly seek to

adapt new tactics, organization methods, and procedures to the realities of the environment. Marines identify deficiencies in existing practices, discard outdated structure, and make modifications to maintain function and utility. The ability to adapt enables Marines to be comfortable within an environment dominated by friction. Experience, common sense, and the critical application of judgment all help Marine leaders persevere.

First Lieutenant Christian Schilt

Marines have long known how to adapt and overcome. On 30 December 1927, a Marine patrol near Quilali, Nicaragua, engaged a large Sandinista force and suffered heavy casualties. The patrol was in desperate need of supplies and 18 Marines required medical evacuation. Marine pilots airdropped the equipment that was needed to clear a 500-foot-long makeshift



First Lieutenant Christian Schilt

airstrip. Between 6 and 8 January 1928, First Lieutenant Christian F. Schilt risked his life to make 10 flights onto the airstrip in the besieged town, carrying in a replacement commander and critical medical supplies. He also evacuated the 18 wounded Marines by strapping them to the wings. His feat is even more incredible considering the Vought O2U biplane had no brakes and required Marines on the ground to grab the wings and drag the aircraft to a stop as soon as it touched down.⁵²

Navajo Code Talkers

Another example of innovation born out of the need to adapt came from the Navajo Code Talkers. In the days before portable, tactical cryptographic devices, radio operators either had to transmit messages unencrypted, risking enemy interception, or laboriously encode, transmit, and decode messages. During World War I and after Pearl Harbor, the Army made limited use of Choctaw and Comanche speakers to transmit messages. Always on the lookout for innovative ideas, the Marine Corps followed the Army program with great interest. After a successful proof of concept, the Marine Corps enlisted 29 Navajo men for service as communicators. In keeping with Marine tradition, Commandant Thomas Holcomb insisted that the recruits receive



Privates First Class Preston Toledo and Frank Toledo, Navajo Code Talkers, attached to a Marine artillery regiment in the South Pacific.

MCWP 6-10, Leading Marines

the same basic training as other Marines. In other words, they were Marines first and specialists second. It turned out that the cryptographic solution was not as simple as speaking Navajo on the radio. The Navajo language didn't have an alphabet or words for military terms. The task of creating an alphabet and code words for military terminology fell on the new Marines. In the end, they created a code in their native language that reduced the time required to encode, transmit, and decode messages from four hours to about two minutes. As a result, the Navajo Code Talkers were combat multipliers in every Pacific campaign, from Guadalcanal to Okinawa.⁵³

Innovations in Iraq and Afghanistan

In another example from many years later, as Marine forces began to expand their lodgment during Operation Desert Shield, one of the greatest concerns was overland transportation. Faced with an acute shortage of trucks and other vehicles, Marine logisticians applied an unconventional approach to motor transportation. In addition to receiving 246 trucks from the Army, the Marines began leasing as many civilian vehicles as they could. In the end, they obtained 1,414 assorted



“Circus Truck” pressed into service.

trucks, which included 50 colorfully decorated 10-ton vehicles that the Marines dubbed “circus trucks.” Additionally, the Marines used 214 commercial buses and 465 sport utility vehicles to transport personnel.⁵⁴

Sometimes innovation is the answer to situations that arise from cultural nuances and sensitivities, critical factors in understanding the combat environment. For example, in a program called “Team Lioness,” female Marines were trained to conduct searches for weapons and drugs on Iraqi women because of the sensitivities regarding men touching women in that culture. This is an example of not only increasing our combat effectiveness by understanding the combat environment but also of leveraging diversity within our ranks.

Adaptation happens most frequently at the small-unit level. During early August of 2010, Company L, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines were clearing the Taliban stronghold of Safar Bazaar in the Garmsir District of Helmand Province, Afghanistan. The Taliban who defended the bazaar saturated the area with IEDs. The Marine’s lightweight, compact metal detector soon proved utterly useless in detecting the nonmetallic IEDs, which had not yet been seen in country.

Prior to executing the operation, the company devised multiple nonstandard solutions to clear the bazaar, one of which was water hoses. Safar Bazaar was located on a canal off the Helmand River, so a nearly unlimited supply of water was conveniently available. Dragging a holley stick (a more than ten-foot-long, field-expedient stick with a hook on the end devised by Gunnery Sergeant Floyd Holley) across the ground to locate IED wires or



Marines from Lima 3/1 clearing the Safar Bazaar.

pressure plates, Marines then used water from the nearby river to soften the soil thereby allowing them to remove the devices. If the softened soil did not yield the IED, Marines secured the area and used line charges to detonate the devices. It took two weeks to completely clear the bazaar using multiple complementary lethal and nonlethal techniques. Each IED discovered and destroyed reduced a lethal risk to Marines and civilians using the bazaar and overcame a difficult Taliban challenge.

Predecessors in Marine Corps Innovation

Our reputation as innovators stems, in part, from periodic examinations of our role in the national defense structure. After World War I, our predecessors sought to redefine the Corps, which had fought alongside the Army on battlefields in France. They focused on the requirement to seize advanced naval bases and developed doctrine for amphibious operations at a time when the other militaries of the world, in the aftermath of Gallipoli, considered it a reckless mission. By 1926, the Marine Corps was teaching courses in Pacific strategy and amphibious operations. It was in Marine Corps schools that students and faculty developed a list of chronological steps for planning and executing amphibious operations, resulting in the historic 1934 *Tentative Manual for Landing Operations*.⁵⁵ As Marines became experts in amphibious operations, they also trained US Army divisions in the tactics that would be used by them to land at Casablanca, Sicily, Anzio, and Normandy in the European theater; and at Kwajalein, Leyte, and Okinawa in the Pacific. Marines went further still and developed a landing craft and a reef-crossing tractor that became primary tools in both the Pacific and European theaters of World War II.⁵⁶

After World War II, General Alexander A. Vandegrift summed up the importance of Marine Corps innovation during the interwar period, saying, “Despite its outstanding record as a combat force in the past war, the Marine Corps’ far greater contribution to victory was doctrinal: that is, the fact that the basic amphibious doctrines which carried Allied troops over every beachhead of World War II had been largely shaped—often in the face of uninterested and doubting military orthodoxy—by U.S. Marines,

and mainly between 1922 and 1935.”⁵⁷ The Marine Corps also added to counterinsurgency doctrine by codifying its vast experience in operations other than war in the *Small Wars Manual* in 1940—a manual that continues to prove its relevance in the 21st century.

Marine innovations have changed the character of war. Whether in developing a system to use naval gunfire in support of landing forces, studying the art of dive bombing, figuring out how to drop bombs at night and in all weather, or developing and proving the concept of maritime prepositioning, Marine leaders who combine vision and initiative make a difference.

DECENTRALIZATION

Many years ago, a promotion examination scenario given during a class for lieutenants assigned them a figurative 10-person working party led by a sergeant, and told to erect a 75-foot flagpole. All lieutenants who tried to figure out how to erect the flagpole failed, no matter how accurate their calculations. The correct solution was to simply give the order, “Sergeant, put up that flagpole.”⁵⁸ This test illustrates the point that decentralized leadership is taught, expected, and practiced throughout the Marine Corps. Decentralization is simply authorizing subordinates to act, guided by commander’s intent and focus of effort, in situations where judgment and experience dictate action. The Marine Corps has long understood the advantage of allowing junior leaders to apply judgment and act on their decisions and has enjoyed great success decentralizing authority to the lowest levels. Marines fighting expeditionary wars during the first half of the 20th century exemplified this. Whether on

duty in the Legation Quarter in China during the 1920s, with the *gendarmerie* in Haiti, or on patrol with the Guardia in Nicaragua, junior Marines supported US policy; kept law and order; suppressed revolts against governments; and protected US lives, interests, and property.

During World War II, the actions of junior leaders were directly responsible for our successes in the island-hopping campaigns of the Pacific. Decentralized decision making—pushing authority, responsibility, and accountability to the lowest levels—promoted speed in execution. In battle after battle, small units were able to make a decisive difference because of the actions of subordinate leaders. Colonel Merritt A. Edson mentioned decentralization and adaptability as important contributors to the outcome in the battle for Tarawa, saying, “It is my opinion that the reason we won this show was the ability of the junior officers and [noncommissioned officers] to take command of small groups of six to eight or ten men, regardless of where these men came from, and to organize and lead them as a fighting team.”⁵⁹

As a result of these experiences, the Marine Corps developed the modern-day fire team and produced the world’s finest noncommissioned officers. The tradition of encouraging decentralized decision making continues today and is manifested in such peacetime duty as that performed by Marine Security Guard detachments commanded by staff noncommissioned officers and the small-unit combat patrols in the strife-torn streets of every corner of the globe.

A testament to the skills of Marine small-unit leaders was the development of the combined-action program. First used with



Marine Advisor in Afghanistan.

success in Haiti (1915–1934), then later in Santo Domingo (1916–1922) and Nicaragua (1926–1933), and then used again in Vietnam.⁶⁰ Often, the combined force was commanded by a Marine squad leader—a sergeant or a corporal. In Iraq and Afghanistan, this concept took the form of small-unit training and advising teams embedding with Iraqi and Afghan security forces.

RESILIENCY

A great and successful troop leader said that there comes a point in every close battle when each commander concludes that defeat is inevitable. The leader who carries on, wins.

*Positions are seldom lost because they have been destroyed, but almost invariably because the leader has decided in his own mind that the position cannot be held.*⁶¹

—Lieutenant General Alexander A. Vandegrift

Resiliency is an important aspect of a Marine's personal and professional life. It ensures that when faced with the challenges in and out of combat, they will be able to meet those challenges, drawing from internal and external sources of strength and support. Resilience can be objectively observed through physical and cognitive performance. How Marines build and maintain resilience is more subjective, meaning measures are influenced by unique factors and characteristics of the individual and the unit. Marines with a high degree of physical and cognitive performance build and maintain resiliency in the following four areas of Marine fitness.

Physical Fitness: In addition to regular physical training and exercise, physical fitness includes proper nutrition, injury prevention, and recovery to maximize performance. You must embrace discomfort and push yourself to new levels of physical strength and ability. Learning proper techniques for exercises, appropriate nutrition for your goals, and mutually supporting those around you are all ways to improve physical resiliency.

Mental Fitness: Mental fitness includes the mindset, attitudes, and practices that help one deal with various stressors that impede overall performance. We must recognize and accept that just “pushing through” a problem will only work for a short time and may delay or impede one’s ability to rebound from a difficult situation. Learning to recognize when you have a mental resiliency challenge that you may not be properly equipped to deal with, and then having the courage to seek someone who can give you that knowledge, is essential to your own personal growth.

Spiritual Fitness: Identifying our personal faith, foundational values, and moral living from a variety of sources and traditions helps us live out core values of honor, courage, and commitment, live the warrior ethos, and exemplify the character expected of a United States Marine. This is learning to trust in something larger than ourselves and laying the foundation for our moral character.

Social Fitness: Building a solid skillset that fosters cohesion, belonging, and trust in one's personal and professional relationships develops our social fitness. We have to know when to reach out for assistance and have the personal courage to do so. We all build social networks in our own way, and in such a diverse environment of people, socializing can be intimidating. However, we are all tied together as brother and sister Marines. That one solid, shared connection builds the foundation on which we develop a strong social community.

Adversity in life and in combat is unavoidable. Our ethos, our core values, and our training are all focused on developing the skills and abilities to address this conflict, have the strength to handle it, and the resiliency to restore ourselves to be even stronger than we

were before. These four fitness elements help us identify specific areas in which we must develop resiliency and give us the resources to do so. We must build our resiliency in a time where perhaps this strength is not yet needed, so that when challenge comes, we are prepared. As the popular Marine t-shirt slogan states, “The more we train in peacetime, the less we bleed in war.”

Combat power is “the total means of destructive and disruptive force that a military unit or formation can apply against an enemy at a given time.”⁶² Napoleon understood that the combat power of a unit is not measured solely by the number of people, rifles, tanks, cannons, trucks, fuel, ammunition, or airplanes a military force possesses when he said, “The moral is to the physical as three to one.”⁶³ By moral, Napoleon meant those resilient mental and spiritual qualities of a unit—an organization’s ability to conduct combat operations by overcoming challenges faced on the battlefield. Creating and sustaining superior combat power requires the combination of the tangible activities of war (maneuver, firepower, and protection) with the intangible elements of war (unit esprit, discipline, cohesion, and individual courage). It is these intangible qualities that make certain units superior to others on the battlefield. They enable organizations to take high casualties and continue their missions and can compensate for material deficiencies. It is the leaders who instill these intangible qualities such as our core values and those listed above in their Marines. In the end, “success in battle is not a function of how many show up, but who they are.”⁶⁴

TRUST AND FAILURE

Due to the high consequences for our actions as warfighters, it is easy to slip into a “zero defect” mentality. Leaders must actively fight this type of command climate. This is not to say that all errors are to be accepted as part of a Marine’s development or learning process. Leaders need to demonstrate sound judgment in assessing whether the error was a result of good initiative, bad judgment, or poor execution; or was the mistake part of a trend that if not appropriately addressed can result in the harm to personnel, equipment, or the mission.

Ultimately, this can be addressed by establishing a climate of trust, both horizontally and vertically within a command. Senior members need to foster an environment where juniors have the liberty to err and trust that their leadership will not stifle initiative, innovation, and peer leadership. Peers need to trust each other. Mistakes should be seen as opportunities to learn and help shape training. They should not be used to disparage or be leveraged for advancement, as this will destroy team cohesion and trust. Finally, juniors need to be empowered, to not only make mistakes themselves, but to handle minor tasks, decisions, and minor disciplinary issues within their scope. There is risk involved with trust, but that should not keep us from trusting. Leadership cannot develop if trust is not first offered, and we must understand that Marines exercise initiative for those they trust.

Without this trust, a command will stumble. Juniors will hesitate to exercise initiative, or even police their own, due to fear of overstepping their boundaries or even being met with negative consequences. They will become uncomfortable with contributing their knowledge or opinions, unwilling to make

suggestions counter to their leaders due to fear of reprisal or being disregarded. Environments like this create individuals, not teams. This is concerning, because even though all Marines are considered a member of the profession of arms—upon receiving the eagle, globe, and anchor at the conclusion of The Crucible (for enlisted Marines) or upon commissioning (for officers)—the strength of the Marine Corps, and the United States, for that matter, is in the wide swath of experiences brought to the table by its diverse group of people. Commands cannot create environments that are insular in nature, but instead must leverage its diverse population and the opinions of its members. When applied correctly, this access to new ideas increases adaptability that may be necessary to drive tempo and innovation and creates a more ready and lethal force.

Peers who trust each other are more apt to assist each other when one stumbles. This increases resiliency in the force. It creates a humble and competent team that is willing to build on each other's experiences and seek help when required, both personally and professionally. Criticism by peers is not viewed as a way to outshine each other, but recognized as constructive, and for the benefit of the institution. Tone is important and words have specific meanings. If a leader's message is not communicated properly then the subordinate's trust and willingness to try innovative ideas is challenged.

For senior members, the risks of a command without a proper balance in trust and failure is twofold. First, the leaders will become task-saturated when they do not allow themselves to delegate. They will execute tasks themselves, rather than leading and developing juniors by supervising and providing guidance. We must not avoid the path of leadership and learning, because the team where all are trained to become more

skilled will be a much stronger and more capable section. Although it may initially take more time to teach others the leadership lessons and competencies you have already learned and to correct the mistakes made along the way, the long-term result is well worth the effort.

Secondly, the leader runs the risk of not having the best possible solution presented to them. Marine leaders cannot afford to have the truth hidden from them due to fear of being disregarded or reprimanded for thinking outside the box. A leader who fosters an environment of trust dramatically increases effective decentralized operations, innovation, adaptability, *esprit de corps*, loyalty, morale, and resilience. These benefits are manifested because members of the unit are empowered to make decisions and learn, which also increases vertical and horizontal cohesion.

Lieutenant General Victor A. Krulak developed a set of rules to promote innovation and creativity from his own experience of senior officers encouraging innovation to embrace the Higgins boat and vertical envelopment doctrine within the Corps. He told leaders to make it their duty to bring subordinates' ideas and criticisms to the surface where all may analyze and evaluate them.⁶⁵ Ask for ideas and you will get them. Leaders must have an open door policy. Subordinates should use the chain of command, but ideas must rise to the top. Leaders must allow subordinates the opportunity to show initiative. Because innovation is imprecise and because subordinates, particularly junior ones, will make mistakes, protect them. "Zero defects" are not a standard of measurement. They do not encourage initiative; they stifle it. Lastly, emphasize that you expect honest expression of the subordinates' best thinking. Do not tolerate patronizing behavior!

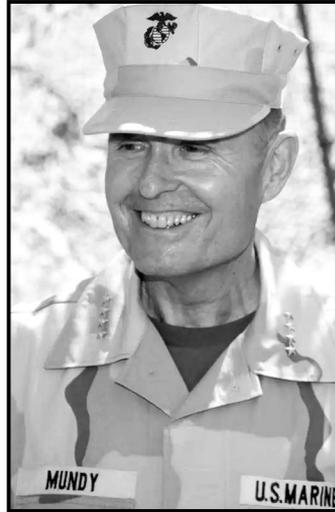
Epilogue

A Message from General Carl E. Mundy, Jr.

The most important responsibility in our Corps is leading Marines. If we expect Marines to lead and if we expect Marines to follow, we must provide the education of the heart and of the mind to win on the battlefield and in the barracks, in war and in peace. Traditionally, that education has taken many forms, often handed down from Marine to Marine, by word of mouth and by example.

—General Carl E. Mundy, Jr.

Engaged, compassionate, and caring leaders have made serving in the Marine Corps a defining experience for all who have worn our cloth. Today, after generations of Marines throughout history have accepted—and carried out—this sacred responsibility, this challenge is now passed to you. Thus, it is fitting to end this version of *Leading Marines* with the words of General Mundy, its original author.



General Carl E. Mundy, Jr.

Our actions as Marines every day must embody the legacy of those who went before us. Their memorial to us—their teaching, compassion, courage, sacrifices, optimism, humor, humility, commitment, perseverance, love, guts, and glory—is the pattern for our daily lives. This manual was written in attempt to capture those heritages of the Marine Corps' approach to leading. It is not prescriptive because there is no formula for leadership. It is not all-inclusive because to capture all that it is to be a Marine or to lead Marines defies pen and paper. Instead, it is intended to provide those charged with leading Marines a sense of the legacy they have inherited, and to help them come to terms with their own personal leadership style. The indispensable condition of Marine Corps leadership is action

and attitude, not words. As one Marine leader said, 'Don't tell me how good you are. Show me!'

Marines have been leading for more than 200 years and today continue leading around the globe. Whether in the field or in garrison, at the front or in the rear, Marines, adapting the time-honored values, traditions, customs, and history of our Corps to their generation, will continue to lead—and continue to win.

This manual comes to life through the voices, writings, and examples of not one person, but many. Thousands of Americans who have borne, and still bear, the title 'Marine' are testimony that 'Once a Marine, always a Marine' and 'Semper Fidelis' are phrases that define our essence. It is to those who know, and to those who will come to know, this extraordinary way of life that this book is dedicated.

Semper Fidelis . . .

Appendix A

Professional Military Education

ADDITIONAL VIGNETTES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Leading Marines supports the objective of Marine Corps leadership as stated in the *Marine Corps Manual*: “to develop the leadership qualities of Marines to enable them to assume progressively greater responsibilities to the Marine Corps and Society.” To achieve these objectives, it is paramount that we, as Marines and leaders, strive for self-improvement through professional military education.

Below are questions, discussion topics, and additional educational resources that Marines at all levels can use as a starting point to further develop their own leadership and guide leadership discussions with their fellow Marines.

Questions

1. What does leading Marines mean to you?
2. How can you apply the lessons from this book into your own leadership style?
3. What differences, if any, do you think there are between leadership in garrison and leadership in combat? If there are not any, why not?
4. How does leadership affect mission accomplishment and unit readiness?
5. Do different levels of leadership require different types of leaders?
6. Are there different leadership traits required at the fire team level than at the battalion/squadron level? Why or why not?
7. Who is a leader you respect and why do you respect him or her as a leader?
8. Self-assess, what is important to you as a leader? What type of leadership style do you have?
9. What are the characteristics of a disciplined unit?

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Discussion One

Acting as a buffer to protect subordinates is a key responsibility of any leader. Consider the actions of the Second Division's commanding general, Major General John A. Lejeune, during World War I. One evening in November 1918, General Lejeune overheard one of his watch officers talking on the phone with higher headquarters. When queried, the watch officer told General Lejeune that Third Corps gave orders for Second Division to march the next morning. Knowing that his men were exhausted, he immediately got on the phone with the Third Corps staff officer. The staff officer told General Lejeune that Field Marshal Foch had directed the Second Division to begin the attack from Stenay, which required the division to march 60 kilometers: 40 kilometers to cross the river at Dun-sur-Meuse and then 20 kilometers to Stenay. General Lejeune pointed out that the division could cross at Pouilly, which would considerably reduce the marching distance. The staff officer countered that the division could not cross there because it would require passage through German lines. General Lejeune then suggested the division repair the bridge at Stenay, which would significantly reduce the length of the movement. The lieutenant colonel from Third Corps stated that he did not have the authority to change the order. When General Lejeune said that he would take it up with someone more senior, the staff officer replied that all the senior officers were asleep. General Lejeune then replied, "It is better to wake up one general than to have 25,000 sick and exhausted men march sixty kilometers, and I will do so myself." In the end,

Third Corps modified the orders, and the division engineers repaired the bridge, saving many tired Marines and Soldiers unnecessary hardship.⁶⁶

Questions

1. Is there a balance between protecting your Marines and insubordination to authority?
2. How do you find that balance?
3. What leadership traits are valuable to a situation like this?

Discussion Two

Our reputation as innovators stems, in part, from periodic examinations of our role in the national defense structure. After World War I, our predecessors sought to redefine the Corps, which had fought alongside the Army in the trenches in France. They focused on the requirement to seize advanced naval bases and developed doctrine for amphibious operations at a time when the other militaries of the world, in the aftermath of Gallipoli, considered it a reckless mission. By 1926, the Marine Corps was teaching courses in Pacific strategy and amphibious operations. It was in Marine Corps schools that students and faculty developed a list of chronological steps for planning and executing amphibious operations, resulting in the historic 1934 U.S. Marine Corps *Tentative Manual for Landing Operations*.⁶⁷ As Marines became experts in amphibious operations, they also trained US Army divisions in the tactics that would later be used to land at Casablanca, Sicily, Anzio, and Normandy in the European

theater; and at Kwajalein, Leyte, and Okinawa in the Pacific. Marines went further still and developed a landing craft and a reef-crossing tractor that became primary tools in both the Pacific and European theaters of World War II.⁶⁸

Questions

1. The Marine Corps often prides itself with innovation and “doing more with less.” How can this focus on innovation make you more efficient and effective in your job?
2. What innovations have you made, and who have you helped with them?
3. What other ideas do you have?

Discussion Three

Captain William Barber’s Medal of Honor citation describing his performance from 28 November 1950 to 2 December 1950, demonstrates the importance of a leader’s will. Captain Barber received the mission to defend a critical three-mile-long mountain pass along the 1st Marine Division’s main supply route. Captain Barber’s battle-weary Marines dug positions in the frozen, snow-covered hillside. That night, an estimated regimental-strength force savagely attacked over a seven-hour period, inflicting heavy casualties. After repulsing the enemy, Captain Barber assured his higher headquarters that he could hold his isolated position if supplied by air drops. He understood that if he abandoned his defensive position, 8,000 Marines would be trapped at Yudam-ni and would not be able to join the 3,000 more awaiting their arrival at Hagaru-ri for the continued drive to the

sea. Despite severe wounds that forced him to be carried on a litter, Captain Barber continued to lead his Marines. Through five days and six nights of repeated attacks by the Chinese, he and his courageous Marines held, killing approximately 1,000 enemy combatants in the bitter subzero weather. When the company was finally relieved, only 82 of his original 220 men were able to walk off the hill under their own power. Captain Barber's indomitable will inspired his men and allowed the 1st Marine Division to avoid destruction by withdrawing from the Chosin Reservoir.⁶⁹

It is tough-minded leaders like Captain Barber who hold units together under extreme stress. Lieutenant Colonel Murray, commanding the 5th Marines at the Chosin Reservoir, summed up what was required of leaders: "I personally felt in a state of shock, the kind of shock one gets from some great personal tragedy, the sudden loss of someone close...My first fight was within myself. I had to rebuild that emptiness of spirit."⁷⁰ For leaders to hold units together under adverse conditions, they must first fight—and win—the battle within themselves.

Questions

1. We define "resiliency" as having internal and external strength in these areas: physical fitness, mental fitness, spiritual fitness, and social fitness. How are these demonstrated in the vignette above?
2. Is one of these areas more important than the other?
3. How does your resiliency as an individual impact the overall resiliency of your team?

Discussion Four

After just a few months at a new duty station, it seems that you are the only Marine being relied upon, with your list of tasks never seeming to end. You continue to accomplish your tasks and attempt to delegate to other Marines; however, the tasks are either half-complete or not completed to your standard and you do not feel that you have the time to show them and it is easier to handle it yourself.

Questions

1. What will happen to you or how do you think you would feel if this continued for 6 months? A year?
2. What will happen to the unit after you leave?
3. What will happen to those Marines as they leave the unit and begin to lead other Marines? What will happen to the Marines they lead?

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION

Books

Leaders Eat Last, Simon Sinek

Extreme Ownership, Jocko Willink and Leif Babin

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey

Wooden on Leadership, John Wooden and Steve Jamison

Meditations, Marcus Aurelius

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Marine Leader Development



<https://www.usmcu.edu/Academic-Programs/Lejeune-Leadership-Institute/Marine-Leader-Development/>

Commandant's Professional Reading Program



<https://grc-usmship.libguides.com/usmc-reading-list-2020>

History Division: Articles, Publications, and Battle Studies



<https://www.usmcu.edu/Outreach/Publishing/History-Division-Publications/Books-by-topic/>

Marine Corps University Press: Free Publications and Articles



<https://www.usmcu.edu/Outreach/Publishing/Marine-Corps-University-Press/Books-by-topic/TitlesAZ/>

Marines Resource Page



<https://www.marines.mil/Marines/>

Notes

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1. Journal of the Continental Congress, 10 November 1775, in *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, Vol. 2, ed. William Bell Clark (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1966) p. 972.

2. General James N. Mattis USMC (Ret.), Commanding General's Message to all hands, 1st Marine Division Reinforced, March 2003.

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5. Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.), *First To Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1984) p. 155.

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7. General David Berger, 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps. “Commandant’s Planning Guidance,” July 2019, p. 23.

8. General Charles C. Krulak, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps. “Commandant’s Planning Guidance,” August 1995.

9. Richard Rubin, *The Last of the Doughboys: The Forgotten Generation and Their Forgotten World War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013) p. 192.

10. Paraphrased from Congressional Medal of Honor Society: Captain Henry T. Elrod on navy.mil. <https://www.cmohs.org/recipients/henry-t-elrod>. (Last accessed 26 July 2023).

11. Paraphrased from NAVMC 11533 (EF), Personal Award Recommendation, Summary of Action and Award Citation for Lieutenant Colonel Christopher K. Raible’s actions on 14 September 2012 during Operation Enduring Freedom. Lieutenant Colonel Raible was awarded the Bronze Star with Combat “V.”

12. Paraphrased from NAVMC 11533 (EF), Personal Award Recommendation, Summary of Action and Award Citation for Sergeant Bradley W. Atwell’s actions from 19 April to 14 September 2012 during Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant Atwell was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat “V.”

13. Paraphrased from NAVMC 11533 (EF), Personal Award Recommendation, Summary of Action and Award Citation for Major Robb T. McDonald’s actions on 14 September 2012 during Operation Enduring Freedom. Major McDonald was awarded the Silver Star.

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14. Paraphrased from NAVMC 11533 (EF), Personal Award Recommendation, Summary of Action and Award Citation for First Sergeant Bradley A. Kasal's actions on 13 November 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. First Sergeant Kasal was awarded the Navy Cross.

15. Paraphrased from a U.S. Department of Defense article found at <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/1346285/face-of-defense-marines-react-save-lives-during-las-vegas-tragedy/> (last visited July 2023).

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23. Paraphrased from “America’s first female African American combat pilot,” 10 February 2012, written by Lance Corporal Chelsea Anderson for Defense Media Activity–Marines. <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/83686/americas-first-female-african-american-combat-pilot> and from “Vernice ‘FlyGirl’ Armour–Historical Path” <https://vernicearmour.com/meet-flygirl/> (Last accessed 12 December 2023).

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25. Marine Corps Order 29, “Relations between Officers and Men” (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, US Marine Corps, 1920).

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27. Major General John A. Lejeune, “A Legacy of Esprit and Leadership,” (speech presented to Army General Staff College [forerunner of the Army War College] in Washington, D.C., 18 January 1921), as reprinted in *Marine Corps Gazette* (July 1979) p. 32.

28. Paraphrased from the Presidential Unit Citation as quoted in Jane Blakeney, *Heroes: U.S. Marine Corps 1861–1955—Armed Forces Awards-Flags* (Washington, D.C.: Guthrie Lithograph Co., 1957) p. 362. The 1st Marine Division, Reinforced, received the Presidential Unit Citation for actions in Chosin Reservoir and the Koto-ri area of Korea from 27 November to 11 December 1950.

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29. Details collected from Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, *Frozen Chosin: U.S. Marines at the Changjin Reservoir* (Marine Corps History and Museum Division, U.S. Marine Corps Historical Center, 2002).

30. Colonel B. P. McCoy, *The Passion of Command: The Moral Imperative of Leadership* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Association, 2007) p. 37.

31. Corporal Gary C. Cooper, "Guideposts to Leadership," *Marine Corps Gazette* (July 1960) Vol. 44, Issue 7, p. 35.

32. Paraphrased from the Medal of Honor citation presented to First Lieutenant William D. Hawkins as quoted in *The Congressional Medal of Honor: The Names, The Deeds* (Forest Ranch, CA: Sharp and Dunnigan Publications, 1984) pp. 341–42.

33. From CMC correspondence files.

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40. Paraphrased from Katie Lange’s article “Medal of Honor Monday: Marine Corps Pfc. Oscar Austin” (DoD News, January 2020). <https://www.defense.gov/News/Feature-Stories/story/Article/2059786/medal-of-honor-monday-marine-corps-pfc-oscar-austin/>. (Last accessed 12 December 2023).

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187–188. This unfinished classic is arguably the definitive treatment of the nature and theory of war. All Marine officers should consider this book essential reading.

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61. *Battle Doctrine for Front Line Leaders* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Development and Education Command, US Marine Corps Education Center, 1981) p. 7. This publication was originally written and published as a training guide by the 3d Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, under the command of General A. A. Vandegrift during World War II.

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