



United States Marine Corps  
Lejeune Leadership Institute



## LtGen John A. Lejeune: Relations between Officers and Men

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**Author/Presenter:** Major General John A Lejeune, USMC  
Commandant of the Marine Corps  
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Young Marines respond quickly and readily to the exhibition of qualities of leadership on the part of their officers. Each officer must endeavor by all means in his power to develop within himself those qualities of leadership, including industry, justice, self-control, unselfishness, honor, and courage, which will fit him to be a real leader of men and which will aid in establishing the relationship described below.

The spirit of comradeship and brotherhood in arms which has traditionally existed throughout the ranks of the Marine Corps is a vital characteristic of the Corps. It must be fostered and kept alive and made the moving force in all Marine Corps organizations.

The relation between officers and enlisted men should in no sense be that of superior and inferior nor that of master and servant, but rather that of teacher and scholar. In fact, it should partake of the nature of the relation between father and son, to the extent that officers, especially commanders, are responsible for the physical, mental, and moral welfare, as well as the discipline and military training of the men under their command who are serving the Nation in the Marine Corps.

The recognition of this responsibility on the part of officers is vital to the well-being of the Marine Corps. It is especially so for the reason that so large a proportion of the men enlisting are under 21 years of age. These men are in the formative period of their lives and officers owe it to them, to their parents, and to the Nation, that when discharged from the service they should be far better men physically, mentally, and morally than they were when they enlisted.

To accomplish this task successfully a constant effort must be made by all officers to fill each day with useful and interesting instructions and wholesome recreation for the men. This effort must be intelligent and not perfunctory, the object being not only to eliminate idleness, but to train and cultivate the bodies, the minds, and the spirit of our men.

It will be necessary for officers not only to devote their close attention to the many questions affecting the comfort, health, morals, religious guidance, military training, and discipline of the men under their command, but also to actively enlist the interest of their men in building up and maintaining their bodies in the finest physical condition; to encourage them to improve their professional knowledge and to make every effort by means of historical, educational, and patriotic addresses to cultivate in their hearts a deep abiding love of the Corps and Country. The provisions of the above apply generally to the relationships of non-commissioned officers with their subordinates and apply specifically to non-commissioned officers who may be exercising command authority.

