



# COMMANDER'S INTENT FOR MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 11

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**COMMANDER'S INTENT:** As we begin our relationship together, it is important for you to understand how I do business and what is important to me. I have articulated this in person (verbally) to all Commanders and Principle Staff members --- this memorandum serves to provide follow on written guidance to be shared with the entire command. This intent, along with my direct guidance, which will develop through our day to day contact with one another, will be the basis for your decision process. It is my belief that every member of MAG-11 wants to be challenged and wants to excel. I will challenge each of you while creating an environment that will facilitate your "professional excellence & success". This environment will be one of an open, honest and candid atmosphere of shared ideas and perspectives. I expect everyone to have a passion for excellence and to be aggressive in the performance of his or her duties. I will lead by mission type orders . . . giving you the mission and desired result and challenging you with the "HOW." I won't routinely ask you for details, but when I do, I will expect you to know them.

**OBJECTIVES – FOCUS OF EFFORT:** Our mission is to provide fixed wing aviation support to the MAGTF. Our focus will be on combat readiness and family stability. We will do that by:

- *Supporting "our" Marine Corps policies, guidance, programs & ideals*
- *Supporting "what's best" for MAG-11*
- *Supporting the welfare of our Marines, Sailors and their families*

**RELATIONSHIPS:** Relationships will provide the foundation of how we do our business --- with each other, within the staff and with outside agencies / commands. All relationships will possess the foundation of trust, mutual courtesy and respect --- everyone (*regardless of rank or position*) will "always" be treated with dignity.

**MAG-11 XO:** My "Right Hand Man -- a valued advisor & confidante" . . . it should be assumed that any / all direction from him has come from me. *He has my highest trust!* Use the XO to confirm guidance and "rumors". He will be an invaluable source for checking command climate and my position on issues. *He is charged with implementing my guidance and coordinating the staff.*

**MAG-11 Sergeant Major (SgtMaj):** My "Other Right Hand Man -- also a valued advisor & confidante . . . like the XO." It should be assumed that any / all direction from him has come from me. *He too has my highest trust and is charged with implementing my guidance* . . . and, will be an invaluable source for checking command climate and my position on issues.

**PRIORITIES:** Priorities at MAG-11 will take on many complexions --- many will be resource based and be driven by good business practice . . . but all will require our collective "good sense" and "leadership". If everything is a priority . . . then nothing is a priority. Do not make the assumption that everything that comes from the Commander is a priority --- I will let you know when / if it is. Otherwise, prioritize within your organization using the enclosed guidance and your professional experience & expertise – that will serve us well and enhance success. *We will work together* to set

the priorities for MAG-11 and I need and solicit your pragmatic participation. Fight parochialism – think of the greater good when establishing your priorities. **No agendas!**

### *Commander's "Inherent" Priorities*

Mission First --- Our People "ALWAYS" . . . Our mission is to do what is right / best for the institution. Taking care of our Marines, Sailors & their families will be considered in every decision. We will maintain the highest of standards (Policies, Ideals & Images) that has come to be expected of "Our Corps."

*"Serve --- Don't Humor The Boss" . . . your jobs are not to make the Boss happy but to serve our great institution, its mission & the wonderful people in it.*

#### COMMANDER'S THOUGHTS & PREFERENCES IN DOING BUSINESS:

**ROUTINE:** There is no set routine . . . I will expect Commander's supervisors at all levels to run their organizations in the best interest of their unit and MAG-11. It is good business for the principle staff to check out with the XO in the evening before securing to ensure there are no hanging fires. Each department head should be accessible during off-duty hours for emergencies. Routines / schedules should not be established around "my" work hours / habits . . . contact me through the XO or Adjutant after hours. Make time in your day for yourselves . . . whether PT, a walk or whatever is your pleasure . . . breaks are healthy. Take your vacations! I do not want lost leave . . . but can't let everyone take the last month of the year off . . . pace yourself. Ensure your people are taking their breaks & leave. Make sure that you leave someone in charge & "empower them".

**ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATION:** Do it right the first time. Prepare correspondence as though it was going directly to the Commandant without review from anyone else – take ownership, responsibility & accountability (for facts, principles & recommendations). *Email is a good "information tool" . . . it is not a substitute for leadership!!* Write email with correctness and guard against emotion (watch sensitivities) --- you never know who will forward it. Use the chain of command . . . it works!!

- Bad news doesn't get better with age . . . provide initial reports with limited information . . . then, follow up with details as they become available
- Be sensitive to "potential" issues of visibility outside the command and provide background or heads up to the Command Element.
- Push "important / sensitive" information to the Command Element --- Don't wait for the Command Element to pull. If we ask for it . . . ask yourself why you didn't beat us to the punch.
- **I prefer short, to the point (Yes or No when appropriate) answers to questions** – avoid the temptation to "build a clock" when asked the time . . . but know the details for discussion if / when asked. Start discussions with "The Subject."
- Surprises are not normally good . . .
- **Briefings to me (inside the command) should be informal** with focus on information . . . "not cosmetics". Use tools (charts, lists, maps, etc) that you use in your everyday work. If the brief will eventually be viewed outside the command, plan for a formal presentation (slides, book, etc) and use it on me during the pre-brief.
- **Make deadlines** . . . if unable, communicate early with reasons, assistance required and revised timelines

- All problems, issues, concerns should be presented with Options / Alternatives and Recommendations.
- Awards and other recognition --- should be “timely” . . . never pass up an opportunity to recognize our people
- Performance evaluations for military & civilian “Shall Be Accurate & Timely” . . . maintain responsibility and accountability.

Take time with the new USMC Performance Reporting System (PES). . . it is both a revolutionary and evolutionary initiative in our Corps and will take our support and attention. We owe it to the Marines that we report (and review) on.

**PROFESSIONAL & SOCIAL EVENTS:** Very important. I will attempt to attend as many as possible. My absence or inability to attend “should never” be viewed as seeing the event as not important. ***Changes of Command will have my highest priority.*** Anticipate regularly scheduled social events --- often in conjunction with PME. Encourage these events within the squadrons and staff sections . . . make time for these “valuable events.”

**DECISION MAKING:** I encourage Initiative, Innovation & Decision making at “all” levels . . . “all hands” are empowered within the scope of my Commander’s Guidance & Intent to conduct business and advance the welfare of MAG-11 and the people in their charge. The development of our supervisors and youngest Marines and Sailors can only be accomplished through experience (*Remember . . . Good experience often comes from bad decisions*)

We will allow mistakes (bad decisions) for the right reasons (No Zero Defects) --- and learn from them. **We learn more from our failures than we do our successes.**

**“POLICY DECISIONS FOR MAG-11” come from one source --- the Commander**

**MAINTAIN A SENSE OF (CONTROLLED) OUTRAGE!!** When something bad, dumb or dishonest is happening around you – do something about it. Have the moral courage to do the right thing . . . whether popular or not. Remember,

- **Management . . .** is doing things right
- **Leadership . . .** is doing the right thing
- **Both are important . . .** but know the difference

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:** Strict compliance with Marine Corps Orders, Standards and Ideals --- Command Policy will be promulgated under separate correspondence.

**OUR ENVIRONMENT:** The state of police & cleanliness of aircraft and our work space(s) ***is a very high priority with me.*** We are limited by our resources, which gives more credence to taking care of those things that we have. Limited resources are no reason for uncleanness . . . take pride in where you work and live. ***Hold those not supporting these standards accountable.***

**PROFESSIONAL & CONTINUED EDUCATION:** We will have an active program at all levels and I charge Commanders and Supervisors to establish & promote these programs. This will also include opportunities at the various Clubs followed by Social Hours . . . normally on Fridays. Units should anticipate a rotating sponsorship. Attendance at these events will be a priority and Commanders / Supervisors shall support these programs by making their personnel available.

**STANDARDS:** We will maintain those standards that make us Marines (*Moral, Ethical, and Physical*).

**SKYLINE DETRACTORS:** Those “things” that when they do not “go right” tend to highlight the command and cause an unusually large proportion of effort to reduce “the thing” to an acceptable level.

- Aircraft Incidents/Accidents
- Media Encounters (*Be sensitive to those things that have media potential – “Anticipate”*)
- Hazing
- Sexual Harassment
- Officer /Troop Misconduct
- Suicides
- Accidents
- Equal Opportunity (violations)
- Be aware of others . . . work to prevent . . . keep everyone informed

**LAST THOUGHTS:**

- I prefer short / concise Email . . . if too long, I tend not to read it
- I like neatness / cleanliness . . . will tour spaces & the base and provide feedback – will expect prompt corrective action when required
- I prefer to PT in the afternoons . . . will normally keep an open schedule over the lunch hour (1130 – 1300) to work administration . . . available for walk-in traffic for “hot” issues.
- I prefer not to be a slave to my schedule (office bound)
- I have a poor memory for Names . . . address me with your name & functional area until I recognize you with regularity (my shortcoming --- not yours)
- I get cranky with “late stuff” especially late performance evaluations & untimely awards
- I like to “think out loud” . . . do not misconstrue my musing as tasking. I want to discuss before we decide on things (when time permits) and encourage your comments to my musing. Ensure we both understand taskings (scope, expectation, and timelines) before we break.
- **I believe, very strongly, in the Marines and Sailors of MAG-11 and I am committed to each member of the “Team.”**

Thomas Jefferson believed in “luck” . . . I believe in Thomas Jefferson’s philosophy that, “The harder you work – the more luck you have.” However, I would build on that by saying we can (and will) work smarter rather than harder . . . and always remember, “Hope is not a method” -- we must be engaged.

My Commander’s Intent is not (*nor is it meant to be*) all-inclusive. Rather, it sets a foundation for you (us) to understand what is important to me and to establish a common expectation. We will build on this as our relationship grows. My “AXIOMs and Thoughts” (attached) summarizes my guidance . . . use them as a reference . . . they will serve us all well.



# COMMANDER'S AXIOMS

... "and other thoughts"

Have a passionate "*Commitment to Excellence*"

Be "*Demanding and Fair*" ... don't let people off the hook

"*Empower Subordinates*" -- train them to do "your" job

Have the "*Courage to Check*" ... things seem to improve when supervisors check

One man with "*Courage*" is the Majority

"*Reasonable men can disagree*" on the allocation of "Scarce Resources"

"*Listen to your instincts*" ... they are generally correct

"*Each supervisor is responsible for moral & ethical leadership*" ... if in no other way by personal example

"*Optimism is infectuous*" ... NEVER underestimate the effects (and power) of a smile & kind word

Competition is good .. "*Teamwork is better*"

"*Hope is NOT a method*"

"*Do the unpopular thing*" before it becomes a problem or incident

Bad news never gets better with age -- "KEEP THE COMMANDER INFORMED"

I believe very strongly in these "Axioms & Thoughts" ... they will assist you in knowing who I am and my intent, which will facilitate your decision-making. I encourage each of you to show your initiative and innovation and empower each of you to make decisions within the scope of my intent. MAG-11 and we (as a team) will grow and flourish together in this environment.

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