

it so that incoming rounds don't take all of you out. It's a tough problem.

Time is usually the biggest constraint. ~~If armor is used as a reaction force, or to constantly suppress and engage the enemy, breaking it away for maintenance is hard. But you have to listen to the tank commander when he tells you, for example, that an engine is about to fail. If you think guarding a tank while the crew pulls maintenance is a problem, consider how much more of a problem you'll have when the engine blows. The cost is unavoidable. The best you can do is manage when you're going to pay that cost.~~

Security is a simple equation—and a two-way street. The closer the terrain, the more susceptible an armored vehicle is to being ambushed. It needs protection, especially to its flanks and rear. But the closer the terrain, the more opportunity the enemy has to slow down the infantry, and the more the infantry needs ~~the tank's firepower to blast its way through and the tank's armor to protect its movement.~~

How will the protecting element move? Are you willing to slow the tank to the speed of dismounted infantrymen? Where will the tank be in relation to its supported element? These are questions best answered through the development of simple drills and easily communicated SOPs.

When it comes to target identification and designation and fire control, there are a number of things you need to consider.

The tank crews' ability to observe tar-

gets decreases the more they are forced to seal their hatches. Once the hatches are closed, the crews have only several vision blocks to see through. Their vision upward (toward the upper floors of buildings) is severely restricted, and they must rely on other vehicles, or on ground observers, to direct their fires.

In this situation, does your unit have ~~an SOP with a simple, sure way of "talking" the rounds onto a target?~~ What about at night? How is your supply of chemical lights? How do you mark vehicles for thermal identification? How do you prevent fratricide?

The standardization of procedures can come only through practice. Do you have an armor element supporting you in a habitual training relationship? Do you know the element commander's first name? Do you understand each other's techniques and needs?

~~What if you don't have a tank element to train with regularly? The best answer is that you treat your cooperation with tanks like a science instead of an art.~~ Approach the problem methodically—read manuals, watch films, discuss it with your leaders, wargame it on sandtables with micro-armor, use blackboards, look up historical writings from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, study drills from other units, request assistance from the Armor or Infantry Schools, visualize and discuss their use during urban combat training, study U.S. Marine Corps techniques, and use other vehicles in training as a substitute for tanks.

Synchronization and teamwork is where the art comes in. You'll develop into a combined arms team "artist" as you practice, practice, practice. But if you can't practice, do the next best thing—study the problem and master the principles and the theory.

History validates the need for infantry to be supported by tanks, especially when ~~assaulting a strong enemy position.~~ This requirement exists even if the terrain may appear to restrict the use of armor. Furthermore, even though there are no apparent transportation assets for deployment, planners should attempt to locate some and to deploy as many supporting tanks as possible—preferably a slice for each infantry battalion. The combined arms principle is—and has always been—the key to battlefield success.

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Effective Military Leadership

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Some people are effective leaders. Some are not. The personal characteristics that make the difference have been seriously considered since the beginning

of time. Yet, to date, no one seems to have identified the leader formula with any assurance.

To me, a leader is a leader, regardless

of the walk of life in which he operates. There are shades of difference, but the essential skills appear to be very similar.

When we talk about military leaders

we tend to think in terms of unit commanders, but many staff assignments also require a high degree of leadership. ~~Commanding a unit is often easy compared to directing a staff section or an ad hoc activity.~~

There are certainly more experts on this subject than there are effective leaders, and I don't pretend to be either. But I have spent a lifetime watching leaders, both good and poor, while trying to decide what made them that way. One fact stands out. Good does not necessarily mean nice, nor poor, unpleasant. Some of the nicest people I knew were lousy leaders. The opposite is also true.

Identifying effective military leaders through hindsight is not particularly useful. The trick is to make that judgment before assigning responsibility. Nevertheless, hindsight does permit us to identify certain characteristics that effective leaders share. These characteristics are not all endowments from our maker. Many of them are developed. Six that I believe the leader has some control over are the following:

Be Yourself. You have a personality. Use it. If it's dull, you may want to work on dressing it up, but it's yours and, within the limits of what you may be able to do with it, you are stuck with it.

You cannot be someone else successfully. Many have tried to cloak themselves in the mantle of some esteemed leader's personality, but the effort has almost never worked as expected. Following World War II, for example, mainly in the European Theater, a rash of Patton personalities emerged. The result was ludicrous. Patton could be Patton. That was his personality. But nobody else could. Those who tried were immediately identified and roundly ridiculed. Thus it will always be. This does not mean you cannot watch successful leaders or study what they do. Without reference to style, copy the methods that work and avoid those that fail.

You may be able to pass yourself off for a time using someone else's personality. But under stress, the act will fail and you will have failed those who were looking to you for the leadership your own personality promised.

Be Ambitious for Your Unit. Ambi-

tion is good—you might even say essential—if you are to be an effective leader. If you're not ambitious you had better avoid the leader role. Otherwise you can expect to be a total flop.

Many leaders try to use their organizations to further their personal careers. They emphasize the things that look good or that are momentarily popular at headquarters and exclude the things that make a unit fundamentally good. They try to steer clear of the tough tasks and avoid activities where their leadership or the basic soundness of their unit can be measured. They criticize publicly what they have inherited from their predecessors and spend more time and energy on public relations than on sincere unit development.

Be ambitious, but be ambitious for your organization. Have two objectives when you take over the leader role: The first is to leave a better organization than you found. You do this by stressing the basics and by never being fully satisfied with the level of performance achieved. The second is to make the organization the best of its kind—the best company, the best battalion, or the best staff section.

The payoff here is in reflected glory. If you command the best tank company in the division, everyone is going to assume you made it that way. Of course, you may hit one of those "once in a lifetime" situations where you are the beneficiary of a veritable whiz kid as an executive officer or deputy. But don't count on it. Senior officers are good at spotting "kept" leaders. If you hope to succeed, plan on being the motivating factor in creating a great outfit, one that will stand up to the challenges.

You Set the Priorities. Every organization worth its salt always has more to do than it can do, or at least do well. Moreover, every organization normally has a long list of "first" priority tasks—reenlistment, safety, training, maintenance. All of these will have first priority!

A commander or a staff operator often assigns "first priority" to an activity he does not expect to go well. This allows him to protest later: "But I made that first priority." Disgusting behavior, but not unusual.

Having too many first priority tasks poses a real problem for a conscientious leader. He knows perfectly well that all of those activities cannot reasonably receive first priority attention. Too often, the solution is to bluster and take the stand that "this unit can do anything," then proceed to drive the unit to distraction by striking out in all directions while praying that the shortcomings are not too apparent. That is "reactionship," not leadership.

Real leadership requires that you set the priorities for your organization. That does not mean that if your commander states clearly that training will be the first priority, you as a subordinate, should disagree and tell your people that safety will be first priority. That would be dumb! What it does mean is that when you face a situation, whether by design or oversight, in which your immediate organization has more high priority tasks than you know it can accomplish, you have to decide what priorities will be followed. You must make that determination on the basis of what you believe to be correct. Carrying this decision out requires moral courage.

You will make mistakes. The time will inevitably come when your judgment differs from that of the proponent of one of the first priority projects that did not make your list. There is nothing to do but stand up for the necessity of your decision. (You may want to keep lines to your maker open when faced with this eventuality. You will be amazed at the number of times he will support you.)

Be Demanding in a Reasonable Way. Any idiot can be demanding, and many are. The art of leadership is to establish standards that you can seriously expect your organization to meet. This involves establishing both what you want and the end result that you expect. (This should not be confused with telling others "how to do it.") If you do not make your standards clear and unequivocal, you will get the minimum performance your subordinates think you will accept. It may not be obvious at first, but they will quickly move in that direction.

Whenever it is possible, and it usually is, explain the reasons for your standards. This explanation will help your subordi-

nates support you. There are cases, however, in which your standards may appear to be arbitrary or harassing. If you are convinced of the standard's value to the organization, insist on it even if it is not generally considered useful. If you are right, its usefulness will become apparent. If you are wrong, that will also become apparent, and you can reevaluate your position. *Nowhere is it written that an effective leader has to be infallible.*

When I required my battalion in Vietnam to wear steel helmets, for instance, there was a great deal of comment, much of it unfavorable. But one day, while the battalion was conducting an operation in heavy jungle, a single shot rang out from the flank. The S-3 radio operator did the combat load equivalent of a back flip, his helmet flying about ten yards away. The medic examined him for a wound, but found none. About that time the operations sergeant came over with the helmet, which had a fist-sized dent in one side, but no hole. *(The radio operator did have a headache for a day or two.)* The comments about wearing steel helmets ceased.

Be Courteous and Considerate. Contrary to the usual Hollywood portrayal of a leader, you do not have to shout to get results. In fact, if you shout all the time, your people will become accustomed to it and accept it as routine. If you customarily shout at the bearers of bad news, soon you will not hear the bad news until it is too late. Many a leader has gone down with bugles blowing and banners flying because people were afraid to risk telling him the unpleasant facts.

Similarly, foul-mouthed language is no substitute for clear, precise English. Within the military establishment, the language is usually foul enough without the leader contributing to it. Knowing some of the words and having healthy vocal cords may indeed be useful on some occasions, but for maximum effect those occasions should be rare.

People perform their best when they feel that their efforts are appreciated. People do make mistakes, though—sometimes even careless or dumb mistakes. Those mistakes have to be faced, pointed out, and corrected. That is what leadership is all about. But people do not

have to be degraded in the process. If you degrade your people you are the loser, because they will simply not perform to the best of their capabilities.

Be Morally Courageous. *Physical* courage is believed to be the stuff good soldiers are made of, and that is true, to a point. Soldiers must have enough physical courage to face the known and unknown dangers of the battlefield. Most do. Even those who do not can usually be brought along by good leadership and example. The leader must, of course, have enough physical courage to be able to operate in the combat environment. That is usually easier for the leader because he has a lot on his mind and little time to be afraid.

What is much more rare is moral courage. Moral courage is having what it takes to do what you believe is right—or, more pertinent to the military leader, being able to adopt a course of action and carry it through without concern for the effect the outcome may have on you personally. This is precisely where most people fail in effective military leadership.

Many military decisions are made with an eye more to the way failure will affect the career of the leader than to the result to be achieved. It is entirely possible to be a successful leader without ever being called upon to make a really risky decision. But it is not possible to be an effective leader while habitually shading decisions toward the safe side. What you wind up with is the lowest common denominator of successful performance, because that is what you are programming. It may be successful to the extent that it avoids failure. But it is dull, uninspired, and far from the effective leadership we seek. And the missing ingredient is moral courage.

Combat decisions, at least those at division level and below, are risky by nature. The effective combat leader, much like the entrepreneur in business, is the guy who is capable of making a decision of that kind and living with its consequences. It is a quality much rarer than you might think. An effective combat leader is more likely to be a man of high moral courage rather than one of great physical courage.

Most leaders can figure out what should be done, but a really effective leader has the moral courage to carry on, even when he realizes he is assuming a high degree of risk. That is precisely the breakpoint. The ineffective leader cannot accept the risk. He seeks a more assured course, one that will yield a guaranteed, if smaller, success. Regrettably, too many of our leaders are the "guaranteed success" types.

Even if you're blessed with the six characteristics I have outlined, you still may not be an outstanding leader. These are only part of the story. After all, Alexander, Napoleon, and Custer did not necessarily do it my way. And if you fall into their category you certainly don't need me to tell you about leadership. But if you want to become a better leader, you should consider working to make these characteristics your own. Constantly critique your own performance to see where you have fallen short. When faced with a situation, review these items and see if you can proceed in that direction.

Of these six attributes, the most important is the moral courage a leader is prepared to bring to the task. Moral courage is the heart of leadership, and it can be developed. Think about it. If you cannot call the tough ones the way they should be called, you should not be leading.

The next most important is to be yourself. It may take a lot of courage to lead and be yourself, but do it anyway. If you are not succeeding, that may tell you something about your personality. But personalities can also be developed or adjusted.

Finally, it is flattering to be a leader, but being flattered by it is different from being comfortable with it. If you find you are not comfortable with the leader role or with the responsibility it requires of you, try something else, and let others do the leading.

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