



Fighter Discussion Guide

It may seem a bit redundant and unnecessary to have fighter as one of the foundations of the leadership development program. It is of course fighting that all Marines have consistently been training to do more efficiently since joining the Marine Corps. It is also the foundational mission of the Marine Corps to fight and win our nations battles. “Fighter” maintains numerous areas of personal and professional development however. In addition to MOS and Common Skills, ‘Fighter’ includes communication skills, leadership skills, and PME. Of the six foundational areas of leadership incorporated into the LDP, fighter identifies as the nucleus of the program. By focusing on PME, leadership and communication skills, the LDP becomes better-rounded stressing that smart leaders, communicating effectively with other Marines results in enhanced unit performance and readiness. The USMC Fitrep includes sections on Communication, Leadership, and PME. This provides the foundation for a command to emphasize such skills challenging holistic development of Marines. The old adage applies, inspect and reward what you expect. The LDP provides the resources and structure to inspect otherwise abstract concepts.

This guide is divided into three sub-headings. Part one is communication skills, part two is leadership skills, and part three is PME.

Communication Skills

Communication skills are vital to Marines of all ranks and positions. “Knife-handing, devil dogging, and drill-instructor speak” are of diminishing value the longer an individual is in the Marine Corps. Instead, established methods of personal interaction must replace the degrading talk of entry-level training. The LDP considers the Communication, Consulting, Counseling and Coaching package taught at the USMC recruiting management/recruiter instructor course as a proven method of effective communication still based in military professionalism.

Build Rapport:

The initial aspect of communication skills is used to build positive relationships between senior and subordinates and enhance collaboration and team work among all Marines. Building rapport is developing a relationship through interpersonal skills. You build rapport in purposeful conversations and in everyday interactions with subordinates, peers, other command members, and members of the community. Proper rapport building develops trusting relationships and encourages open honest exchange of information that helps you understand others’ perspectives.

Situation A:

1. Considers a situation in your setting in which relationship building or building rapport skills are not being used well.
2. Discuss how you can apply rapport building skills to address your situation. For instance:
 - a. Consider how listening to yourself might identify what is not going well.
 - Is your communication with others purposeful where there is a definite outcome you are trying to achieve?
 - Are you dominating the conversation through one-way communication or allowing two-way communication?
 - Have you received by-in from other Marines and acknowledged their input?
 - b. Identify nonverbal information that is evident in your interactions.
 - To demonstrate interest in your Marines responses, do you maintain eye contact and actively listening while they are talking to you?
 - Do you also show a genuine interest by occasionally nodding your head or interjecting with words that encourage the other person to continue?
 - Do you watch for nonverbal cues from others such as avoiding eye contact, slumping, etc?
 - c. How ready for change do you believe your team is?
 - d. How might your verbal communications (responses, open-ended questions, and reflections) change to enhance relationships?
3. What are some other things you have done or seen others do that help build rapport with Marines or even civilians?

Situation B:

1. Think of a time when you have encountered a person you work with who was extremely challenging. What do you find most difficult in relationships with seniors, subordinates, or peers?
2. Pick two skills that might help you in these difficult situations.
3. How might this look and sound? Try it out with your Marines or write a play-by-play as you imagine it. Read it to your Marines for feedback.

Personal Reflections on Building Rapport

This aspect of the discussion guide can be carried out as an alternative group discussion with your Marines. Ask each Marine to write a brief response and share with one other Marine.

1. Most people struggle with judgments about other people. When do you find yourself struggling most with judgments about other Marines.
2. How might a lack of empathy be hindering your ability to communicate positively?
3. Can you see yourself committing to changing one behavior in the next few months? Write your commitment down or share it with another Marine.

Listen with a Purpose:

Your listening skills will help you identify opportunities you can use to continue to build a relationship with others with the aim of gaining their buy-in to your plans. Active listening is a critical component of the tasks facing today's leaders. Active listening is a person's willingness and ability to hear and understand. At this core, active listening is a state of mind that involves paying full and careful attention to the other person, avoiding premature judgment, reflecting understanding, clarifying information, summarizing, and sharing. By learning and committing to the skills and behaviors of active listening, leaders can become more effective listeners and, over time, improve their ability to lead.

1. Why do you think it is important to clarify and confirm when you might disagree with or react strongly to what the person is saying?
2. What are some other techniques that you use to be an effective active listener?
3. What are some challenges that you have encountered or still overcoming in the area of active listening?
4. What is the impact of poor listening?
5. What are the benefits of using active listening?
6. How is listening a critical communication skill?
7. Do you suspend judgment and refrain from providing your point of view until you understand the mentee's point?
8. Do you listen for whole meaning, facts, and distinguish them from personal opinions?
9. Do you listen for changes in tone of voice, rate of speech, and volume?
10. Do you make your surroundings conducive to listening (quiet, no interruption, etc.)?

Communicate Properly:

Effective leaders are competent communicators. Leaders must be able to explain themselves in written and oral forms so Marines understand what they are supposed to do, at what level it is to be done, and when it is to be done. Some leaders run into stumbling blocks that are caused by bad communication experiences, understanding of concepts, and expectations.

1. What are some examples of leaders you know who were competent communicators?
2. Do you know good leaders who you thought were poor communicators?
3. What are some examples of stumbling blocks to effective communication?

Resources:

-Marine Corps Recruiting Command

-Center For Creative Leadership: Active Listening, Improve Your Ability to Listen and Lead. Michael H. Hoppe. 2006. www.ccl.org

-MSL 201 L08b Interpersonal Communication. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/102958864/MSL-201-L08b-Interpersonal-Communication>

Leadership Skills

We make Marines. We win our nation's battles. We develop quality citizens. These are the promises the Marine Corps makes to our nation and to our Marines. They are the reason for our demanding recruit training and stringent officer selection process. Upon reading the oath of enlistment and or the oath of office, Marines enter into a covenant with their leadership and their subordinates to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. Marines have shown their resiliency, resourcefulness and capacity of heroic feats and sacrifice. They expect their leaders to respect them as valued members of effective and cohesive organization and to embrace the essence of leadership.

The leadership skills guide is designed to support the Marine Corps Leadership Development Program. It is intended to impart skill sets to Marines and serve as a leader's guide to counseling, coaching and mentoring as it relates to the Marine Corps.

Counseling, coaching, and mentoring are actively applied elements of leadership. All three are similar because they are forms of interaction between individuals, and in some cases groups, but they vary widely in scope and purpose. Counseling, the most prescriptive of the three, is designed to address and increase the performance of an individual against a tangible standard or metric. Coaching, on the other hand, is task centric and is generally not as formalized as counseling. Mentoring assumes a more holistic bent as it centers on personally and professionally broadening the recipient (mentee), not just what they do or how they do it. The three are related, but are distinctly different in their perception, definition, and application.

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to codify leadership skills in a comprehensive volume to provide Marines with leadership skills in order to assist them in their personal and professional development, to build the requisite talent pool with the competencies required to perform successfully in leadership positions, ensure leadership continuity and return Marines better able to function in civilian society.

Scope: This guide will address the following topics necessary to become a more effective and complete leader:

- Leadership Definitions
- Coaching Skills
- Counseling Skills
- Mentoring Skills

Leadership Traits Defined

Good leadership begins and ends with the basics. All Marines are well versed in the basics of good leadership and the traits as they are laid out in the 14 leadership traits and ingrained during entry-level training. These traits are worth regular review for all Marines, and leaders should strive for ways to make these traits relevant by finding real-world examples.

Leadership Principles Defined

- Be technically and tactically proficient
- Know yourself and seek self-improvement
- Know your Marines and look out for their welfare
- Keep your Marines informed
- Set the example
- Ensure assigned tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished
- Train your Marines as a team
- Make sound and timely decisions
- Develop a sense of responsibility among subordinates
- Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions

Coaching : The process whereby a Marine is given individualized instruction to increase his/her knowledge, skills, and performance in a specific area.

Coaching focuses on the addressing a discrete task or series of tasks that require improvement or refinement. The desired end state for coaching is for the recipient to improve his or her competence in accomplishing something, and the methodology used is for the coach to use interpersonal interaction to impart techniques that will improve the ability of the recipient to accomplish whatever the subject of the coaching is. Coaching occurs whenever an individual Marine provides another, or group of others, with the benefit of his or her experience.

There is not necessarily a hierarchical relationship between coaching participants, and coaching is not solely utilized in the context of leadership development. Formalized coaching is performed as a routine part of instruction and training in the Marine Corps as well as a tool for leadership development.

Types of Coaching

Coaching occurs at all levels and is a continuous process.

- **Formal School:** In the formal school setting, coaching is a technique of instruction intended to sharpen the abilities of the student on a particular skill set. Coaching in Education.
- **Informal:** In an informal setting at an operational unit, coaching is performed by “old hands” as they break in newly joined Marines. Coaching in training.
- **Day to Day:** Between these two extremes lie the varied other venues for coaching, such as during training exercises, inspections, deployments, and combat. Applied Coaching

Coaching as a component of education

The Marine Corps, as an institution, invests a significant amount of time and effort into developing leaders, and a part of that effort is educating Marines on the fundamentals of

leadership. Whether born or made, the Marine leader is expected to be a student in a very rigorous school of leadership. Coaching is a part of that education and is taught at various professional schools, at all levels, across the Marine Corps.

Coaching as a component of training

The Marine Corps does two things- it makes Marines and wins battles. Both of these tasks are accomplished through training, and a significant component to training is coaching. Hours spent in the classroom are followed by application of the lessons that Marines have learned, and a part of the evaluation of that application is the process of coaching. This transition between theory and practice is facilitated by a coach, who helps refine the myriad tasks required to become a proficient shooter.

Coaching as a component of application

Coaching is a continuous process, and it is not confined to the after action review or to the overseers of training exercises. It occurs during training as individuals with show others how to perform actions during the course of their duties or the accomplishment of their missions. It is during the carrying out of tasks that they are also improved through coaching. This form of coaching is most commonly performed where the rubber meets the road-at the small unit and tactical level.

The impact of coaching at all levels cannot be overstated. What makes coaching viable is the basis of mutual respect between participants from which it springs. As leaders, it is imperative for each and every Marine to be capable of learning lessons from others with more experience, and in turn passing that knowledge on to others with less experience. For it to be effective, the coach must be proficient in the subject that he or she is coaching, and the recipient must be receptive to the lessons that are being presented. As professional Marines, we learn from each other, and by doing so make ourselves and our fellow Marines better.

Coaching Characteristics

Coaching is a process, which enhances potential in individuals to improve performance. It is about helping someone to learn rather than teaching them. Coaching utilizes hard skills (set standards and reviewing performance) and soft skills (recognizing talent and developing potential)

Often it is about addressing the “attitude or motivation of an individual” which all too regularly limits their performance, progress and potential.

There are four facets of coaching we must keep in mind:

- Coach as a guide (To keep individuals on target with performance and standards)
- Coach as an instructor (To focus students on Learning Objectives)
- Coach as a motivator (To motivate students to perform well)

- Coach as a mentor (So students have the desire to emulate your performance as a Instructor)

Coaching Process

Throughout, the emphasis is on guiding the person towards finding his or her own solutions to their own performance problems. In this way, raising awareness is about getting the people to think for themselves for the purpose of self-education or self-evaluation.

The stages of the coaching process are as follows:

- Raise Awareness.
 - During this stage, the coach helps the person create a vision of their goal by identifying: The leader uses effective questioning and active listening skills to learn:
 - What they want to achieve
 - Why they might want to achieve it
 - How they intend to do so
- Generate Responsibility. During this stage, the coach challenges the person to take action towards making their goal a reality by:
 - Making them aware of benefits and consequences
 - Clarify their readiness to do so
- Facilitate Performance. During this stage, the coach supports the person as they take action towards making their goal a reality and deals with the challenge of doing so. The Leader can use the resources provided on the LDP website to assist in facilitating the performance and improvement of their Marines.
 - Empathetic understanding and support enable a leader to assist the Marine.

Counseling

Counseling. A process of two-way communication between a Marine senior and a Marine junior to help the junior achieve or maintain the highest possible level of performance. It both supports and reinforces good performance as well as corrects deficiencies.

Counseling is a directed task performed by the senior in a senior / subordinate relationship. It involves two-way communication between a senior Marine and a junior Marine to help the junior achieve or maintain the highest possible level of performance. As such, counseling is the invaluable tool that establishes the expectations of performance that both the senior and junior recognize. It is performed in various forms, with the central focus being the past performance of the junior Marine and how to maintain or improve it in the future. It is generally the most formalized of the three processes (coaching, counseling and mentoring).

Definition: Counseling is a process by which a senior provides a junior feedback on proficiency, performance, and/or conduct. The purpose of counseling is to present the expected standard and to articulate how the recipient measures up to that standard. Additionally, it serves to provide positive reinforcement for good work and to pass on knowledge, skills, and techniques to improve in areas deemed deficient. The critical element of counseling is that it is a formalized (although often informal) process that utilizes the comparison of performance to a discernible metric.

Following entry-level training is where counseling rises dramatically in importance. Instructors and leaders at the various schools and detachments reinforce the standards that new Marines have recently learned. Instructors and the staffs of training detachments are also accountable for the continued development of the persona of their charges, and ensuring that the valuable lessons that they learned during initial training are not forgotten.

After completing Military Occupational Specialty training, the Marine is finally prepared to integrate into his or her first unit. It is at this critical juncture that establishing standards is arguably most important; the Marine has left the structured environs of the training pipeline and is in the vulnerable position of entering their first unit.

Every Marine has expectations, and those expectations are framed by his or her experiences in the Marine Corps as well as the standards that fellow Marines and leaders set. Counseling is imperative to manage the expectations of the Marine and to reconcile them with the expectations of the unit and the organization as a whole. Every Marine, whether he or she is a newly minted PFC, a Staff NCO, or an officer, wants to know where they stand and what is expected of them. Counseling is the tool that establishes these expectations and articulates how well the individual Marine meets them.

All Marines, new and old, transition between units, bases, and commands. As Marines move, expectations of the new unit and its leaders must be clearly made known to the newly joined Marine. Many, if not most, of these expectations will not be new, however, they will likely be slightly different than those from the Marine's previous unit. It is the responsibility of the leader to provide the left and right lateral limits to the subordinate Marine, and it is the duty of the junior Marine to dialog with the senior in order to make sure that a clear understanding of expectations is articulated.

Types of Counseling

Counseling can be generally divided into two types: formal and informal. Formal counseling is directive in nature and follows published regulations and orders. It is usually conducted in an official capacity between a senior and a junior Marine, and is documented. Informal counseling is less strict in its execution, and less likely to be documented.

Formal Counseling

Formal counseling describes expectations of the senior Marine, the unit, and the Marine Corps to the junior Marine, as well as the requirements for successful job performance. It should be documented by the senior Marine, and junior Marine should leave the counseling session with a full and complete understanding of what is expected of him or her. Good leaders use counseling as a regular part of normal interaction between seniors and juniors, used to reward, correct, and develop.

Frequent, consistent, and relevant counseling provided to Marines will ensure that they do not deviate radically from their professional and technical expectations. Infrequent and inconsistent counseling, however, does not provide the proper grounding most Marines desire, and some Marines need, to stay on course. The result of a poor counseling program usually manifests itself in a significant number of “leadership problems” and Marines who get into various forms of trouble. The cumulative effect of a group of Marines who know their jobs, understand what is expected of them, and receive feedback that improves their performance will produce results that far outweigh a similar group of Marines who lack such a foundation of expectation.

Informal Counseling

Informal counseling is that performance based interaction between senior and junior that occurs outside the formal counseling environment. The simplest and probably most common form of informal counseling occurs every day, and in every place Marines live, train, and operate. It is the simple, on the spot praise for a job well-done or correction of a deficiency.

Informal counseling is not only for remediation of errant performance or behavior, nor is it intended solely for reinforcing positive performance through praise. It serves another important purpose as well, that purpose being the continuous reinforcement of the established standards. It reinforces the intent and message presented in formal counseling sessions by serving as a reminder of what the standard is, and by applying small course changes that preclude the need to jam the rudder hard over in one direction to correct any errant behavior or performance.

Mentoring:

In addition to coaching and counseling, the LDP encourages mentoring relationships between Marines. Unlike the previous USMC mentoring order, the intent of the LDP is to create an environment where mentor/mentee relationships develop. Leaders throughout the unit must look for ways to mentor junior Marines. A spirit of “pay it forward” must prevail, meaning mentor others as a pay back to those who have mentored you. There are various types of mentoring: One-to-One, Formal, Peer, and Informal Mentoring. Marines should look for ways to participate in mentoring relationships IOT better themselves by learning from others and provide knowledge and guidance to others.

One-to-one mentoring places one senior Marine with one junior Marine. The mentor and mentee should meet regularly and discuss various issues. The mentor usually spends more time listening

to the mentee, and allowing the mentee to develop themselves. The mentor merely provides guidance and suggestions.

Formal Mentoring: The one-to-one leadership that a senior exercises in order to help a subordinate succeed personally and professionally. Formal mentoring in the Marine Corps occurs within command-directed programs that emphasize engaged leadership, goal-setting, and accountability. Formal mentoring can also be seen as counseling between members of the same command. This can grow into a mentoring relationship.

Peer Mentoring: Provides an opportunity for Marines of equal rank to assist others with a specific subject matter that one has mastered. Examples of this can be physical fitness, MCMAP, PME, or MOS specific skills.

It is the objective of the LDP program to create repeated environments where Marines interact with one another discussing a wide range of topics and addressing a broad scope of issues.

This portion is designed to provide the user skills and behaviors to guide them through the mentoring process:

- What is a successful mentor
- Mentoring roles and responsibilities
- Different mentoring styles
- The mentor-mentee relationship
- How to identify a mentee
- Cultivation of the relationship
- Pitfalls to avoid
- Positive shared effects by the mentor, the mentee, and the organization.

What is a successful mentor?

A successful mentor is: supportive, patient, respectful and trustworthy. Mentors support the needs and aspirations of a mentee. Their supportive attitude is critical to the successful development of the relationship. Through their support, a mentor must encourage the mentee to accept challenges and overcome prospective difficulties. Mentors are patient and willing to devote time executing their mentoring responsibilities. A mentor is someone who has earned the respect of peers and/or their particular MOS community. It is important that this person be someone to whom others can look at as a positive role model. The trust they engender is built upon their competence, personal and professional skills.

Just as a mentor is more than a teacher, a mentee is more than a student. A mentee, as a bright and motivated individual, is the future of an organization; the insurance that a well-trained, high-quality force will exist to meet long-term needs of the nation. Mentees represent a wide range of individuals in terms of age and experience. One mentor describes a mentee as a "diamond in the rough--ready to be cut and polished into the type of Marine our nation needs."

Together, the mentor and mentee share mentoring experiences that, over time, can build a successful and enriching relationship. Of course, the success of this relationship depends on both the mentor and the mentee. Both you and your mentee must want the relationship to work. You must cooperate with each other to make the most of the experience.

Roles and Responsibilities

There are different roles a mentor can assume: Teacher, Guide, Counselor, Motivator, Sponsor, Coach, Advisor, Agent, Role Model, Door Opener

The role you assume depends on the needs of your mentee and on the relationship you build with your mentee. On any given day, your mentee may require you to perform one of these roles, or all of them.

The mentor-mentee relationship

The first essential of a successful mentoring relationship is respect. Respect is established when the mentee recognizes knowledge, skills, and abilities in the mentor that he or she would like to possess. The mentee then attempts to acquire these much-admired characteristics. Respect usually increases over time.

Trust is another essential of a successful mentoring relationship. Trust is a two-way street--both mentors and mentees need to work together to build trust. There are four factors to building trust:

Communication: You need to talk and actively listen to your mentee. It is important to value your mentee's opinions and let your mentee know that he or she is being taken seriously. Your mentee can help to build trust in the relationship by honestly relaying his or her goals and concerns and by listening to your opinions.

Availability: You should be willing to meet with your mentee whenever he or she needs you. Remember the "open door" policy--that is, you should keep the door open as often as possible. Your mentee should also make time for this relationship.

Predictability: Your mentee needs you to be dependable and reliable. You should make a point to give consistent feedback, direction, and advice. You should also be able to predict the needs of your mentee. Conversely, your mentee needs to be consistent in his or her actions and behavior. Although your mentee will grow and change during the mentoring relationship, drastic changes in behavior or attitude could signal a problem. Look for these indicators of potential trouble in your mentoring relationship:

Loyalty: Never compromise your relationship by discussing your mentee's problems or concerns with others. Keep the information discussed between the two of you in strict confidence.

Mentoring Responsibilities Defined in Section F, Leadership, of Our Current FITREP

The LDP encourages a renewed focus on the mentoring and leadership portions of fitrep evaluations. Instead of being a way for leaders to balance their profile, taking this portion seriously sets the proper command climate for mentoring relationships to flourish throughout the command.

Developing Subordinates

Committed to train, educate, and challenge Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates.

Maintains an environment that allows personal and professional development. Ensures subordinates participate in all mandated development programs.

Develops and institutes innovative programs, to include PME, that emphasizes personal and professional development of subordinates. Challenges subordinates to exceed their perceived potential, enhancing unit morale and effectiveness. Creates an environment where all Marines are confident to learn through trial and error. As a mentor, prepares subordinates for increased responsibilities and duties.

Widely recognized and emulated as a teacher, coach, and leader. Any Marine would desire to serve with this Marine because they know they will grow personally and professionally. Subordinate and unit performance far surpassed expected results due to MROs mentorship and team building talents. Attitude toward subordinate development is infectious, extending beyond the unit.

Ensuring Well-Being of Subordinates

Genuine interest in well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care their own.

Deals confidently with issues pertinent to subordinate welfare and recognizes suitable courses of action that support subordinates' well-being. Applies available resources, allowing subordinates to effectively concentrate on the mission.

Instills and/or reinforces a sense of responsibility among junior Marines for themselves and their subordinates. Actively fosters the development of and uses support systems for subordinates which improve their ability to contribute to unit mission accomplishment. Efforts to enhance subordinate welfare improve the unit's ability to accomplish mission.

Noticeably enhances subordinates' well-being, resulting in a measurable increase in unit effectiveness. Maximizes unit and base resources to provide subordinates with the best support available. Proactive approach serves to energize unit members to "take care of their own" thereby correcting potential problems before they can hinder subordinates effectiveness. Widely recognized for techniques and policies that produce results and build morale. Builds strong family atmosphere. Puts motto Mission first, Marines Always.

PME and the Commandants Reading Program

"Preparation for war is an expensive, burdensome business, yet there is one important part of it that costs very little---study."

Field Marshall Viscount Slim

There is a renewed emphasis across the Marine Corps on Professional Military Education. The Commandant released the updated reading list in January of 2013, selection for resident Intermediate and Top-Level School is becoming more competitive, and efforts to improve the overall level of intellect across the force are considerable. The Marine Corps dwindling budget combined with wide-ranging potential missions require mental flexibility in leaders. Leaders must not only be conscious of latest trends and emphasis on PME, they must also recognize this emphasis is not a trend, but absolutely critical to keeping faith with our Marines and our service. A solid PME plan greatly enhances a units training cycle and contributes to the readiness of individual Marines.

Our force has contributed and sacrificed significantly in the conflicts of the past 12 years and Marines will continue to fight heroically in the most difficult of circumstances. It is imperative the leadership sets the example in terms of professional reading and intellectual growth to make sure these efforts are not in vain. There are multiple ways to integrate PME into a units culture, all of which require prioritization from the command and dedication amongst individual Marines. The Commandant released a white paper in November of 2012 outlying the 30 year old body, 5000 year old mind concept. The guidance from the highest levels is clear:

<http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/2215/699282/CMC-White-Letter-4-12.pdf>

Commanders will naturally understand the importance of PME, but many will look for the best way to implement the program within their unit, and what measurable positive effects will result. A recent Gazette article outlines one way to do such a thing “A Battalion Reading Policy: Improving Baseline Skills and Knowledge” <http://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/article/battalion-reading-policy>

At levels subordinate to the Battalion there are multiple ways for a leader to promote a culture of reading and intellectual growth in a unit. The following are a list of questions any leader can use to generate discussion with Marines and slant the conversation as to the importance of making professional reading a regular part of every Marines daily schedule.

1. What are you reading?
2. Are you familiar with the Commandants Reading List? What are the four Commandant’s Choice books?
3. Which of the books have you read?
4. Do you know the books on the list for your rank?

The next step is of course to ensure that the time a Marine invests in reading is not wasted. Often times, people will read books and be unsure about why the book is important, and why is it even being recommended. This is where leadership and guidance for a book come in. Leaders should consider reading books along with their subordinates and generating questions for discussion

from the books on the list. The CPRL website has a “Discussion Guides” tab that provides generic questions for all books and is currently being populated with question and discussion guides for each book on the list to help readers and leaders alike. Additionally, a simple internet search of any book will allow a leader to read either a book review or other materials to assist in extracting key themes from each book to assist in guiding discussions. The key is, leaders are engaged and aware of what their Marines are reading, and understand the core tenets and themes of these books.

<http://guides.grc.usmcu.edu/discuss>

Marine Corps University has also established the Unit Commanders PME reference site which contains rank relevant tabs with question and discussion guides or various PME related topics. These tabs have mini-lessons imbedded that a small unit leader can use to facilitate discussion on either leadership related issues or PME based topics. Many of the topics are tied closely to resident PME and will benefit any Marine in various portions of their career.

<http://guides.grc.usmcu.edu/content.php?pid=312696&sid=2559292>

The reading list, MCI’s, Marine Net, and PME serve as a sufficient foundation of materials Marines have access to. It is imperative that leaders embrace the importance of professional reading and study and establish a culture of intellectual development within their units. Although the effects will likely not be immediately apparent, informed decisions rooted in the study of our profession will be the eventual outcome.