LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

CPT Robert L. Barney Jr.

My leadership Philosophy is simply how I expect us to conduct business. Ultimately, our business is to fight and win our nation's wars. We must become proficient in our peacetime, as well as wartime tasks, in order to accomplish this. Daily, we perform our business through training and perfecting our skills and characteristics as individuals and Teamwork, Positive Leadership, Fitness, Motivation, Discipline, Marksmanship, Communications and Battle Drills.

1. TEAMWORK. The first priority of our unit is to live, breath, think, and act as one united force. Although we are many individuals, we must always act as one team. Individual accomplishment will amount to nothing if the team as a whole fails. Everyone will have to "give way together" on many tasks to ensure that the unit moves forward as a whole. The focus of the individual in this unit is to seek the betterment of the unit as a whole. Families are an important part of our team and their interests need to be included in the planning and execution phases to ensure they know they are on the team.

2. POSITIVE LEADERSHIP. Positive leadership is a must at all levels of leadership whether staff or command. It is important to know what positive leadership is. Positive leadership always keeps the individual's, as well as the team's, best interest in mind. It is not self-serving. Positive leadership never says, "can't," it knows that the unit can accomplish anything. Mistakes will be made and these must be used as learning opportunity to improve the individual or unit. This eliminates any "zero defects" attitudes. Leaders are expected to give realistic and attainable task, condition and standards to subordinates. This allows individuals to use initiative to solve and complete tasks. In addition unnecessary complaining will not be tolerated. If you have a problem fix it or bring it to the attention of a superior, also bring a possible solution. Superiors are expected to fix it or explain why it has to be that way. Negative attitudes breed negative attitudes and since you attitude affects other subordinates in this unit, you are expected to control yours. Understand what it means to be a "quiet professional".

3. FITNESS. You must be individually fit in all areas of you life-physically, mentally and spiritually. Physical fitness not only prepares us for the stress and strain of combat, but also helps with numerous other areas of our life. You must also stay fit mentally and spiritually. Maintain a balance in your life that reflects your priorities. Allow time in your schedule to work out all three fitness areas. If you are operating at 95% to 100% of your capability during home station, what will you engage when we need you to step up in war? As a leader, make sure your subordinates are working these areas. We must take care of them and their families to ensure they will be ready when the time comes.

4. MOTIVATION. Motivation is the key in doing your job well. If you are not motivated to do your job and to coach, teach and mentor your subordinates then you are in the wrong line of work. We have a great job to defend our country. Although at times conditions beyond our control may be less than ideal, we must strive to stay motivated and hold the standards in our area.

5. DISCIPLINE. Discipline is doing the right thing. While most people define discipline as doing the right thing when no one is looking, it also means doing the right thing when they are looking. From individual training to maintenance, we will consistently do it right and to the standard the first time. Knowing and following the regulations, having a professional attitude, being squared away on personal and professional issues, and going the extra mile are all part of the discipline expected in this unit. Good personal discipline sets the example for your unit and makes you a positive leader.

6. MARKSMANSHIP. To be a good marksman you must hit what you are aiming at. Marksmanship applies to every aspect of your job. In combat a good marksman will identify the enemy, aim, and then shoot. Likewise, in peacetime it is just as important to identify your enemy (the problem), aim (develop a plan to fix the problem) and shoot (execute the plan without being distracted). The key to a good marksman is the ability to focus on the target without distraction. This is also the key to effective problem solving using common sense in peacetime.

7. COMMUNICATION. Communication is the most important and challenging task we will do as leaders in combat or in peacetime. Good communication is the ability to objectively present the facts of the situation. Allowing your opinion of a situation to dictate what information you share prevents the individual you are communicating with from making his own evaluations. Problem solving becomes tainted and unproductive. Be direct and honest in all communications. Disagreement will not be treated as disloyalty. Do not withhold information. Bad news does not get better with age; on the contrary, things that can be fixed early are often unfixable later. You will not be judged on the problems you encounter (mistakes will be forgiven, crimes will not). Rather you will be judged on your response to them. At the same time, telling someone about your problem does not relieve you of the responsibility to correct it. Be honest, concise and factual in all communications to allow others to evaluate the true facts, not personal opinions. Another critical area of communication is counseling. You must counsel your subordinates and ensure that counseling is completed correctly at all levels.

8. BATTLE DRILLS. We must be experts at doing the basic "blocking and tackling" if we are to do great things. If the battle drill during wartime is platoon attack or during peacetime, it's submitting the USR, we must become so versed in doing the basics well that they require little effort or thought, so that we can concentrate on bigger tasks at hand. To do this we must work on the basics and use the Army's system (manuals or reporting), or develop our own standard operating procedures to prevent us from re-inventing the wheel every two or three weeks. Two areas that must be automatic battle drills are AARs and risk assessments. They must be done to improve performance and prevent accidents respectively.