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Subj: LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

The definitive strength of America's Battalion is the skill and will of our individual Marines and Sailors. Any successes attributed to Team "Trinity" are due to the superb talent of our teammates. These talents must be cultivated and hardened into disciplined habits by mature leaders, armed with unwavering character, proven competence, and genuine compassion to develop the confidence, cohesion, and credibility of the men and women in our battalion. Remain mindful of General Võ Nguyên Giáp's wisdom, "In war there are the two factors—human beings and weapons. Ultimately, though, human beings are the decisive factor. Human beings! Human beings!" Technology is enabling, but it will never supplant the immutable human factors in combat. We must choose to use it additively and responsibly to make us more lethal while guarding against its vulnerabilities. Our adversaries will attack our technology; be prepared to fight in technologically degraded and denied environments. "Trust Tactics" will fuel our decentralized command & control model. Winning demands our teammates exercise uncompromising integrity and sound ethical judgments "to keep our honor clean" on the uncertain battlefields of the future.

1. Character. Are you willing to make the hard but right decision even if it costs you personally? VADM James B. Stockdale stated, "Morality lurks in all the shadows surrounding our profession. To not only ignore it but fail to embrace it will ultimately ensure your failure in the service." Integrity remains the single most important trait of all leaders, regardless of rank; our word must be our bond. Honor, courage, and commitment are more than mere words. Those precious virtues are the defining aspect of each of us. Our character remains the bedrock upon which everything else we do is built. The common thread uniting all of our activities is an emphasis on the growth of integrity, courage, initiative, decisiveness, mental agility, humility, and personal accountability. These qualities and attributes are fundamental elements of effective leadership and must be aggressively nurtured across our team to instill the indispensable "fighting spirit."

2. Competence. Do you know your job, or are you striving to learn it? The duty of leaders is to build and lead combat capable units. As we train for war, we will prepare our people to go into harm's way alongside skilled comrades that they know and trust. Our abilities must be honed across the moral, mental, and physical dimensions of combat. Learning how to fight requires more than equipment mastery, battle drills, and repetition. Although technical and tactical expertise is part of it, learning how to fight requires a mastery of the situational application of combat power – developing a bias for action in uncertain environments. Heavy reliance on situational training exercises; TDGs, sand table tactics problems, small-unit SOPs, and force on force training will provide the unit with a reservoir of information and experience beyond which live-fire training alone can provide. Sensing the battlefield requires an innate understanding of the enemy and the friendly dispositions, as well as an appreciation for the aspects of the terrain. Every time we go to the field these variables should change. Use these exercises to improve our small unit leaders' decision making skills and their ability to execute advanced techniques in a fluid environment as a team. Allow your unit to make mistakes in order to draw out the lessons

learned. Use the critique as a means to highlight the relationship between decisions, actions, and results. The only mistake that is a cardinal sin is not taking action in the face of uncertainty.

3. Compassion. Do you care about your teammates' welfare more than you care about own self-interests? Proper attitude is determined by courtesy and good sense. Whether officer or enlisted, everyone demands courteous treatment. Humiliating a teammate accomplishes no good; it can only arouse a desire for revenge, and, failing that, hatred for a Marine Corps that makes such occurrences possible. Discourtesy is the last refuge of one uncertain of the authority of his position. Lieutenant General John A. Lejeune advises, "Be kindly and just in your dealings with your men. Never play favorites. Make them feel that justice tempered with mercy may always be counted on. This does not mean a slackening of discipline. Obedience to orders and regulations must always be insisted on, and good conduct on the part of the men exacted." It is a matter of observation that people respond in kind to the manner in which they are treated. If they are treated as undeserving scoundrels, they will make a special effort to live up to the assertion. Resentment against undeserving harshness leads them to conduct for which they would never otherwise be guilty. Just as certainly, men who feel that they are trusted take pride in being worthy of that trust. When they know that they are presumed to be honorable and reliable until the contrary is proved, they will be honorable and reliable in conduct.

4. Discipline. Do leaders across our team enforce discipline through coercion or persuasion? Discipline is that which distinguishes the army from the mob, and the U. S. Marine Corps from any other military organization in the world. Even under conditions that seem hopeless, discipline often turns defeat into victory; battles can never be won without it. The strength of our team is measured by the quality of our discipline. Every tactical maneuver is based upon the premise that each individual will do his part wholeheartedly. To "be a good teammate," we must each do our part to ensure we are each ready, willing and able to meet and defeat our enemy at any time and in any place. We must each prepare for the day when our life, and more importantly our teammates' lives, will depend on our individual skill as a Marine. We must each be "ready now" by being able, dependable, and accountable to meet or exceed our responsibilities. We must follow our leaders without hesitation, and trust that our leaders care more for our welfare than for their own; further we must continue on in the event our leader is lost. This can only be accomplished through strict discipline, the exacting execution of orders resulting from an intelligent, willing obedience rather than one based solely upon fear. It is the duty of everyone in to accept discipline, and, in the appropriate manner, to discipline. A disciplined Marine is confident; he knows the right thing to do, and he does it well at the right time and for the right reasons.



J. B. REID