

## GRAY BELT CHARACTER TIE-INS

### WARRIOR ETHOS

What is a Marine?

Being a Marine is a state of mind. It is an experience some have likened more to a calling than a profession. Being a Marine is not a job - not a pay check; it is not an occupational specialty. It is not male or female, majority or minority, nor is it a rank insignia. Stars, bars, and chevrons are only indicators of the responsibility or authority we hold at a given time. Rather, being a Marine comes from the eagle, globe and anchor that is tattooed on the soul of every one of us who wears the Marine Corps uniform. It is a searing mark in our innermost being, which comes after the rite of passage through boot camp or OCS when a young man or woman is allowed for the first time to say, "I am a United States Marine." And unlike physical or psychological scars, which, over time, tend to heal and fade in intensity, the eagle, globe and anchor only grow more defined - more intense - the longer you are a Marine. "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

The determination to be different, and remain different, has manifested itself in many ways over the years - from military appearance, to strict obedience to orders, to disciplined behavior, to adherence to traditional standards, and most of all, to an unyielding conviction that we exist to fight. Marines have been distinguished by these characteristics from the beginning. A sense of elitism has grown from the fact that every Marine, whether enlisted or officer, goes through the same training experience. This training has endowed the Corps with a sense of cohesiveness enjoyed by no other American service. This matter of being different is at the very heart of leading Marines. It defines who and what we are by reflecting the mystical cords of the mind that bind all Marines. What we are, what we have been, what Marines will always be, is enduring. There is yet another element of being different that defines Marines, and that is selflessness: a spirit that places the self-interest of the individual second to that of the institution we know as the Corps. That selflessness is stronger nowhere in American society than among Marines.

Ordinary men and women-heroes who showed extraordinary leadership have shaped our ethos and courage, both physical and moral, as they shaped the special character that is the essence of our Corps. They are heroes and leaders who are remembered not by their names, or rank, or because they received a decoration for valor. They are remembered because they were Marines.

***"Success in battle is not a function of how many show up, but who they are."***

Individual Marines-like those described above-are the bedrock upon which our Corps spirit is built. From the first day of recruit training, to their first assignments, to their first celebration of the Marine Corps birthday, each Marine is infused with an understanding of the deeds of his or her predecessors. "Recruit training, both officer and enlisted, has long been 'the genesis of the enduring sense of brotherhood that characterizes the Corps. New recruits are told the day they enter training that, as one Marine leader put it, "A Marine believes in his God, in his Country, in his Corps, in his buddies, and in himself."

What happens on the parade decks of Parris Island and San Diego or in the woods of Quantico is what makes Marines-it is the instillation of "an intangible esprit along with the complicated, specific knowledge of soldiering."

Marines, as they always have, carry on that tradition as a force in readiness, able and willing to go anywhere and do anything. "Trained men who will stand and fight are never obsolete. It was not the bowman, but the long bow, not the cavalryman, but the horse, which vanished from the scene. Men-the man, the individual who is the Marine Corps symbol and stock-in-trade constitute the one element which never changes."

Every Marine is a rifleman.

There is both a practical and moral dimension to the credo "every Marine a rifleman." The force structure of the Corps reflects its central purpose: an expeditionary force in readiness. And because it is expeditionary, it is also austere. Austerity places a premium on the role of every Marine. There are no "rear area" Marines, and no one is very far from the

fighting during expeditionary operations. The success of each of these operations depends on the speed and flexibility with which Marines build combat power.

Marines fighting with maneuver elements are backed up by fellow Marines who labor unceasingly to support the mission by building logistic bases, running truck convoys, distributing supplies, and fighting when needed to. This is nothing new. The first Marine aviator to earn the Medal of Honor in World War II, Captain Henry "Hank" Elrod, was a fighter pilot on Wake Island. His aircraft destroyed after 15 days of heroic defense of the island, he died leading a platoon of Marines. Actions of Marines like Captain Elrod, and others, continue to demonstrate that every Marine is a rifleman. These actions occur with such regularity, that non-Marines often show surprise on learning that there are any specialties in the Corps other than the infantry. This perception on the part of others is part of what makes the Corps, the Corps and transcends the issue of occupational specialties.

There is almost nothing more precious to a Marine than a fellow Marine. This traditional bond flows from the combat training which all Marines receive, officer and enlisted, and the shared danger and adversity inherent in expeditionary operations.

***"Those men on the line were my family, my home. They were closer to me than I can say, closer than any friends had been or ever would be. They had never let me down, and I couldn't do it to them. I had to be with them, rather than let them die and me live with the knowledge that I might have saved them. Men, I now know, do not fight for flag or country, for the Marine Corps or glory or any other abstraction. They fight for one another. Any man in combat, who lacks comrades who will die for him, or for whom he is willing to die, is not a man at all. He is truly damned."***

This cohesion between Marines is not a function of a particular unit within the Corps. It is a function of the Corps itself. When a Marine reports to a unit, he or she may be unknown personally, but is a known quantity professionally. Regardless of anything else known about them, their leaders know that they have been trained as Marines and that they bear, consequently, that indelible stamp of "rifleman." Nowhere is the effect of this more evident than when Marines are exposed to danger or to war. Fellow Marines, remote from the action, are

usually uneasy. Marines are going in harm's way, and there is an unnatural feeling of being "left out" among those not able to go. This attitude is born of the confidence that every Marine can fight, that every Marine can contribute to the mission, and that every Marine is duty bound to share in the danger and the risk of every other Marine in the Corps.

This "spirit" of confidence comes from training and tradition; ...each individual Marine, because of the fighting tradition of the Corps and the toughness of the training, is confident of his own ability and that of his buddies. That is why Marines fight with discipline and steadfastness in the toughest situations, when victory or survival becomes doubtful, why they turn to their belief in themselves, their buddies, and their units, fighting for one another, their unit, and the Marine Corps. This confidence in themselves and one another very often spells the difference between victory and survival and defeat and annihilation.

The sense that every Marine is a rifleman is at the heart of the ethos of the Corps. This unspoken feeling among Marines is more than tradition, or the cut of the uniform. It is the reality and adrenaline of a shared experience of danger and violence, the proximity to death, that which Oliver Wendell Holmes, a famous American Supreme Court Justice and Civil War veteran, called the "touch of fire."

## **LEADERSHIP TRAITS**

The traits of leadership are the basic fundamentals that Marines use to develop their own leadership abilities and that of their subordinates. The results of failure to apply these fundamentals are obvious. For example, a leader's lack of knowledge or judgment, or failure to look after his Marines' welfare or to make sound and timely decisions could result in the unnecessary loss of Marines' lives. Our profession is deadly serious when it comes to the requirements for effective leadership by all Marines. Let us now discuss each of the fourteen traits.

BEARING. Creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance, and personal conduct at all times. The ability to look, act, and speak like a leader whether or not these manifestations indicate one's true feelings. Some signs of these traits are clear and plain speech, an erect gait, and impeccable personal appearance. Keeping your head, keeping your word and keeping your temper. This is how a warrior acts.

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. The business of fighting and winning wars is a dangerous one; the importance of courage on the battlefield is obvious.

DECISIVENESS. Ability to make decisions promptly and to announce them in a clear, forceful manner. The quality of character which guides a person to accumulate all available facts in a circumstance, weigh the facts, choose and announce an alternative which seems best.

DEPENDABILITY. The certainty of proper performance of duty. The quality that 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. It is knowing you can always be counted on.

ENDURANCE. The mental and physical stamina measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, and hardship. The quality of withstanding pain during a conditioning hike in order to improve stamina is crucial in the development of leadership. Leaders are responsible for leading their units in physical endeavors and for motivating them as well. Without endurance a warrior is only a shadow of what he could be.

ENTHUSIASM. The display of sincere interest and exuberance in the performance of duty. Displaying interest in a task, and an optimism that it can be successfully completed, greatly enhances the likelihood that the task *will* be successfully completed.

INITIATIVE. Taking action in the absence of orders. Since NCOs and junior officers often work without close supervision, emphasis is placed on being a self-starter. Initiative is a founding principle of Marine Corps War fighting philosophy.

INTEGRITY. Uprightness of character and soundness of moral principles. The quality of truthfulness and honesty. A Marine's word is his bond. Nothing less than complete honesty in all of your dealings with subordinates, peers, and superiors is acceptable. For the warrior, integrity is the unity of the mind, body and spirit. It is an understanding that a true warrior is only complete when he has trained himself completely so that his physical prowess is complimented by his mental skills and all is under the control of his soul. The opposite of integrity is not lying but disintegration.

JUDGMENT. The ability to weigh facts and possible courses of action in order to make sound decisions. Sound judgment allows a leader to make appropriate decisions in the guidance and training of his Marines and the employment of his unit. A Marine who exercises good judgment weighs pros and cons accordingly to arrive at an appropriate decision and take proper action.

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. The quality of displaying fairness and impartiality is critical in order to gain the trust and respect of subordinates and maintain discipline and unit cohesion, particularly in the exercise of responsibility as a leader.

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 is important for your growth and development. For the warrior this is the mental discipline of the martial art.

LOYALTY. The quality of faithfulness to country, the Corps, and unit, and to one's seniors, subordinates, and peers. The motto of our Corps is *Semper Fidelis*, Always Faithful. You owe unswerving loyalty up and down the chain of command: to seniors, subordinates, and peers.

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 in a constructive and beneficial manner. This deference must be extended under all conditions regardless of true feelings.

UNSELFISHNESS. Avoidance of providing for one's own 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. This quality is not to be confused with putting these matters ahead of the accomplishment of the mission.

An acronym that helps us remember these important leadership principles is "JJ-DID-TIEBUCKLE":

- Justice
- Judgment
- Dependability
- Initiative
- Decisiveness
- Tact
- Integrity
- Enthusiasm
- Bearing
- Unselfishness
- Courage
- Knowledge
- Loyalty
- Endurance

It is important to realize that knowledge of these basic tenets of leadership is not enough; the leader of Marines must instinctively apply them personally, as well as earnestly develop them in his subordinates. This is not only critical as we develop our subordinates as future leaders but because of the fact that these traits are also at the very heart of a sound character development (Select a particular trait and elaborate on that trait).

## **LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES**

The eleven leadership principles are a guide for every Marine, regardless of their respective rank or MOS. As you will see they are rooted in our core values, or ethos and our leadership principles. Let us discuss each.

(1) Know yourself and seek self-improvement. Evaluate yourself by using the leadership traits and determine your strengths and weaknesses. Work to improve your weaknesses and utilize your strengths. With knowledge of yourself, and your experience and knowledge of group behavior, you can determine the best way to deal with any given situation. Ask your friends and seniors for an honest evaluation of your leadership ability. This will help you to identify your weaknesses and strengths. As a warrior you should spend more time on your weaknesses, only then will you become better.

(2) Be technically and tactically proficient. Before you can lead, you must be able to do the job. The first principle is to know your job. 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 as well as the basic skills of a rifleman that each of us must maintain. Respect is the reward of the Marine who shows competence. Tactical and technical competence can be learned from books and from on the job training. Included in this area are physical fitness, water survival and martial arts skills.

(3) Know your Marines and look out for their welfare. This is one of the most important of the principles as it is also one of the two purposes of leadership. You should know your Marines and how they react to different situations. This knowledge can save lives. A Marine who is nervous and lacks self-confidence should never be put in a situation where an important, instant decision must be made. 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.

(4) Keep your Marines informed. Marines by nature are inquisitive. 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. This, of course, is done when time and security permit. Informing your Marines of the situation makes them feel that they are a part of the team and not just a cog in a wheel. Informed Marines perform better and, if knowledgeable of the situation, can carry on without your personal supervision. The key to giving out information is to be sure Marines have enough information to do their job intelligently and to inspire their initiative, enthusiasm, loyalty, and convictions.

(5) Set the example. As a Marine progresses through the ranks by promotion, all too often he takes on the attitude of "do as I say, not as I do." Nothing turns Marines off faster! As a Marine leader your duty is to set the standards for your Marines by personal example. The Marines in your unit take careful note of your appearance, attitude, physical fitness, and personal example. If your personal standards are high, then you can rightfully demand the same of your Marines. If your personal standards are not high you are setting a double standard for your Marines, and you will rapidly lose their respect and confidence. Remember your Marines reflect your image! Leadership is taught by example.

(6) Ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished. This principle is necessary in the exercise of command. Before you can expect your Marines to perform, they must know first what is expected of them. You must communicate your instructions in a clear, concise manner. Talk at a level that your Marines are sure to understand, but not at a level so low that would insult their intelligence. Before your Marines start a task, allow them a chance to ask questions or seek advice. Supervision is essential. Without supervision you cannot know if the assigned task is being properly accomplished. Over supervision is viewed by subordinates as harassment and effectively stops their initiative. There is a fine line between proper supervision by the leader and micromanagement, and the effective leader will never cross that line. Allow subordinates to use their own techniques, and then periodically check their progress.

(7) Train your Marines as a team. Every waking hour Marines should be trained and schooled, challenged and tested, corrected and encouraged with perfection and teamwork as a goal. When not at war, Marines are judged in peacetime roles:

perfection in drill, dress, bearing and demeanor; shooting; self-improvement, and most importantly, performance. 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 very best in the profession of arms. Train with a purpose and emphasize the essential element of teamwork.

(8) Make sound and timely decisions. The leader must be able to rapidly estimate a situation and make a sound decision based on that estimation. Hesitation or a reluctance to make a decision leads subordinates to lose confidence in your abilities as a leader. Loss of confidence in turn creates confusion and hesitation within the unit. Once you make a decision and discover it is the wrong one, don't hesitate to revise your decision. Marines respect the leader who corrects mistakes immediately instead of trying to bluff through a poor decision.

(9) Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates. Another way to show your Marines that you are interested in their welfare is to give them the opportunity for professional development. Assigning tasks and delegating the authority to accomplish tasks promotes mutual confidence and respect between the leader and subordinates. It also encourages the subordinates to exercise initiative and to give wholehearted cooperation in the accomplishment of unit tasks. 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.

(10) Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities. Successful completion of a task depends upon how well you know your unit's capabilities. If the task assigned is one that your unit has not been trained to do, failure is very likely to result. Failures lower your unit's morale and self esteem. You wouldn't send a cook section to "PM" a vehicle nor would you send three Marines to do the job of ten. Seek out challenging tasks for your unit, but be sure that your unit is prepared for and has the ability to successfully complete the mission.

(11) Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions. For professional development, you must actively seek out challenging assignments. 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 that your unit does or fails to do. Regardless of the actions of your subordinates, the responsibility for decisions and their application falls on you. You must issue all orders in your name. Stick by your convictions and do what you think is right, but accept justified and constructive criticism. Never remove or demote a subordinate for a failure that is the result of your own mistake.

## **HAZING**

Hazing is defined as any conduct, whereby one military member, regardless of service or rank, cause another military member, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to an activity which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, or oppressive. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any form of initiation or congratulatory act that involves physically striking another to inflict pain, piercing another's skin in any manner, verbally berating another, encouraging another to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning or dangerous acts. Soliciting or coercing another to participate in any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact among or between military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature.

Hazing does not include mission or operational activities; the requisite training to prepare for such missions or operations; administrative corrective measures; extra military instruction; command authorized physical training; authorized incentive training permitted at the Marine Corps Recruit Depots; and other similar activities authorized by the chain of command.

### Policy.

Hazing is prohibited. No Marine, or service member attached to a Marine command, including Marine detachments, may engage in hazing or consent to acts of hazing being committed on them. No one in a supervisory position may, by act, word, or omission, condone or ignore hazing if they know or reasonably should have known that hazing may occur. Consent to hazing is not a defense to violating the order. Any violation, attempted violation, or solicitation of another to violate the Marine Corps Order, subjects involved members to disciplinary action under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

## Traditions.

Since the beginning, Marine Corps has embraced a variety of "Traditions" that commemorate special events in our history or events that celebrate personal milestones and professional achievement. These events remind us of our legacy and help define us as a band of brothers. When properly organized and supervised, these events serve to enhance morale, esprit de corps, pride, professionalism and unit cohesiveness. Unfortunately, some in our ranks confuse hazing with the tradition of certain military ceremonies and develop initiations or "rites of passage" they believe promote loyalty. They do not. Moreover, the occurrence of improper conduct is not limited to such activities. Any "at risk" activity should be strictly scrutinized and supervised by the chain of command to ensure that the dignity and respect of all participants is maintained, while preserving the customs and traditions historically associated with the activity.

With the implementation of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program we have the opportunity to add to our "Traditions." One of these will be the ceremony attendant with the "belt ceremony." As a Marine progresses through the various belt levels and masters additional skills, there should be an appropriate ceremony to mark this special occasion. Let us make this event one that can proudly join our other traditions and become a part of our heritage.

## Leadership Responsibilities.

Provide appropriate training as part of their unit's orientation and annual troop information programs to ensure that Marines are aware of the Marine Corps policy on hazing.

Foster a command climate conducive to the reporting of hazing incidents and be aware of the sensitive nature with which this type of report, as well as the victim's privacy, must be handled.

Teach your Marines the true traditions of our Corps. Make history, customs and courtesies, and traditions not just an inspection item for the Inspector-General and Commanding General Inspection but part of their daily lives. Schedule "Band of Brothers" type events such as mess nights, Bosses nights, Officer/SNCO/NCO calls, Right-hand Man night, etc., on a regular

basis. Celebrate promotions, graduations, belt advancements and other special occasions in a positive reinforcing manner.

## **WHAT DOES COMMITMENT MEAN TO A MARINE AND A WARRIOR?**

"Commitment": The promise or pledge to complete a goal, an obligation. Dedication to an institution or idea.

COMMITMENT: The spirit of determination and dedication within members of a force of arms that leads to professionalism and mastery of the art of war. It leads to the highest order of discipline for unit and self. It is the ingredient that enables 24-hour a day dedication to Corps and Country, to pride, to concern for others and is an unrelenting determination to achieve a standard of excellence in every endeavor. Commitment is the value that establishes the Marine as the warrior and citizen others strive to emulate. The promise or pledge to complete a worthy goal by worthy means, which requires identification with that goal and demonstrated actions to support that goal, including, but not limited to:

(1) Competence. Maintaining, and improving one's skill level to support the team. Commitment to growing toward a standard of excellence second to none.

(2) Teamwork. Individual effort in support of other team members in accomplishing the team's mission. Marines take care of their own. All worthwhile accomplishments are the result of a team effort.

(3) Selflessness. Marines take care of their subordinates, their families, their fellow Marines before themselves. The welfare of our country and our Corps is more important than our individual welfare.

(4) Concern for People. The Marine Corps is the custodian of this nation's future, her young people. We exist to defend the nation, but as importantly, we are in the business of creating honorable citizens. Everyone is of value, regardless of race, nation of origin, religion, or gender. Concern includes a commitment to improving the level of education, skill, self-esteem, and quality of life for Marines and their families. On the battlefield, a Marine is the fiercest of all warriors and the most benevolent of conquerors.

(5) Spiritual Heritage. The U. S. Constitution, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the creeds that guide our nation recognize the value of religious and spiritual heritage of individuals and base our understanding of rights and duties on the endowment of all people, by God, with the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Marines maintain spiritual health and growth to nurture enduring values and acquire a source of strength required for success in battle and the ability to endure hardship.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct is a simple, written creed applying to all American fighting men. The words of the Code, presented in six articles, state principles that Americans have honored in all the wars this country has fought since 1776.

The six articles of the Code can be divided into three categories. Articles I and II are general statements of dedication to country and freedom. Conduct on the battlefield is the subject of Article II. Articles III, IV, and V concern conduct as a prisoner of war. Let us discuss each.

### **Article I**

**I am an American. I serve in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.**

It is a long-standing tradition of American citizens to willingly answer the call to arms when the peace and security of this nation are threatened. Americans have risen to the challenge and have proven their dedication and willingness to make the supreme sacrifice.

### **Article II**

**I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender my men while they still have the means to resist.**

This is an American tradition that dates back to the Revolutionary War. An individual may never voluntarily surrender himself. If isolated and unable to fight the enemy, he/she is obligated to evade capture and rejoin friendly forces at the earliest possible time. Where a unit is involved, the Marine in command may never surrender that unit to the enemy while it has the power to resist or evade. A unit that is cut off or surrounded must continue to fight until it is relieved by, or able to rejoin friendly forces.

### **Article III**

**If I am captured, I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.**

The misfortune of being captured by the enemy does not end a Marine's usefulness to his country. It is his duty to continue to resist the enemy by all possible means, and to escape and assist others to escape. A Marine may not accept parole from the enemy or special favors such as more food, warm clothes, fewer physical restrictions, etc., in return for promises not to escape, or informing, or providing information to the enemy.

### **ARTICLE IV**

**If I become a prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information nor take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and we'll back them up in every way.**

Informing, or any other action endangering the well being of a fellow prisoner is forbidden. Prisoners of war will not help the enemy by identifying fellow prisoners who may have knowledge of particular value to the enemy, and who may, therefore, be made to suffer brutal means of interrogation.

Strong leadership is essential to discipline. Without discipline, organization, resistance, and even survival may be extremely difficult. Personal hygiene, sanitation, and care of sick and wounded prisoners of war are absolute musts. All United States officers and noncommissioned officers will continue to carry out their responsibilities and exercise their authority if captured.

The senior line officer or noncommissioned officer within the prisoner of war camp or group of prisoners will assume command according to rank or date of rank, without regard to service. He is the lawful superior of all lower ranking personnel, regardless of branch of service.

The responsibility to assume command must be exercised by the senior. If the senior officer or noncommissioned officer is incapacitated or unable to command for any reason, the next senior man will assume command.

#### **Article V**

**When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number, and date of birth.** I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statement disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

Every POW must make every effort to prevent from providing the enemy with information about his unit or operations that could endanger the lives of fellow Marines. To the present, Americans have traditionally fought the enemy wherever he was found and with whatever weapons were available. When captured, the POW continues the battle in a new arena. When facing interrogators, they are under fire just as though bullets and shell fragments were flying about them. Disarmed, the POW must fight back with mind and spirit, remaining faithful to his fellow POW's, yielding no military information, and resisting every attempt of indoctrination.

#### **Article VI**

**I will never forget that I am an American responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.**

Article VI and Article I of the Code are quite similar. The repeated words "I am an American, fighting in the service of my country" are perhaps the most important words of the Code, because they signify each American's faith and confidence in their God, their country, and their service. It is the responsibility of each Marine to honor these traditions by carefully adhering to the meaning of each article of the Code of Conduct.

## **THE SIX TROOP LEADING STEPS**

The purpose of the troop leading steps is to provide you with a structured format to help you develop your plan of attack to accomplish whatever missions you may be assigned. Leaders at all levels use the troop leading steps to varying degrees but no more so than at the small unit level. In order to help you remember the troop leading steps we use the acronym BAMCIS. It stands for the following:

**B**egin planning  
**A**rrange for reconnaissance and coordination  
**M**ake reconnaissance  
**C**omplete the plan  
**I**ssue the order  
**S**upervise activities

Let us now discuss each of the six steps individually and how they build upon one another.

**B**egin planning - When given an order you as a leader must begin the planning for how you will execute the mission assigned. At this time you need to consider how much available time you have to prepare and execute using reverse planning. Next you issue a warning order to your Marines so they can begin preparing themselves and their equipment and assist you. The warning order will give the situation, mission, organization, uniform and equipment, schedule, specific instructions and should include inspection and rehearsals.

Next you want to **A**rrange for reconnaissance and coordination. In a combat situation you will look at terrain, obstacles, routes and the enemy. You will also coordinate with adjacent,

supporting and higher units. In a peacetime situation such as planning field training you will do the same type of reconnaissance and coordination.

After preparing, you will **Make** your reconnaissance, to get an "eyes on" assessment of the terrain, obstacles, and enemy composition and layout. With this visual reconnaissance you are ready for the next troop leading step.

Based upon initial order received, facts gathered from your reconnaissance and coordination you will **Complete** your plan. In a combat situation this would normally be accomplished by using a five-paragraph order.

Once the order is completed you will **Issue** the order. Ensure all are present, that your order is clear, concise and provides enough detail that your Marines understand it and have the information needed to accomplish the mission. Ask questions to verify that all understand the order.

Finally, the last and most important of the troop leading steps is to **Supervise** activities. It is continuous and includes the use of inspections, asking questions, and rehearsals. Do not confuse micro-managing with supervision and never assume that something has been done. The NCO handbook states. **"A Noncommissioned Officer never expects, he inspects."**

These troop leading steps help you prepare for and to execute assigned missions. It is a mental process useful both on the battlefield and in garrison; for tactical situations as well as everyday situations we face continuously. They help to make the best use of time, facilities, and personnel. All the steps should be considered, but depending on the mission and time available, the degree of consideration for each varies. The most important step and the one that can never be left out is supervision.

## **MARINE CORPS CORE VALUE; HONOR**

Definition. "Honor" Credit or reputation for behavior that is becoming or worthy. A source of credit or distinction. A personal characteristic consciously maintained, such as might deserve or expect esteem.

What does honor mean to a Marine and a warrior?

Honor is the bedrock of our character. The quality that guides Marines to exemplify the ultimate in ethical and moral behavior; never to lie, cheat, or steal; to abide by an uncompromising code of integrity; to respect human dignity; to have respect and concern for each other. The quality of maturity, dedication, trust, and dependability that commits Marines to act responsibly; to be accountable for actions; to fulfill obligations; and to hold others accountable for their actions.

The Marine Corps is a unique institution, not just to the military, but also to the nation and the world. As the guardians of the standards of excellence for our society, Marines must possess the highest sense of gallantry in serving the United States of America and embody responsibility to duty above self, including, but not limited to:

Integrity. Demonstrating the highest standards of consistent adherence to right, legal and ethical conduct. For the warrior, integrity is the unity of the mind, body and

spirit. It is an understanding that a true warrior is only complete when he has trained himself completely so that his physical prowess is complimented by his mental skills and all is under the control of his soul. The opposite of integrity is not lying but disintegration.

Responsibility. Personally accepting the consequences for decisions and actions. Coaching right decisions of subordinates. A chain is only as strong as the weakest individual link, but a battalion of Marines is more like a cable. Together we are stronger than any individual strand, but one strand may hold us together in a crisis if it's strong enough. One Marine, taking responsibility for a situation may save the day. Every warrior must realize that we are also responsible for properly using the special skills we have been taught.

Honesty. Telling the truth. Overt honesty in word and action and clarifying possible misunderstanding or misrepresentation caused by silence or inaction when you should speak up. Respecting other's property and demonstrating fairness in all actions. Marines do not lie, cheat, or steal. The warrior is not afraid of the truth and loathes the lie.

## **CORE VALUE: COURAGE**

Courage. "The heart of our Core Values, courage, is the mental, moral, and physical strength ingrained in Marines to carry them through the challenges of combat and the mastery of fear; to do what is right; to adhere to a higher standard of personal conduct; to lead by example, and to make tough decisions under stress and pressure. It is the inner strength that enables a Marine to take that extra step."

Definition. 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. Moral, mental, and physical strength to resist opposition, face danger, and endure hardship.

Significance. Knowing and standing for what is right, even in the face of popular disfavor, is what makes a good leader. The business of fighting and winning wars is a dangerous one; the importance of courage on the battlefield is obvious.

Elements. The following are elements of courage.

Self-discipline. Marines hold themselves responsible for their own actions and others responsible for their actions. Marines are committed to maintaining physical, moral, and mental health, to fitness and exercise, and to life long learning.

Patriotism. Devotion to and defense of one's country. The freely chosen, informed willingness to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

Loyalty. Steady reliability to do one's duty in service to the United States of America, the United States Marine Corps, one's command, one's fellow Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, citizens, oneself, and to family.

Valor. Boldness and determination in facing danger in battle, and the daily commitment to excellence and honesty in actions small and large.

Courage is the outward act of our character. By its presence or absence we show what we are truly made of. There are two types of courage, *physical and moral*.

*Physical courage* involves overcoming perceived dangers that can cause injury or death. A natural reaction to this is fear. It is the body's natural reaction to various types of dangers. Our heart rate increases, chemical reactions take place that heighten our senses and increase our strength. If we are aware that these changes are natural we can harness this extra energy along with the strength of our mind and character and deal with any situation. This is physical courage.

*Moral courage* involves doing the right thing when faced with a moral dilemma, ridicule, embarrassment or censure. Mark Twain called moral courage the "quiet courage." In most circumstances no one will know if you have to make this moral decision. You could see an ethical problem and pretend it doesn't exist. No one may be the wiser. The problem with this is that while there is no outward physical damage, a lack of moral courage will eat away at the individual's spirit. You will know and your conscience will constantly remind you of the cowardly deed. It will erode the very foundations of your character. By making the right decision you will strengthen your inner self and develop the moral courage to do the right thing, always.

## **CUSTOMS, COURTESIES, AND TRADITIONS.**

One of the things that make a culture or society unique is their customs, courtesies and traditions. This is no different for the Marine Corps. Over our 232-year history we have developed customs and courtesies that are similar to many other military organizations but others that are quite unique to our Corps. These customs, courtesies and traditions are part of our heritage and are associated with the reputation as the world finest fighting force that persuaded us to join. Whether it was the idea of becoming something special, the image of a Marine in dress blues on a poster, the precision of the silent drill team, the glory of the flag flying over the Marine Corps War Memorial or any other of the symbols associated with our Corps something influenced you to become a Marine. Let us discuss some of the things that make the Marine Corps unique as a martial culture.

All organizations have formal rules and regulations that govern individual and group conduct and behavior. These maintain good order and discipline. In addition many organizations and cultures have another set of rules that can be both formal and informal. These are customs, courtesies and traditions. Overtime the Marine Corps have developed its own unique customs, courtesies, and traditions. It is important that you understand what these are and their importance to the strength of a unit. This strength includes unit discipline, esprit de corps, morale, and cohesion.

Customs are the practices of preserving ideas and actions from generation to generation. What are some customs that we have in the Marine Corps? Marine Corps Birthday, Parades and Ceremonies, Mess night, etc. Customs strengthen a unit by providing a link with our past, strengthening unit cohesion by instilling a sense of pride in the unit, esprit de corps and morale.

Courtesies are a set of rules of behavior. It allows for a set of rules that makes it easier for people to live with each other. As part of a military culture this is essential. We all belong to units that must fight as a team. We also understand that within this unit there is a rank structure and chain of command. The courtesies of the Marines Corps allow for the harmonious interaction of all Marines. Some Marine Corps courtesies include; saluting, reporting to seniors, addressing officers, etc.

Traditions are the transmission of knowledge, opinions, doctrines, customs and practices from generation to generation by word of mouth or example. Marine Corps traditions have helped create a fighting force that has become recognized as an American institution. Our traditions foster camaraderie and provide us with an example to emulate. They provide us with a link to our past. Some Marine Corps traditions include our motto, our conduct in battle, change of command ceremony, etc. Concepts such as Marines never leave our dead, wounded or equipment behind on the field of battle. "First to fight" and "the Marines have landed and the situation is well in hand" are examples of our combat traditions. These are the traditions of warriors. We must remember and practice them.

It is essential that all Marines know and apply the customs, courtesies and traditions of our Corps. They are a part of our heritage and will ensure our continued success in the future. As a warrior they provide us with a link to our past, guide our actions in the present and provide us with a means of passing on to future generations of Marines a part of who we are

## **MARINE CORPS HISTORY.**

From its very beginnings, the Marine Corps has been a part of history. Our history has become a rich legacy that serves as an example for each of us to follow during our development as a Marine. Our history is one of combat in defense of the Nation and the ideals of our Constitution. It is a warrior's history.

Marine Corps history is the chronological record of the events and individuals that have shaped our Corps. The strength of our Corps is its people and our history is the record of the deeds of every Marine who has gone before us. Their valor, devotion, commitment, and selflessness are what have made the Marine Corps strong. The gift or legacy of these Marines is a Marine Corps whose reputation as an elite fighting force is second to none. It is a legacy of war fighting, duty, sacrifice, discipline, and determination. By their actions,

they have set the standard that we must strive always to maintain and if possible exceed.

As a warrior, every Marine should know the history of our Corps as well as he knows his weapon. We learn from our history, its customs, courtesies and traditions. We apply our customs, courtesies, and traditions so that they will not be lost to the generation that follows us. We understand how we have become the type of organization that we are and what will be required to maintain that same level of professionalism.

We also learn from the mistakes and successes of the past. This must be part of our study of the art of war. What tactics and techniques have been successful and how these can be applied today. We study the mistakes of the past in order to avoid them in the future. And finally, we study past leaders to learn from them how to be better leaders ourselves.

## **PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS**

Professionalism. One aspect of the Marine Corps that makes us so special is the high standards of performance and conduct for which we are recognized. This reputation is based upon the deeds and the actions of Marines from our past. But what made their actions so memorable was the level of professionalism and conduct associated with those actions. So it continues today. We are an elite organization that views itself as special and with the highest standards. But what does it mean to be a professional?

The Marine Corps is neither a job nor merely a career men and women drone through in order to reach retirement. When we took our oath, in our hearts we pledged to give our all and sacrifice

everything if necessary. As members of a Corps, of a team, we understand the concept of selflessness, subordinating our personal needs for that of the common good. We have accepted the fact that as Marines we are expected to maintain the highest standards of conduct and performance. Our appearance must be squared away and our attention to detail meticulous. This is what makes us a professional. It is the hallmark of a Marine, of a Warrior/Defender.

Ethics. The most important aspect of being a professional is our character. Our character is defined as the values by which we live our life. It governs our actions and guides our decisions. As warriors, we embrace a set of values that allows us to live life by an ethical set of standards. These ethical standards are set forth in the Constitution, the UCMJ, Law of War, Code of Conduct, regulations, and customs and traditions of the service.

It is important to understand that to be a professional and to be a warrior you must be an individual whose character is based upon certain ethical standards and values. For a Marine, these are things we have been taught since the first day of recruit training or OCS. But to truly be a warrior/defender, you must apply these values without exception. This requires decision making using ethical standards. It comes down to always listening to your conscience and making the right choice.

"It's easy to do justice, but hard to do right."- LTCOL. George H. Bristol.

"What's right isn't always popular, and what's popular isn't always right."- Unknown author.

These are statements that illustrate the characteristics of ethics, and what it takes to be an ethical warrior.