



**MARINE CORPS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
LEJEUNE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY**



PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPING SUBORDINATE LEADERS

INSIST ON THE USE OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

- ❖ **HOLD** subordinate leaders responsible for the actions of those under them.
- ❖ **DELEGATE AUTHORITY** commensurate with responsibility.
- ❖ **LOWEST-LEVEL** Decisions should be made and problems solved at the lowest level in the chain of command.

TEACH YOUR SUBORDINATES WHAT TO DO

- ❖ **SET** standards and goals that can be met.
- ❖ **DAILY OBJECTIVES** Lofty goals and objectives have their place, but subordinate leaders need day-to-day objectives.
- ❖ **INSTRUCT** on what you want done, trying to avoid how.
- ❖ **LET YOUR MARINES “WORK IT OUT”** General Omar Bradley, United States Army once said it best:

“There is no better way to develop a person’s leadership than to give him a job involving responsibility and let him work it out. We should try to avoid telling him how to do it. That principle, for example is the basis of our whole system of combat orders. We tell the subordinate unit commander what we want him to do and leave the details to him. I think this system is largely responsible for the many fine leaders in our services today. We are constantly training and developing younger officers and teaching them to accept responsibility.”

RECOGNIZE ACHIEVEMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENT

- ❖ **JUDICIOUS, TIMELY, AND EFFECTIVE** use of meritorious masts, meritorious promotions, awards and special liberty will enhance leadership in a command.
- ❖ **FREQUENT ORAL AND WRITTEN ENCOURAGE** also serves to raise moral and initiative. However, do not give out awards like candy for this tends to lessen their worth and effectiveness. Marines are not stupid, and they know who among them deserves recognition and who doesn’t. When an undeserved award is given out, it cheapens the meaning of that award for those who really deserve them and demotivates those who have worked hard and received no recognition.

GIVE THOSE THAT DEMONSTRATE POTENTIAL INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY

- ❖ **USE NATURAL LEADERS** to their fullest extent. Outspoken individuals sometimes can be a value aid in influencing subordinates.



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- ❖ **USE THE “HARD CHARGERS”** to the maximum extent possible. This should again raise the example of the father and son, with the son being given even greater responsibility as he proved that he could handle it. Also, it is just common sense, since we must allow our Marines to crawl before they can walk.

GIVE POSITIVE AND DIRECT CORRECTION OF ERRORS IN JUDGMENT AND INITIATIVE

- ❖ **HONEST MISTAKES** can be tolerated if used as teaching points.
- ❖ **CORRECTION** of error early in the development of subordinate leaders will enhance their growth. Do not let mistakes grow into sore points.
- ❖ **MISTAKES ARE TO BE CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL** to the learning process and thus case in a positive light. The focus should be on whether the leader did well or poorly, but on what progress he/she was making overall to develop as a leader. Damaging the leader’s self-esteem, especially public, should be strictly avoided. The key here is that we don’t want to totally destroy a potentially good subordinate leader for making an honest mistake – he/she is trying to learn. By focusing on what went wrong rather than on what the leader did wrong, the lesson is learned and the subordinate retains some measure of self-confidence.

ENCOURAGE INITIATIVE AND RESOURCEFULNESS

- ❖ **INITIATIVE** is the stimulant to growth for any organization.
- ❖ **RECOGNIZE** a new way to accomplish a task.
- ❖ **RESOURCEFULNESS** is desirable in all leaders. A subordinate who is an initiator and resourceful is highly desired.

HOLD SUBORDINATES RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS

- ❖ **NOT ONLY ARE SUBORDINATE LEADERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR PERSONAL ACTIONS**, they are also responsible for the actions of those they lead. This is sometimes a tough message to get across to subordinate leaders.

INSTILL VALUES

- ❖ **LEADERS MUST EMPHASIZE THE CORE PROFESSIONAL VALUES OF OUR LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY;** loyalty to the nation and the Marine Corps, loyalty to the unit, personal responsibility, and selfless service.

ACCEPT INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY WILLINGLY AND INSIST THAT SUBORDINATES DO THE SAME

- ❖ **“CAN DO”** is a motto that bears attention. Seeking responsibility is the mark of a leader. As leaders we must seek increased responsibility for ourselves and our subordinates.

Adapted from MCTP 6-10B Marine Corps Values: A User’s Guide for Discussion Leaders, Chap. 20 “Developing Subordinate Leaders,” p. 20-3 to 20-5 (1998)



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**STRESS THE FACT THAT THE LEADER MUST BE APPROACHABLE BY SUBORDINATES
IN AN INFORMAL BUT NOT A FAMILIAR WAY**

- ❖ **IT MEANS A FRANK, OPEN APPROACH** to problems or mistakes. A relationship must be fostered between subordinates and leaders that is based on trust and confidence, not on fear of retribution.

**ENSURE SUBORDINATES RECEIVE THE PROPER FEEDBACK ABOUT THEIR
PERFORMANCE THROUGH TIMELY COUNSELING**

- ❖ **SUBORDINATES WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE ERRORS UNLESS** they are guided along in the right direction. Additionally, counseling lets them know that you are concerned with their development.