

## **COMMANDER'S PHILOSOPHY**

### **Colonel R. J. Rizzo (July 2018)**

It is my firm belief that the ability of our unit to successfully accomplish our assigned mission rests solely on the foundation that every Marine works together as a team member to achieve this goal. In order to foster teamwork and Esprit-de-Corps it is incumbent upon me, as the CO, to set you (the Officers, SNCO's, and NCO's) up for success by informing you of my philosophies on leadership. By insuring you understand where I am coming from, you in turn will be able to make sound, timely, and accurate decisions in the performance of your duties as leaders. Before going any further, let me just say that as I place expectations upon you as leaders, you can be assured that I will hold myself accountable to the same high standards.

First and foremost, I hold leadership as a trusted privilege, which when given inherently requires the leader to place the welfare of his/her Marines before that of their own. With this philosophy automatically comes the requirement to conduct ourselves in a manner keeping with the Marine Corps "14 Leadership Traits" and "11 Leadership Principles" as listed in FMFM 1-0 "LEADING MARINES". It is my opinion that leadership by example is the only form of leadership! There is no such thing as "do as I say, not as I do". We are bound by that sacred trust as leaders not only to live to the same standards we impose upon those we lead, but also to develop them into the future leaders of our Corps by setting the example for them to follow.

I also believe strongly in mission first, Marines and their families always. We must strive to always accomplish this mission while not losing sight of the welfare of our Marines. I am relying on you to achieve the balance of accomplishing the mission while allowing our Marines the time (when possible) to participate in those family activities that are essential to building strong family bonds. The Marine who knows that their leaders honestly care about their wellbeing will always overcome any obstacles which stand in the way of mission accomplishment.

As important as mission accomplishment is to us as Marine Leaders at no time should the SAFETY and/or ACCOUNTABILITY of our Marines be compromised. In keeping with this philosophy inherently comes the responsibility to be proactive when it comes to drugs, promoting responsible drinking (for permanent personnel over 21), Preventing sexual assault, fraternization, and hazing which are in direct conflict to the good order and discipline of our Corps. I expect Leaders at all levels to be on the look out for violations within these areas and to take appropriate immediate actions to prevent further harm or injury from these offenses to the Marines in our charge.

As I stated, I hold leadership as a trusted privilege, a trust which if violated carries with it more severe consequences than the violations of those we lead. If we keep in mind that as Leaders we are responsible for everything our unit does or fails to do, we should always be guided to do the right thing. Remember the saying, "what do I know, who needs to know it, and have I told them yet". An informed Marine is the most well equipped to accomplish the mission, whether in garrison for an inspection or in combat for life and death. We will at all times treat all with dignity, mutual respect, and practice the philosophy of "praise in public and punish in private" and both actions will take on more meaning for the recipient.

Finally we must SUSTAIN THE TRANSFORMATION our new Marines just underwent. There will be NO toxic leadership in this command. As our former 13<sup>th</sup> Commandant General John A. Lejeune said; the relationship 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 relationship between father and son...[and mother and daughter]". They have EARNED the title US MARINE and no other initiation or rite of passage is required and we must reinforce that sustainment for the good of our warrior culture. These things we owe to Corps and Country, to be most ready when she is least ready.