



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT SCHOOLS
TRAINING COMMAND
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IN REPLY REFER TO:
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CO
3 Sep 03

MEMORANDUM

From: Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools
To: MARINE CORPS COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT SCHOOLS
Subj: COMMAND PHILOSOPHY
Encl: (1) Command Philosophy (Executive Summary)
(2) Command Philosophy (Complete)

1. On 8 August 2003 I assumed command and on 11 August I had the opportunity to share with most of you the basic concepts of my command philosophy. Enclosure (1) provides a one-page synopsis of my philosophy of command. I expect all hands to read this document.

2. Enclosure (2) contains a more comprehensive statement of my command philosophy. I expect all officers, staff noncommissioned officers, and GS-11s and above to read this document. While not all-inclusive, the enclosures form an overarching framework or touchstone upon which you may refer when confronted with command issues.

3. In addition to the contents of this document, there are a number of additional documents (e.g., our Command directives, Policy Letters, Marine Corps directives, etc.) that have been (or will be) published that provide amplifying guidance and direction.

4. I treasure the opportunity to lead our Command. The Command's past accomplishments are well documented. I recognize and thank you for all that you have contributed and accomplished in the past. Finally, I look forward to working with our Marines, sailors, and civilian Marines to take Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools to the next level of excellence. Semper Fidelis!

Paul K. Durkin
PAUL K. DURKIN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Colonel Durkin's Command Philosophy
3 September 2003

1. This document explains my *Philosophy of Command* as Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools.

2. My fundamental belief is that a well-disciplined unit that is fully trained, well maintained, properly cared for, and provides positive and effective leadership to its people can accomplish its mission. Additionally, an environment of mutual trust and respect, support for and practice of the United States Marine Corps' core values, the practice of the "Golden Rule" - *treat others as you would want them to treat you*, and proactive risk management must be maintained to allow for Marine development and success in any environment.

3. Our command's fundamental goal is to provide trained Marines capable of performing selected combat service support related skills to the operating forces and supporting establishment. We fulfill this goal by accomplishing our mission, stated below.

The mission of MCCSSS is "to conduct formal resident training and education for officers and enlisted personnel at the Logistics Operations, Personnel Administration, Supply, Financial Management, Instructional Management, and Combat Water Survival Swimming Schools."

4. Guiding Principles for Success:

- a. Remember what is important—people, the organization, and the Marine Corps institution.
- b. Our training curriculum must include relevant instruction.
- c. Planning (long-, mid-, and short-range) is essential.
- d. Train as you fight (or instruct, etc.).
- e. Focus on proficiency in fundamental mission areas.
- f. Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, do it even when no one is watching, and do it right the first time.
- g. Everything we do will be legally, morally, and ethically correct.
- h. People are empowered to do their job so take charge!
- i. There are certain things that are not mistakes: personal negligence, misbehavior, and disobedience.

Colonel Durkin's Command Philosophy
3 September 2003

The relationship among Marines "should in no sense be that of superior and inferior nor that of master and servant, but rather that of teacher and scholar."

General John A. Lefebvre, 15th Commandant

1. **Mission.** The Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools (MCCSSS) is a diverse, multi-faceted organization. The mission of MCCSSS includes:

- To plan, manage, and support the continuum of combat service support resident education and training for officer and enlisted personnel in the logistics, motor transport, supply, financial management, and personnel administration occupational fields.

Our fundamental goal, therefore our main effort, at Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools (MCCSSS) is to sustain the transformation of entry-level students into Marines fully prepared for assignment to the operating forces and supporting establishments.

- To conduct prescribed training and certification of Marines as:

- Formal school faculty instructors, curriculum developers and administrators via completion of the Instructional Management School.

- Marine Combat Instructor of Water Survival and Marine Combat Instructor Trainers of Water Survival.

2. **Intent.** My intent is for us to continue to focus on our core mission(s) and the training and education transformation underway. Our end-state is not fixed; therefore, we will continue to focus our energies on those areas that provide the greatest likelihood and/or benefit of improving the instruction we provide and in turn graduating better-trained students. It is my responsibility to acquire and allocate the resources for us to do our jobs. It is your responsibility to effectively and efficiently make use of allocated resources to accomplish the mission. You are empowered to do so and I expect the same at all levels within the command!

Colonel Durkin's Command Philosophy

3 September 2003

3. Guidance

a. People. "Mission first; people always" is more than a slogan. Our Marines, sailors and civilian Marines are our most precious resource. Accordingly, I expect us to know our Marines, sailors, and civilian Marines and to take care of them and their families to the best of our abilities. In turn, they will take care of us (and our mission). Marines, sailors, and civilian Marines will be treated with respect, dignity and held accountable for their actions. One very important way we can take care of our personnel is by practicing and teaching the tenets of operational risk management. There is nothing that I am aware of in this command that should jeopardize the well-being/safety of any Marine, sailor, or civilian Marine. Our people's safety is paramount.

Take care of our people!

b. Responsibility/Delegation. As your Commander I will delegate authority to subordinates for the execution of details but this delegation does not relieve me of the responsibility for the safety, well-being, effectiveness, and efficiency of the entire command. Accordingly, I will make every attempt to allow subordinate commanders the opportunity to command. However, action passed does not equate to action completed. Rather, supervision, our sixth troop-leading step, is required to ensure mission accomplishment. I expect commanders to close the loop on all matters. Furthermore, plan for the unexpected and adopt the proper sense of urgency in all that we do.

c. Core Values. Our profession is a 24-hour calling and I expect all Marines and sailors to live their lives accordingly, living our core values of honor, courage, and commitment. Basic guidelines include—do not lie, steal or cheat. Likewise, there is no place in our command/the Marine Corps for fraternization, hazing, or sexual harassment. Be guided by: "Do the right thing!"

d. Whole Marine. Marines, sailors and even our civilian Marines must be physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally sound—the whole Marine concept. We shall endeavor to develop our Marines, sailors and civilian Marines accordingly via a number of sources (e.g., a physical conditioning program, proactive personal/professional mentoring program, an aggressive professional

Colonel Durkin's Command Philosophy

3 September 2003

military education program, a robust training program, etc.). Accordingly, our Marines, sailors, and civilian Marines will be recognized when warranted and disciplined when required. In all cases, I expect the lowest level of command to initiate appropriate actions in a timely manner.

e. Innovation and Communication. Our command, as is our Marine Corps, is in the midst of a transformation. Therefore, our end-state is not fixed; rather, our end-state is a moving target. Moreover, wherever our efforts take us, we must train our focus on being relevant to the operating forces and supporting establishment. We will take advantage of technology; however, we will not lose sight of the particular process with which we are involved. Furthermore, I envision an environment within MCCSSS where creative ideas are fostered and where honest mistakes are used as seeds for growth and development--not as career-ending events. I expect the chain of command to be used as designed and responsive--up and down the chain. And remember: bad news does not get better with time.

I encourage and expect to see and hear your ideas on how we can improve the effectiveness and/or efficiency of our command. As a guide, I recommend that we consider General Krulak's (our 31st Commandant's) three leading questions on how we might improve (MCCSSS):

- what are we doing that we should not be doing?
- what are we doing that we should be doing differently?
- what are we not doing that we should be doing?

f. Staff Noncommissioned Officers and Noncommissioned Officers. Our staff noncommissioned officers (SNCOs) and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) are the backbone of our command just as they form the backbone of our Corps. Therefore, they will be assigned responsibilities and granted privileges commensurate with their ranks. Our SNCOs and NCOs shall be granted every opportunity to lead Marines.

4. Conclusion. The bottom line to my concept of command/leadership is that we need to work as a team, communicating with each other and holding each other accountable for our actions. While accomplishing our mission, I expect us to be attentive and courteous. It will take the collective efforts of every Marine, sailor, and civilian Marine to contribute to our success. Let's

Colonel Durkin's Command Philosophy
3 September 2003

have fun too! This is OUR command; we must prepare our Marines so that when the time comes they are prepared—the lives of Marines may depend on it!