



Commanding Officer's Philosophy of Command



Professionalism: The profession of Arms is a noble calling that requires devotion, dedication, and sacrifice. The Nation depends upon our unique expertise to defend the freedoms that many Americans often take for granted. No one is born an expert in artillery, infantry, or logistics. It takes experience, scholarly study, and a consistent discipline of mind and body to build the world's finest fighting force. We must devote ourselves daily, ensuring we live up to this high calling. Marines are thinkers as much as we are fighters. We should all challenge ourselves both academically and intellectually, whether that takes the form of formal schools or informal scholarly pursuits.

Integrity: Of all the leadership traits, integrity is an essential foundation to the rest. It is the primary component of special trust and confidence. Our superiors, peers, and subordinates must trust that we will do what we say at all times. If you cannot be trusted to be forthright and honest on duty and off, you have no place in this Corps. I was once told that integrity is having the courage to do the right thing when no one is looking. If I can not trust that you are a man or woman of integrity, then I can not put my life, or the life of our Marines, into your hands. Our integrity will largely determine the seriousness with which we approach critical programs such as mentoring, substance abuse, sexual assault and harassment, equal opportunity, hazing, etc.

Mission First, Marine Always: This is a people business. Leadership, mission accomplishment, and unit effectiveness are all about relationships. We will invest time on duty and off, in getting to know each other beyond name tapes and billets. Consistent and well-considered counseling will occur at all levels. We will use a multitude of venues to develop personal and professional relationships to include: unit sports competitions, Marine and Family socials, and traditional Marine Corps gatherings. We will not pay lip service to making our families a priority. Your family will still need you long after the Marine Corps no longer does. Don't wait to realize the value of family. I encourage you to put your family first when possible.

Leadership developed at the lowest levels: One of the things that makes the Marine Corps unique is the belief that if the top half of the chain of command were removed from any exercise or operation, our NCOs and junior Marines would still accomplish the mission. This does not happen by observation alone; every occasion must be taken to push leadership opportunities down to the lowest level. There should be at least one day or event a week where your "alpha", second in command, or assistant fulfills your duties and responsibilities. In the field, you should look for reasonable opportunities within the confines of rules and regulations, to allow subordinates to operate as if the man or woman "one up from them" is no longer in the fight.

Are you ready to deploy tomorrow? If not, what do you need to accomplish to get there? One of our former Commandants often said we must be "ready to respond to today's crises, with today's force...Today!" For each of us, that requires a daily evaluation of where we are as a unit in terms of combat capabilities, training requirements, and family readiness. If called upon tomorrow, could your unit deploy in response to a crisis? This requires a constant assessment of strengths and weaknesses of your unit and the identification of shortfalls and gaps.

LtCol Kenny Jones
Commanding Officer
1st Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment
"NIGHTMARE"