

Foundational Leadership: Building Our Non-Commissioned Officers

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LD: 850 Leadership Integrated Capstone

Granite State College

May 30, 2021

Author Note

This is an assignment submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science (M.S.).

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my wife for always pushing me to do my schoolwork and complete my goals.

I would like to thank my parents for always being my sounding board.

I would like to thank the Marine Corps and all those within that have made me into the person I am today.

I would like to thank all the teachers and staff at Granite State without them I would be lost in a world full of uneducated people.

Abstract

This paper is a look into the leadership training model provided to Junior Enlisted Marines. It reviews the eight aspects of Leadership the Marine Corps requires its leader to know, and it expects senior leaders to teach. In a review of Marine Corps publications, books on great leaders, after-action of past battles, a survey of junior leaders, and a review into current business organizations' leadership practice. A strong argument can be made for the potential improvement to the model the Marine Corps uses.

Keywords: Leadership, Principles, Traits, Training.

Foundational Leadership: Building Our Non-Commissioned Officers

The question is what we want leaders to know, is a hard one to answer, outside of everything. We want people that know it all, can find it all, can do it all. Abraham Lincoln said I must die or be better (Goodwin, 2019). For me that saying” die or do better”, means a leader who is always improving, always moving forward, always seeking. The Marine Corps demands that all leaders know 8 things, the leadership principles, the leadership traits, leadership styles, the known, the unknown, the mind, the body, the spirit (MCDP-1/MCTP 6-10B). Sun Tzu said, “anciently the skillful warriors first made themselves invincible and awaited the enemy’s moment of vulnerability” (Griffith, 2009). Made themselves invincible, through training, through knowledge, through work, then they waited for the enemy.

We go through several schools to be proficient in our technical capabilities, but how many schools develop us as better leaders. None of the Career courses impact our world because they are not designed for the infantry. They are designed to get everyone else on our level, they put together patchwork courses while asking Marines to drink the Kool-Aid. Thomas Ricks points out numerous times that the Marine Corps is more about rah, rah, Marine Corps than about technical talks on leadership and philosophy. That worked for us in the World War eras but showed its decline in Vietnam and later the Middle East. The Corps invested all its time and allocation to Officers, “One of the answers was obeying orders whatever happens. Almost every man in this unit knew that the area they were about to enter was dangerous. Also, one of the younger officers even tried to get some superior officers on the radio to warn them about the possibilities of an avalanche in that area. When nothing was heard, they still proceeded into the area. They followed orders and were obedient, even if they knew the danger. And the rest is now history.” (Bergh, 2017). As the evolution of war and the ease of access of education we stand on

a moment where we ask an 18-year-old to call in strike missile but refuse to allocate time to teach him Plato or Socrates, yet “talented officers are retained to teach in the army school system but stripped combat units of the most experienced officer” (Kolenda, 2021). When looking up leadership principles and traits for the Marine Corps, the only authorized publication (MCTP 6-10B) a guide for leader discussion, only talks about them in small bits of information with ambiguity for those that led the discussion.

Our job as infantrymen is to become the best warfighter we can be and then wait until we are needed. To come home ragged, broken, dirty, and be called “magnificent bastards” as we walk through our country’s gates (Drury, 2009). We must allocate time and resources to training our current and future leaders in these ten aspects. Countless studies have shown a direct correlation with, principles, traits, and style having an impact on workplace culture, (Squires, 2020) “In this process followers perceive the relationship with their leader as going beyond the standard economic contract and the parties then operate based on trust, goodwill, and the perception of mutual obligations” (Bishop, 2018). We need to train our Marines to this foundational knowledge and build upon it for the lifetime of their career. We start with the ten foundational steps and add to them at each growth/promotion level. This will give us a force who can not only physically handle all tasks but mentally as well, “Those skilled in war subdue the enemy army without battle, capture his cities without assaulting them and overthrow his state without protracted operations – Sun Tzu” (Griffin, 2009). This issue is not only important right now it is important to the future. As battle as far fought less and less in the trenches it comes to the small unit leader making tactical decisions that affect the lives of what could be thousands, I would want that person to know how to use their weapons as well when to not use that weapon. I would want him to be able to speak and teach the foundational levels of leadership.

At the heart of “Building our Nco’s” is two deficiencies, time and training. Time must be allocated to go over the information and a training plan specific to the Nco corps needs to be developed to run concurrently with group-level training (battalion, company, platoon level). For too long we have associated Nco’s with junior enlisted. The more time and training you put into a product the better the end product will be. If the same mindset went into building Nco’s, how powerful could we make the “backbone of the Corps”.

Literature Review

Leadership Principles

The Marine Corps has established 11 leadership principles that each Marine must learn and strive to Master, Know yourself and seek self-improvement, Be technically and tactically proficient, Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates, Make sound and timely decisions, Set the example, Know your Marines and look out for their welfare, Keep your Marines informed, Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions, Ensure tasks are understood supervised and accomplished, Train your Marines as a team, Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities (MCTP 6-10B, 2016). These principles establish an institutionalized process, therefore, conforming Marines to the cultural climate of the Marine Corps, “Therefore, institutionalization is the process of transforming beliefs and actions in rules of social conduct that, after established by the acceptance, involves behavioral standardization, reaching social relations among members of the institution, in a controlled manner, keeping stable the environment.” (de Souza, 2017).

One of the first books a Marine is required to read (Leading Marines/MCWP-610) has one page dedicated to the leadership Principles. While the leadership discussion book (something most Marine would not see until 10 years plus) breaks down each principle with in-depth

guidance on its practice and its improvement. Furthering the argument that the Corps has allocated too many resources to those higher up on the totem pole than those at the lowest end. Investing in additional time for junior leaders to learn and understand these principles would be/is pivotal to our success as an organization. If we break each principle down to its individual level, we see each one has significant value on its own, (on and off the battlefield) put together, make as Sun Tzu said a skillful warrior.

MCTP 6-10 Defines the Leadership principles as such:

1. Know yourself and seek self-improvement - With knowledge of yourself, and your experience and knowledge of group behavior, you can determine the best way to deal with any given situation.
2. Be technically and tactically proficient – As a Marine, you must demonstrate your ability to accomplish the mission, and to do this you must be capable of answering questions and demonstrating competence in your MOS.
3. Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates - When you properly delegate authority, you demonstrate faith in your Marines and increase their desire for greater responsibilities. If you fail to delegate authority, you indicate a lack of leadership, and your subordinates may take it to be a lack of trust in their abilities.
4. Make sound and timely decisions - The leader must be able to rapidly estimate a situation and make a sound decision based on that estimation. Once you decide and discover it is the wrong one, do not hesitate to revise your decision.
5. Set the example - Your appearance, attitude, physical fitness, and personal example are all watched by the Marines in your unit. If your standards are high, then you can rightfully demand the same of your Marines.

6. Know your Marines and look out for their welfare - You should know your Marines and how they react to different situations. Knowledge of your Marines' personalities will enable you, as the leader, to decide how to best handle each Marine and determine when close supervision is needed.
7. Keep your Marines informed - To promote efficiency and morale, a leader should inform the Marines in his unit of all happenings and give reasons why things are to be done.
8. Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions - You must use initiative and sound judgment when trying to accomplish jobs that are not required by your grade. Seeking responsibilities also means that you take responsibility for your actions. You are responsible for all your unit does or fails to do. Regardless of the actions of your subordinates, the responsibility for decisions and their application falls on you.
9. Ensure tasks are understood supervised and accomplished - You must communicate your instructions in a clear, concise manner. Supervision is essential. Without supervision, you cannot know if the assigned task is being properly accomplished.
10. Train your Marines as a team - No excuse can be made for the failure of leaders to train their Marines to the highest state of physical condition and to instruct them to be the absolute best in the profession of arms. Train with a purpose and emphasize the essential element of teamwork.
11. Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities - Successful completion of a task depends upon how well you know your unit's capabilities.

Leadership Traits

The traits a leader displays will be what his subordinates display. The Marine Corps infantry operates on a scale that each subgroup, team, and individual can be swapped out and

replaced on the fly due to the standardized training program we use. Just as we standardize training, we have standardized the traits of leadership. So, if one leader fails in a certain trait another leader will correct him/her. Called the black sheep effect this process ensures conformability, “The black sheep effect explains how the responses of in-group members to the deviant behavior of an in-group member are more severe than that of an out-group member who shows similar behavior” (Jansen, 2020). The ability to conform to the traits the Marine Corps has identified and then intact them, teach them, exhibit them is just as important to know the traits. The moment a person is selected to be a Marine the process of embedding the elite ethos begins (paraphrased Kolenda, 2021). Bringing them into the “in-group” is a process that starts in boot camp, continues in the schoolhouse, and is shaped, hardened, and defined in the fleet. While the traits are often spoken about or unconsciously drilled into a Marine they are rarely “taught”. In my personal experience and self-reflection, it is only through trial and error that I learned these traits. From moments of being “corrected” through a “black sheep” mentality, I conformed to these traits. I believe that if I had proper training and development/discussion of these traits I would have performed better at the junior ranks.

MCTP 6-10 Defines the Leadership traits as such:

1. Bearing - Creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance, and personal conduct always. The ability to look, act and speak like a leader whether these manifestations indicate one's true feelings.
2. Courage - 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. Knowing and standing for what is right, even in the face of popular disfavor, is often the leader's lot.

3. Decisiveness – The ability to make decisions promptly and to announce them in a clear, forceful manner. The quality of character guides a person to accumulate all available facts in a circumstance, weigh the facts, choose, and announce an alternative that seems best.
4. Dependability - 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.
5. Endurance - The mental and physical stamina measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, and hardship. Leaders are responsible for leading their units in physical endeavors and for motivating them as well.
6. Enthusiasm - The display of sincere interest and exuberance in the performance of duty. Displaying an interest in a task, and an optimism that it can be completed greatly enhances the likelihood that the task will be completed.
7. Initiative - Acting in the absence of orders. The initiative is a founding principle of the Marine Corps Warfighting philosophy.
8. Integrity - Uprightness of character and soundness of moral principles. The quality of truthfulness and honesty. A Marine's word is his/her bond. Nothing less than complete honesty in all your dealings with subordinates, peers, and superiors is acceptable.
9. Judgment - The ability to weigh facts and possible courses of action to make sound decisions. 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.

10. Justice - 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.

11. Knowledge - Understanding of a science or an art. The range of one's information,

including professional knowledge and an understanding of your Marines. The gaining and retention of current developments in military and naval science and world affairs are important for your growth and development.

12. Loyalty - The quality of faithfulness to country, the Corps, and unit, and to one's seniors,

subordinates, and peers. You owe unswerving loyalty up and down the chain of command: to seniors, subordinates, and peers.

13. Tact - The ability to deal with others without creating hostility. 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 constructively and beneficially.

14. Unselfishness - Avoidance of providing for one's comfort and personal advancement at

the expense of others. The quality of looking out for the needs of your subordinates before your own is the essence of leadership.

Leadership Styles

The styles a leader uses can define them as a leader. Too soft and you become a pushover, too hard and Marines don't want to work with you. The emotional intelligence required to lead a team, or more is a constant ebb and flow between inter-personal relationships and the harsh reality of the nature of the mission. Each style must be used on the Marine who will respond the best to it, as an individual, as a team, as a unit, and as a group. As Marines

change and their inter-personal relationship change so to must the leader's style. In situations of harsh reality and death, the style a leader falls into will shape how their Marines will view them, and the confidence their Marines have in them.

MCTP 6-10B Defines the leadership styles as such:

1. Telling Style - The telling style is a one-way communication characterized by leaders making a decision and announcing it without input or with little input from subordinates. In a crisis, the leader is expected to be an authoritarian. Marines are expected to always be ready to step to the forefront and take control of any given situation. As leaders will have times that they alone will make decisions without input from subordinates during tense and/or dangerous situations this style is used for speed and reactions.
2. Selling Style - The leader presents a decision and invites questions and comments. This style allows subordinates to know why and what went into the decision-making process. Although this style only allows minimal participation from subordinates, it provides an avenue for better understanding, and when effectively used, it can further motivate those executing the plan. When leaders take subordinates into their confidence and foster two-way communication, a degree of trust and respect is formed both ways.
3. Participating Style - With this style, the leader presents a problem, gets suggestions, and makes a decision. Good two-way communication between the leader and subordinates is paramount for this style. Leaders should discuss possible alternative solutions before making their decision. This leadership style promotes initiative and ingenuity among subordinates. However, indecisiveness can lead to subordinates questioning the leader's ability.

4. Delegating Style. When using this style, the leader's goals, objectives, and restrictions must be clear to subordinates. The leader defines limits and allows subordinates to make decisions within those limits. This style uses mission-type orders and guidelines to issue the leader's intent. The subordinate then executes the plan and performs all tasks both specified and implied with minimal supervision. This style hinges on the trust and confidence the leader places in his/her subordinates.

Known

The knowns of leadership as it relates to the infantry leader are all the things we can study and prepare for. The nature of our job revolves around the specific nature of conducting war and inflicting, death, violence, and harm. Our leader must be able to prepare for and guard against these elements. This topic has in recent years begun to come to the forefront as we ask more and more of our junior leaders. It however in my opinion is not where it needs to be. The action required in war has a lasting effect that cannot only ripple through the lives of those who encounter it but can ripple through the ranks as well. To combat these issues, it is in our best interest to set this in the step of foundational leadership instead of a practice reserved for those senior enlisted and officers. My personal experience with this left me with scars that could have been avoided if I could study or was exposed via leadership discussions.

MCDP-1 defines the known as:

1. Friction - Portrayed as a clash between two opposing wills, war appears a simple enterprise. Friction is the force that resists all action and saps energy. It makes the simple difficult and the difficult seemingly impossible. Friction may be mental, as in indecision throughout the action. It may be physical, as ineffective enemy fire, or a terrain obstacle that must be overcome. Friction may be external, imposed by enemy action, the terrain,

weather, or mere chance. Friction may be self-induced, caused by such factors as lack of a clearly defined goal, lack of coordination, unclear or complicated plans, complex task organizations or command relationships, or complicated technologies.

2. **Uncertainty** - Uncertainty pervades battle in the form of unknowns about the enemy, about the environment, and even about the friendly situation. The very nature of war makes certainty impossible; all actions in war will be based on incomplete, inaccurate, or even contradictory information.
3. **Fluidity** - Since war is a fluid phenomenon, its conduct requires flexibility of thought. Success depends in large part on the ability. It is physically impossible to sustain a high tempo of activity indefinitely, although there will be times when it is advantageous to push personnel and equipment to the limit. The tempo of war will fluctuate from periods of intense combat to periods in which activity is limited to information gathering, replenishment, or redeployment. Darkness and weather can influence the tempo of war but need not halt it.
4. **Disorder** - In the heat of battle, plans will go awry, instructions and information will be unclear and misinterpreted, communications will fail, and mistakes and unforeseen events will be commonplace. It is precisely this natural disorder that creates the conditions ripe for exploitation by an opportunistic will. Each encounter in war will usually tend to grow increasingly disordered over time. As the situation changes continuously, we are forced to improvise again and again until finally, our actions have little, if any, resemblance to the original scheme. The occurrences of war will not unfold like clockwork. We must not only be able to fight effectively in the face of disorder, but we should also seek to generate disorder and use it as a weapon against our opponent.

5. Complexity - War is a complex phenomenon. Each belligerent is not a single, homogeneous will guided by a single intelligence. Instead, each belligerent is a complex system consisting of numerous individual parts. Each element is part of a larger whole and must cooperate with other elements for the accomplishment of the common goal. At the same time, each has its mission and must adapt to its situation. As a result, war is not governed by the actions or decisions of a single individual in any one place but emerges from the collective behavior of all the individual parts in the system interacting locally in response to local conditions and incomplete information.
6. The Human Dimension - It is the human dimension that infuses war with its intangible moral factors. War is shaped by human nature and is subject to the complexities, inconsistencies, and peculiarities which characterize human behavior. Since war is an act of violence based on irreconcilable disagreement, it will invariably inflame and be shaped by human emotions. War is an extreme trial of moral and physical strength and stamina. Any view of the nature of war would hardly be accurate or complete without consideration of the effects of danger, fear, exhaustion, and privation on those who must do the fighting. Human "will" instilled through leadership, is the driving force of all action in the war. No degree of technological development or scientific calculation will diminish the human dimension in war. Any doctrine which attempts to reduce warfare to ratios of forces, weapons, and equipment neglects the impact of the human will on the conduct of war and is therefore inherently flawed.
7. Violence and Danger - War is among the greatest horrors known to humanity; it should never be romanticized. The means of war is force, applied in the form of organized violence. It is using violence, or the credible threat of violence, that we compel our

enemy to do our will. Violence is an essential element of war, and its immediate result is bloodshed, destruction, and suffering. Fear contributes to the corrosion of will. Courage is not the absence of fear; rather, it is the strength to overcome fear. Courage and fear are often situational rather than uniform, meaning that people experience them differently at different times and in different situations.

8. **Physical, Moral, and Mental Forces** - War is characterized by the interaction of physical, moral, and mental forces. The physical characteristics of war are generally easily seen, understood, and measured: equipment capabilities, supplies, physical objectives seized, force ratios, losses of matériel or life, terrain lost or gained, prisoners or matériel captured. The moral characteristics are less tangible. Moral forces are difficult to grasp and impossible to quantify. We cannot easily gauge forces like national and military resolve, national or individual conscience, emotion, fear, courage, morale, leadership, or esprit. War also involves a significant mental, or intellectual, component. Mental forces provide the ability to grasp complex battlefield situations; make effective estimates, calculations, and decisions; devise tactics and strategies, and develop plans.
9. **The Evolution of War** - While the basic nature of war is constant, the means and methods we use evolve continuously. Changes may be gradual in some cases and drastic in others. As the hardware of war improves through technological development, so must the tactical, operational, and strategic usage adapt to its improved capabilities both to maximize our capabilities and to counteract our enemy's.
10. **The Science, Art, and Dynamic of War** - Various aspects of war fall principally in the realm of science, which is the methodical application of the empirical laws of nature. The science of war includes those activities directly subject to the laws of ballistics,

mechanics, and like disciplines. However, science does not describe the whole phenomenon. An even greater part of the conduct of war falls under the realm of art, which is the employment of creative or intuitive skills. Art includes the creative, situational application of scientific knowledge through judgment and experience, and so the art of war subsumes the science of war. The art of war requires the intuitive ability to grasp the essence of a unique military situation and the creative ability to devise a practical solution. It involves conceiving strategies and tactics and developing plans of action to suit a given situation. Human beings interact with each other in ways that are fundamentally different from the way a scientist works with chemicals or formulas or the way an artist works with paints or musical notes. It is because of this dynamic of human interaction that fortitude, perseverance, boldness, esprit, and other traits not explainable by art or science are so essential in war.

Unknown

The unknown in the field of leadership as it relates to the Marine Corps infantry is something that can come in two fashion experiences and the senior leader's ability to share and teach their experiences. Because we cannot expect junior leaders to jump right into a plethora of combat situations we must rely on the abilities of senior leadership. While currently that situation cannot be addressed, it can be a focal point for future training. Developing junior leaders to share and teach through experience had will set a domino effect to increase junior leadership foundational understanding of the unknown while at the same time increasing their ability to teach and share. In multiple sections of *Infantry in Battle* (1939) we see actions of individual leaders displaying principles and traits in a terrible situation. We cannot in most account understand why the individual took the action they did, or what drove them. We can only delve

into the after-action (review) of the battle. These moments can provide insight into the unknown, with the leader's ability to share and teach providing junior Marine with invaluable information as it relates to the terrible position a leader can find himself in combat.

Mind/Body/Spirit

From the moment Marines step onto the yellow footprints a change comes over them. A transformation. Leaving behind what you would be and starting to build what you will become. Love or hate, success or failure. The Marine corps impacts recruits in some shape or form, while completing the crucible has a life-changing impact on all Marines, "The Marine transformation is forever ingrained in our DNA, from recruit training to Officer Candidates School and throughout the rest of our lives" (MCTP 6-10A, 2018). The defining moment in most Marines lives come in the form of the final ceremony and the handing off of the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor, "All Marines must possess a clear understanding that our Eagle, Globe, and Anchor is much more than an emblem, rather that, earning the title "Marine" carries a life-long responsibility to defend our nation" (MCTP 6-10A, 2018). That lifelong responsibility is to ever push forward, to defend each other and those that came before us. It is the Corps and senior leadership's responsibility to sustain the transformation to better the current generation so that they made led the next.

1. Mind – The mind encompasses all learned tasks. Building your knowledge, understanding how to navigate, understanding individual roles in the unit, the bigger picture of higher echelons. The mind is a direct reflection of knowing yourself and seeking self-improvement. For me this is a mentoring task, Marine will never know what they don't know. It is on the senior leader to provide a training program to share, resources, guidance, and past experiences to junior Marines. So that they know what they don't know. 30 Marines in a recent Alpha company (2021) survey said the one thing they

would change about themselves in a leadership role would be to increase their knowledge.

2. **Body** – The body encompasses all physical aspects of the field of infantry and general Marine Corps standards. Being able to carry 100 pounds on a 5K and turn around and do it again because someone forgot something. Taking the weight from another Marine who is struggling. Building your team to be able to meet the challenges of training and real-world terror. Being able to outlast the enemy. Infantry Marine don't quit, they never stop moving, and at times they have to shoulder the weight of others to complete the task. This is engrained into each Marine and built upon by senior leadership.
3. **Spirit** – The spirit, is the voice inside each Marine that tells them they can push harder and longer. That they can't give up, that they can't let their Marines see them fail. That they won't let their Marines fail. The spirit is imparted in boot camp and is grown at each rank and billet a Marine hold. It what drives the organization to push forward. The spirit is grown and tempered by watching senior leaders.

Summary

To summarize the Marine Corps demands that all leaders know eight things, the leadership principles, the leadership traits, leadership styles, the known, the unknown, the mind, the body, the spirit (MCDP-1/MCTP 6-10B). While some of these are tangible items found in books, articles, and research. Some of the above are intangible, found through life and circumstance.

What we require of leaders in a review of the information is a monumental task, it can only be met with guidance from senior leaders who have walked the path before. Through training, studying, mentorship, and counseling we make leaders, they aren't born.

Framework of analysis

The purpose of this paper was to examine the leadership development approach of the Marine Corps while concurrently deducting what the basic foundational leadership aspect junior leaders need to know. Throughout the conduct of this research, those two questions were answered but another question was raised, why don't our junior Ncos' have this knowledge and/or lack this knowledge. The research conducted was through three primary sources, Marine Corps publications, articles and books from/about great leaders and past battles, and a survey conducted by an infantry company of Marines.

The review of Marine Corps publications set the foundation of what a leader is and should be. It answers the question of what we want leaders to know on a foundational level. The degree to which Nco's are rated is against this standard. The standard is set by those that come before them, and in turn, will be set by them once they have taken the mantle of senior leadership. Die or do better (Goodwin, 2019) is the standard at which all leaders are brought against and to bear. The Marine Corps publication, form a guide to leadership to warfighting are roadmaps to make junior enlisted lethal leaders. They tell them what to know and how to act. The review of this information gave me the framework to which my paper is set.

The review of the articles and books from great leaders and past battles shows us what leadership should be in practical application. Leadership in real life differs from that of instructional leadership. No book or PowerPoint could ever teach one how to operate in battle. The stories from Infantry in Battle (1939) tell the tales of one and a million warriors in one in a million situations, against terrible odds. What made them act, how did they lead, how did they carry themselves? This is the standard we aspire to be we aspire to teach. The review of this information set the framework for what the Marine Corps should aspire to.

The Survey conducted by Alpha Company 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, shows what current Nco's think of their ability and lack thereof. It set the framework of what needs to be changed and developed to meet the needs of the current Marine Corps. The majority of junior leaders said they wanted to increase their physical fitness and their knowledge. This showed me that while current Nco's understand they have yet to reach the standard, they want to hit the standard.

Through the method of standard deduction, I found through research that the Marine Corps has set the standard for what leaders should know. Built an impressive library of leadership publications. Set a suggested reading list of great leaders and past battles. However, there has not been a set standard in implementing these core ideas. That brings me to the conclusion that the Marine Corps must reevaluate its leadership development program.

Discussion and Analysis

The review of the literature points out four points. The first being what society and the Marine Corps want leaders to know, this comes primarily from the Marine Corps publications. The second being how should leaders lead, this comes from the books on leaders, past generals, and battle after actions. The third point primarily comes from the Alpha Company (2021) survey, which tells us what current leaders think of themselves. The last point is the Marine Corps needs to develop a better program.

The Marine Corps has listed in detail every aspect of a Marines' life in publications or orders. However, they never teach anyone how to find that information, and never make it easy to get hard copies of. The information is available in digital form but with the lifestyle of most infantry units' access outside of hard copies are not reliable.

The information from great leaders and past battles is invaluable. However, it is seldom discussed. While we as an organization say we learn from past mistakes. It's hard to believe when we never talk about those mistakes. While we do tactical decision games to increase the "mind" of junior enlisted. That framework already exists in the form of past battles.

The survey shows us where we failed, and where we need to improve. Through my experiences in the Marine Corps, most surveys are about the work environment and never about what I as a leader felt about myself. While we fall back to know ourselves and seek self-improvement, that doesn't skirt the job of senior leadership to develop junior enlisted.

The last point is encompassing of all, the Marine Corps can do better. Either through an increased time allotment or a specific training program targeted to Nco's and what the Nco need. We already know what we want them to know, we already know what we want them to aspire to be, what we need to do more of is ask them what they need or what they lack.

These four points show us a potential shortcoming in the development of leaders. As the great leaders and publications set certain expectations, yet the survey shows the fragility of our current leaders. It does however show us that Nco's want to succeed. It shows us they want to grow and what area they want to grow in. The information shows us that encompassing these points the listed aspects of leadership are required to be successful. With that success, the organization will grow and prosper, for the Marine Corps battle will be won. The information shows us that that Nco's are required and necessary for the Corps to be successful. Die or do better (Goodwin, 2019) is at the core of what the Marine Corps requires of its leaders.

Conclusion and recommendations

In conclusion, I believe that the research answered the questions the paper sought to reach but found a lack of implementation of the core philosophies of the Marine Corps

leadership development program. While they have a set standard of what a leader should be, how a leader should act, and what a leader should know. they do not have a set program to build on that throughout the career of the individual Marine. The Marine Corps has built an impressive library of publication, and a suggestive reading list of past battles and great leaders, but no program designed to discuss or instruct on those readings.

My recommendation to remedy this failure would be three-fold. One, build an educational training program specific to the Nco's to run concurrently with group-level training. Two, develop an academic development program to discuss and instruct on past battles and great leaders, as well as warfighting philosophy. Three, allocate equal time from tactical and physical training to educational and academic. I believe that if these three steps were implemented a drastic improvement in the Marine Corps Ncos would be present.

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