

# Principles of Naval Leadership

## 1. Know the job

- Understand the authority and responsibility conferred upon Naval Officers by the U.S. Constitution
- Know and act in accordance with Navy rules, regulations and policies
- Clearly understand doctrine and unit mission
- Clearly understand organizational structure and chain-of-command
- Understand own role in mission accomplishment
- Be technically and tactically competent
- Know tasks associated with billet assignment
- Prepare yourself for the job as leader at the next higher rank
- Seek feedback concerning your performance

## 2. Know yourself

- Identify own strengths and limitations
- Strive to enhance strengths and overcome limitations

## 3. Know and take care of subordinates

- Put the welfare of the men and women for whom you are accountable before your own welfare
- Ensure that subordinates' basic needs are met
- Represent subordinates' interests to seniors and civil authorities whenever appropriate
- Take time to learn about subordinates
- Eliminate discrimination and sexual harassment from the workplace
- Build positive morale among subordinates
- Be sensitive to effects of cultural and educational differences among subordinates
- Assess and establish a command climate
- Be a proactive counselor for subordinates' personal and professional development

## 4. Set the example through personal and professional behavior

- Maintain high moral and ethical standards
- Demonstrate moral, mental and physical courage
- Be consistent
- Show pride in organization and unit
- Act with tact and diplomacy
- Take initiative
- Put mission accomplishment ahead of own needs
- Demonstrate mental and physical stamina
- Maintain high personal performance and appearance standards
- Perform well under stress
- Exhibit personal respect for each member
- Conduct self in accordance with Navy core values of Honor, Commitment and Courage

## 5. Project a clear vision

- Create a vision to guide unit's progress
- Use common goals to encourage commitment to achieving the vision
- Develop effective means to reach goals
- Communicate to each member his or her role in mission accomplishment

## 6. Communicate effectively

- Encourage open communication
- Communicate up, down and across the chain-of-command
- Listen actively
- Speak and write clearly, accurately and concisely

## **7. Direct, motivate and develop subordinates**

- Give clear, unambiguous tasking
- Develop sense of responsibility in subordinates
- Delegate authority appropriately
- Hold subordinates accountable for their actions
- Broaden and encourage individual interests
- Provide intellectual stimulation
- Encourage initiative in finding opportunities for improvement
- Reward and discipline appropriately and consistently
- Use mistakes as opportunities for development
- Instill sense of personal discipline
- Provide timely, constructive performance feedback
- Fairly allocate training opportunities and job assignments based on subordinates' needs, aspirations and abilities
- Remove barriers
- Create trust

## **8. Demonstrate effective management skills**

- Set clear unit goals and objectives
- Conduct long and short-term planning
- Organize action plans to reach goals
- Optimize use of personnel and material resources
- Gather data concerning issues and problems before making decisions about them
- Combine knowledge, experience and common sense in making decisions
- Expeditiously address and resolve conflicts
- Follow up to ensure timely and accurate task completion
- Manage time effectively
- Involve those close to the action in process evaluation
- Seek and implement continuous process improvements
- Focus on process as well as results

## **9. Build successful teams**

- Build commitment and train to accomplish team goals
- Encourage and reward effective teamwork
- Promote a positive team image
- Encourage social interaction among team members
- Promote ownership by involving team in planning, decision-making and problem-solving
- Implement process to fully indoctrinate new team members
- Promote esprit de corps

## **10. Promote relationships vital to mission**

- Demonstrate loyalty to superiors
- Support key subordinate leaders
- Develop external military and civilian relationships which support mission accomplishment
- Identify and focus on internal and external customers
- Develop supportive peer relationships

## **11. Seek responsibility, take responsibility for your actions**

- Take calculated risks consistent with your mission
- Learn the duties of your superior and be ready to assume those duties

Adapted from the Officer Leadership Working Group  
Draft of August 1993

