



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
UNITED STATES CYBER COMMAND

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To: Navy Intelligence Community

Subj: Leadership Principles for Naval Intelligence

1. Accomplish the Mission

- Know your enemy! Predict your enemy!

Over 2,000 years ago, the Chinese warrior-philosopher Sun Tzu identified the key to victory for a military commander - "Know your enemy!" (And Sun Tzu was just the first one to write it down...the principle goes back to the dawn of time.) This is our mission. There are many in the US Armed Forces responsible for the other half of Sun Tzu's dictum, "Know Yourself," but only a very few that have their full time focus on the utterly critical requirement to understand the enemy's capability and intent, and that is us. To put this in more modern terms, as Admiral Studeman told us when I was a junior officer, "the number one obligation of an intelligence officer is to achieve deep penetration of the target (enemy)." We do that best through human or technical penetration of the enemy, or the next best, through a deep analytic understanding of the enemy acquired through analytical rigor and expertise, which takes years to develop and mature. We must do this despite incomplete or outright deceptive data, an extremely difficult task. Above all, we provide our best service to the operational commander when we can provide an accurate assessment of the enemy's intent, in sufficient time for the commander to take effective countermeasures, whether at strategic, operational or tactical level. This accurate predictive intelligence is exactly what the intelligence greats, Layton and Rocheforte, provided to Admiral Nimitz, enabling victory at Midway in WWII. Of note however, the same intelligence team that pulled off the "Miracle at Midway" were in the same jobs for the attack on Pearl Harbor. There is a misperception that the Pacific Fleet was asleep at the switch at Pearl Harbor, when the reality is that Layton, Rochefort and Admiral Kimmel were driving around the clock and were heartbreakingly close to putting all the pieces together. The difference between success and failure in the intelligence business is razor thin. The enemy requires our utmost, undivided, and undistracted attention, because the enemy's full time job is to defeat us. If you, as an intelligence professional, ever have any doubts about where your attention should lie, I will just slightly modify President Clinton's campaign motto, "It's about the enemy, stupid!" You are critical to the success of the US Navy in future battles - and I firmly believe, the future will be more dangerous than the past.

2. Take Care of Our People

- Or else we will fail to accomplish our mission.

Our most valuable asset in the intelligence business is the brain-power of our work force, our people. The systems will break, the doctrine will prove outdated, the plan won't survive contact with the enemy - it is the people who will always carry the day. Intelligent, creative, highly-motivated, and

well-disciplined people, who will not give up in the face of adversity, are the key to success in our business. We need to develop and retain long-term continuity of expertise in our people. I expect leaders to establish a command climate where our people want to come to work because they are excited about the mission challenge, professionally rewarded for exceeding the highest standards, and personally recognized for their value and contributions - and it is OK to have fun doing it. I expect leaders to be proactively involved in the professional development, and safety, of more junior personnel. If you or anyone in your organization is set up as a "single point of failure" then you are failing as a leader. Develop and cross train your junior personnel so that they can step up and excel if any leader, including you, becomes a casualty, or goes on leave.

Taking care of people includes taking care of yourself. Set the example! Take your leave. Get to the doctor and the dentist. Maintain a high standard of physical readiness - not only your health, but your career depends on it. Make rational and safe decisions regarding travel or alcohol-consumption (I refuse to drink it.) Above all, maximize the time that you spend with family and loved ones to the extent that you can. There is no doubt that we have embarked on a difficult and harsh lifestyle. Every family has a unique degree of capacity to endure the sacrifice required. You must carefully judge how much your family can take and act accordingly, because if your family is not still aboard when you finish this journey, than you have not done it right.

3. Seek the Truth and Speak the Truth

- Integrity above all - and, the enemy is trying to fool you. Your personal integrity is your most important attribute. Never compromise it. Never forget that integrity comes before loyalty. We are entrusted with the very lives of those who work for us. We can make a difference in whether Americans live or die, or if innocent non-combatants live or die. This demands the very highest standard of integrity, and is the fundamental bedrock to the Navy core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

Your professional integrity is as important as your personal integrity. Never forget that (unlike the weather for example) your target is a highly intelligent thinking adversary that is doing everything possible to deceive you - and kill you. You must maintain the very highest standards of analytical and intellectual rigor in your analysis and decision-making. You must actively seek the truth by avoiding analytic pitfalls like group-think, "conventional wisdom," pre-conceived notions, mirror-imaging, faulty assumptions, or just jumping to the obvious conclusion (which may be deception.) Once you have reached your best judgment, have the moral courage to defend it, even if it is not popular. Do not spin intelligence to meet a predetermined course of action, and above all, do not fall into the trap of telling your boss what you think the boss wants to hear. We best "support" operations by providing the most accurate assessment that we can. If you have not been thrown out of your boss's office at least once in your career for bringing forth unwelcome intelligence that messes up the planned operation, then you are probably not a very good intelligence professional.

You will find that I am not a "shoot the messenger" kind of person. I can actually deal with bad news quite well, and frankly I just assume there is a lot more bad news out there than I am being told, so it does not come as a surprise, although I would note that bad news never gets better with age. When confronted with bad news, I have a simple approach; calmly identify what went wrong; identify how to fix it; then quickly fix it; ensure lessons are learned and passed on so that it doesn't happen again, and that we are all better for the experience. I encourage people to try new things; usually

they will work out, sometimes they don't. What matters is that we learn, and improve. Only if there is an actual violation of UCMJ or dereliction of duty will I proceed to the holding someone accountable phase - and even then, that always goes better for everyone if everyone speaks the truth.

4. Respect ALL our shipmates

- No exceptions, anytime, anyplace, or for any reason.

Any person who has volunteered to accept the risk, hardship, and sacrifice of serving in the Armed Forces of the United States deserves to be treated with dignity and respect at all times, regardless of circumstance. We need every person in the Naval Intelligence Community focused full-time on the enemy, not distracted by somebody else's outdated ideas of who should or should not be in this organization. Diverse backgrounds and experiences are a critical factor in preventing various analytic pitfalls, and we should welcome and value the contribution of everyone who is part of this organization. Harassment of any kind must not be tolerated. Respect must go up the chain of command, down the chain of command, and sideways. It does not matter if someone is a great performer, or someone who is being processed for discharge for misconduct; all must be treated with dignity and respect. The need for respect applies just as much to our civilian and contractor workforce, and to all our families. This does not preclude frank discussion and corrective action for a subordinate's substandard work, but performance critiques should focus on the work, not the person.

5. Adapt or Die

- Nothing is ever so good that it can't be better

I do not believe in change for change's sake. However, I am an ardent believer in the need for constant improvement. Since the beginning of recorded history, warfare has been a constant struggle for supremacy between offense and defense; even in ancient times the pace of technological and tactical change was stunning, and that continues to modern times at a rapid and unprecedented rate. About the time we feel comfortable with how we are doing business, the enemy will have figured out how to beat us. I encourage innovation, creativity, out-of-the-box, and even disruptive thinking. Many of the best ideas are percolating at the mid-grade officer and senior enlisted ranks (and even ensigns and seamen will have great ideas). Leaders must find ways to tap into that well-spring of ideas, so that we can accelerate our rate of improvement, and stay ahead of our enemies. Although we will do our best to manage change, if and when change is thrust upon us, immediately seek to identify and seize opportunities and advantage. History is full of great military powers that started to believe their own propaganda about how great they were, and were felled by someone more creative and adaptable, or fell of their own accord. We must not fall into that trap. Go out and find something to make better, today.

Lastly, keep your sense of humor. There is no doubt that we are in a deadly serious business, but humor can be a great way of managing the intense stress that we all endure. And, if we are not at least having some fun doing this, then we are probably in the wrong line of business.


Samuel J. Cox