

FIDELITY

LEADERSHIP TRAITS

1. BEARING

a. Definition. Creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance, and personal conduct at all times.

b. Significance. The ability to look, act, and speak like a leader whether or not these manifestations indicate one's true feelings. Some signs of these traits are clear and plain speech, an erect gait, and impeccable personal appearance.

c. Example. Wear clean and pressed uniforms. Avoid profane and vulgar language. Keep a trim, fit appearance. Keep your head, keep your word and keep your temper.

2. COURAGE

a. Definition. Courage is a mental quality that recognizes fear of danger or criticism, but enables a Marine to proceed in the face of it with calmness and firmness.

b. Significance. Knowing and standing for what is right, even in the face of popular disfavor, is often the leader's lot. The business of fighting and winning wars is a dangerous one; the importance of courage on the battlefield is obvious.

c. Example. Accepting criticism for making subordinates field day for an extra hour to get the job done correctly.

3. DECISIVENESS

a. Definition. Ability to make decisions promptly and to announce them in a clear, forceful manner.

b. Significance. The quality of character which guides a person to accumulate all available facts in a circumstance, weigh the facts, choose and announce an alternative which seems best. It is often better that a decision be made promptly than a potentially better one be made at the expense of more time.

c. Example. A leader who sees a potentially dangerous situation developing, immediately takes action to prevent injury from occurring. For example, if he/she sees a unit making a forced march along a winding road without road guards posted, he/she should immediately inform the unit leader of the oversight, and if senior to that unit leader, direct that proper precautions be taken.

4. DEPENDABILITY

a. Definition. The certainty of proper performance of duty.

b. Significance. The quality which permits a senior to assign a task to a junior with the understanding that it will be accomplished with minimum supervision. This understanding includes the assumption that the initiative will be taken on small matters not covered by instructions.

c. Example. The squad leader ensures that his/her squad falls out in the proper uniform without having been told to by the platoon sergeant. The staff officer, who hates detailed, tedious paperwork, yet makes sure the report meets his/her and his/her supervisor's standards before having it leave his desk.

5. ENDURANCE

a. Definition. The mental and physical stamina measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, and hardship.

b. Significance. The quality of withstanding pain during a conditioning hike in order to improve stamina is crucial in the development of leadership. Leaders are responsible for leading their units in physical endeavors and for motivating them as well.

c. Example. A Marine keeping up on a 10-mile forced march even though he/she has blisters on both feet and had only an hour of sleep the previous night. An XO who works all night to ensure that promotion/pay problems are corrected as quickly as humanly possible because he/she realizes that only through this effort can one of his/her Marines receive badly needed back-pay the following morning.

6. ENTHUSIASM

a. Definition. The display of sincere interest and exuberance in the performance of duty.

b. Significance. Displaying interest in a task, and an optimism that it *can* be successfully completed, greatly enhances the likelihood that the task *will* be successfully completed.

c. Example. A Marine who leads a cadence or offers to help carry a load that is giving someone great difficulty while on a hike despite being physically tired himself, encourages his fellow Marines to persevere.

7. INITIATIVE

a. Definition. Taking action in the absence of orders.

b. Significance. Since an NCO often works without close supervision, emphasis is placed on being a self-starter. Initiative is a founding principle of Marine Corps Warfighting philosophy.

c. Example. In the unexplained absence of the platoon sergeant, an NCO takes charge of the platoon and carries out the training schedule.

8. INTEGRITY

a. Definition. Uprightness of character and soundness of moral principles. The quality of truthfulness and honesty.

b. Significance. A Marine's word is his/her bond. Nothing less than complete honesty in all of your dealings with subordinates, peers, and superiors is acceptable.

c. Example. A Marine who uses the correct technique on the obstacle course, even when he/she cannot be seen by the evaluator. During an inspection, if something goes wrong or is not

corrected as had been previously directed, he/she can be counted upon to always respond truthfully and honestly.

9. JUDGMENT

a. Definition. The ability to weigh facts and possible courses of action in order to make sound decisions.

b. Significance. Sound judgment allows a leader to make appropriate decisions in the guidance and training of his/her Marines and the employment of his/her unit. A Marine who exercises good judgment weighs pros and cons accordingly to arrive at an appropriate decision/take proper action.

c. Example. A Marine properly apportions his/her liberty time in order to relax as well as to study.

10. JUSTICE

a. Definition. Giving reward and punishment according to the merits of the case in question. The ability to administer a system of rewards and punishments impartially and consistently.

b. Significance. The quality of displaying fairness and impartiality is critical in order to gain the trust and respect of subordinates and maintain discipline and unit cohesion, particularly in the exercise of responsibility as a leader.

c. Example. Fair apportionment of tasks by a squad leader during all field days. Having overlooked a critical piece of evidence which resulted in the unjust reduction of a NCO in a highly publicized incident, the CO sets the punishment aside and restores him to his previous grade even though he knows it will displease his seniors or may reflect negatively on his fitness report. (Also an example of courage.)

11. KNOWLEDGE

a. Definition. Understanding of a science or an art. The range of one's information, including professional knowledge and an understanding of your Marines.

b. Significance. The gaining and retention of current developments in military and naval science and world affairs is important for your growth and development.

c. Example. The Marine who not only knows how to maintain and operate his assigned weapon, but also knows how to use the other weapons and equipment in the unit.

12. LOYALTY

a. Definition. The quality of faithfulness to country, the Corps, and unit, and to one's seniors, subordinates, and peers.

b. Significance. The motto of our Corps is *Semper Fidelis*, Always Faithful. You owe unswerving loyalty up and down the chain of command: to seniors, subordinates, and peers.

c. Example. A Marine displaying enthusiasm in carrying out an order of a senior, though he may privately disagree with it. The order may be to conduct a particularly dangerous patrol. The job has to be done, and even if the patrol leader disagrees, he must impart confidence and enthusiasm for the mission to his men.

13. TACT

a. Definition. The ability to deal with others without creating hostility.

b. Significance. The quality of consistently treating peers, seniors, and subordinates with respect and courtesy is a sign of maturity. Tact allows commands, guidance, and opinions to be expressed in a constructive and beneficial manner. This deference must be extended under all conditions regardless of true feelings.

c. Example. A Marine discreetly points out a mistake in drill to a NCO by waiting until after the unit has been dismissed and privately asking which of the two methods are correct. He/she anticipates that the NCO will realize the correct method when shown, and later provide correct instruction to the unit.

14. UNSELFISHNESS

a. Definition. Avoidance of providing for one's own comfort and personal advancement at the expense of others.

b. Significance. The quality of looking out for the needs of your subordinates before your own is the essence of leadership. This quality is not to be confused with putting these matters ahead of the accomplishment of the mission.

c. Example. An NCO ensures all members of his unit have eaten before he does, or if water is scarce, he will share what he has and ensure that others do the same. Another example occurs frequently when a Marine receives a package of food from home: the delicacies are shared with everyone in the squad. Yet another form of unselfishness involves the time of the leader. If a Marine needs extra instruction or guidance, the leader is expected to make his/her free time available whenever a need arises.