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DEVELOPING OFFICERSHIP: IT STARTS AT THE TOP

by

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Abstract

Officership is the basic foundation of the professional military officer. Senior military leaders have a responsibility and an obligation to develop and promote officership in order to produce our future leaders and to maintain the institutional values, traditions, and professionalism of the United States Air Force. Officership is not automatic; it must be taught and the teaching must start with our senior leaders. This responsibility cannot be taken lightly and must be continuous. Officers must see themselves first as military officers and secondly as specialists (e.g., pilot, engineer, comptroller, logistician). Furthermore, as our societal norms change, so will the people that enter the military. Changes in societal norms and values challenge the basic concept of officership and the military as a profession. Consequently, senior leaders must understand the basic fundamentals of officership and their important role in developing military leaders.

Chapter 1

Introduction

> *Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.*
>
> —Hon Sheila E. Widnall, Secretary of the Air Force
> *Perspectives on Leadership,* 1995

How many times in your career have you heard a senior officer say, "What is happening with our young officers? Their values and behavior do not represent good officership. Are they getting the right kind of commissioning training? Is the Air Force bringing in the right kinds of people? What is wrong?" What these officers (and sometime non-commissioned officers) are saying is that they are frustrated, confused, and in many cases angry that our young officers may not appear to have the same values and sense of dedication as those officers that served in years past. Those who criticize our young officers see a "new generation" not committed to the Air Force, but to themselves. This "new generation" is often perceived as ill-disciplined, lacking in the institutional values that enabled the United States Air Force and the other services to make the US the lone remaining superpower. What these critics see is a group of "civilian soldiers" that don't know, understand, or value what it means to be a leader—an officer in the service of one's country.

While I would agree with some of the critics that there is work to be done, I simply don't believe "the sky is falling." Furthermore, if our young and mid-level officers do not have the right officership values, who is at fault—the officer, or those of us that have the responsibility for developing these officers? If we want to ensure that our officers internalize and display the right officership principles, it is the senior leadership who has the responsibility for developing our officers. Developing officership starts at the top.

Officership is the one element that separates the military officer from all other professions. It embodies a set of core values that have well served our military leaders since the inception of our nation. Officership is the basic foundation of military leadership and professionalism. However, officership is not something that most military officers bring with them to the military service. It is like an acquired taste; it comes with time, experience, understanding, and commitment. Officership is an attitude and behavior that is learned. It is the senior officer's responsibility and obligation to teach and develop officership in order to produce future leaders and to maintain the institutional values, traditions, and professionalism of the United States Air Force.

This paper will examine the concept of officership and explore some of the key principles and dimensions of officership. The reason why senior officers must promote and develop officership will be discussed in substantive detail. Finally, I will offer some suggestions for developing officership.

The history of the US military, and in particular the Air Force, is filled with examples of how the professionalism, commitment, and determination of our people were the deciding elements in battle. People have been and will continue to be the "force multiplier" in the prosecution of war. As we enter the twenty-first century, our military

leaders will be confronted with many new and unique challenges. In fact, changes in the core values and norms in our society could and probably will have great impact on military service. Enhanced technology and weapons development will not be enough to maintain US superpower status. It will take strong leadership and a continued commitment to the values that make American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines the most awesome fighting force in the world. To maintain our military edge, we will need strong officership! To properly develop officership, the senior leadership must take the lead in shaping the officer corps of the twenty-first century and beyond.

Chapter 2

The Foundation of Officership

> *I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: So Help Me God.*
>
> —Commissioning Oath of Office

Officership is not complex, difficult or hard, but it can be challenging. Yet there are many officers in the Air Force that would probably prefer to focus on the "hard core" technical issues rather than on people issues. Officership is essentially about people...and it is about the values, vision, and mission of the Air Force. To properly develop officership, senior leaders must have a thorough working knowledge of officership, recognize the impact of societal norms and values on officership, accept the fact that officership is architectural, not accidental, and understand the close relationship between officership and the commissioning oath of office.

Definition of Officership

Just what is officership? Many writers have attempted to find or develop a definition of officership. In his paper, "Officership: The Missing Factor in the Air Force Search for Professional Leadership," Major George Ferrell concluded that officership "is, as yet, an

undefined term." His paper pointed out that officership is one of those words or terms that means different things to different people.[1] Major Terry J. Wyrick in his paper entitled "Officership and Direct Commissioning" concluded that the attempt to define officership has been going on for many centuries. From Sun Tzu to contemporary writers, the attempt to define officership has been a difficult, relentless process.[2]

American dictionaries have no reference to officership. Yet the term is used quite commonly among military members and is referred to in countless military publications. The term officership is similar to the word "love;" everyone knows what it feels like and can recognize it, but it is difficult to define. However, it is important to know what officership is in order to understand its vital role in developing future leaders in the Air Force.

Officership should not be thought of as a term or a word for which a definition should be developed. Officership should be thought of as a recipe or formula. You would not expect to find a recipe or formula in the dictionary, nor should you expect to find a neatly packaged definition of officership. Based upon my research and my own experience, I would suggest that officership should be considered "a learned set of principles and values that guide an officer's judgment, decisions, behavior, philosophy and vision." Like a recipe or formula, officership has many ingredients: values, courage, accountability, loyalty, responsibility, discipline, leadership, character, trust, and authority. Just like a recipe, each individual officer may even add a few more things to give it a distinct flavor, such as honor, bravery, commitment, sacrifice, and duty. Certainly, no officership formula would be complete without a portion of professionalism and patriotism.[3]

The young officer entering the Air Force may already possess many of the basic ingredients of officership. However, this is not likely the case. Most officers will certainly possess some of the vital officership principles, but these principles will need further honing and development. Many of our young officers may even come to the Air Force with many officership principles but may be confused with the vast difference between the level of importance placed on these principles in the military, versus what they may have experienced in civilian life. These officers may, to a large extent, simply be victims or products of their environments. Therefore, the military has a responsibility to provide these young officers the structure and foundation that is so critical to their professional development. This must be done in a carefully planned and orderly manner.

Taking young, often chaotic and ill-disciplined young men and women and developing them into sound, capable leaders is a central characteristic of the military. This is what makes the military so unique. However, it should be understood that rapidly changing societal norms and values can also have a major impact on promoting and developing officership.

Impact of Societal Norms and Values on Officership

Are the young officers of today different from those of the past? Are our young lieutenants, captains, majors and our more senior officers made of the same fabric as the officers that shaped our military history and formed the foundation for the Air Force? Unfortunately, there is no clear answer to this question. But one thing we do know: the officers entering today's Air Force come from distinctly different backgrounds and have many influences in their lives that our forefathers in the Air Force did not have![4]

This "new generation" of officer has likely been shaped and influenced by parents, school, peers, and to a large degree—television. Their values are likely to be quite different for those who entered the Air Force 20 or more years ago.[5] Based upon sociological studies, you can expect these individuals to be more self-oriented, cynical, materialistic, indifferent to authority, and slow to commit to other people and jobs. They will likely place a greater value on fun and leisure time and are generally not willing to wait for the "good life" for any length of time. They want it all and they want it now.[6] Additionally, their views on marriage, family, religion, human life, morality and the role of government (including the use of military forces) will likely differ significantly from the values of past generations.[7] These changing values and norms create a whole new set of challenges and potential problems for our leadership in the Air Force and other services.

Unfortunately, many of these values and factors are incompatible with the Air Force and military service in general. Or, at the very least, these current-day values will pose a challenge to developing desired officership values among our next generation of officers. As Major Farrell pointed out in his paper on officership, "professional military officers, as a group, hold certain attitudes, beliefs, and values as manifestly self-evident. The concepts of loyalty, duty, honor, and country-before-self are a few of these."[8] If our next generation of officers hold values that are in direct conflict with these, then the senior leader's role in developing officership becomes more critical and challenging.

Officership: Not Accidental but Architectural

Developing officership requires a structured, architectural approach. If we want good quality officers that will maintain the very values and standards that have served our

military over its history, then we need to build them. We need to manage their development. We need to continually test their officership skill, capabilities, and values. It is important to do this early in an officer's career. The price for learning the fundamental officership principles late in an officer's career can be very costly. Just like the acquisition system that produces a weapon system, "Developing officership is not accidental but architectural. It must be worked at on a daily basis. It won't happen just because we want it to."[9]

Furthermore, we can't afford to leave it to someone else to do. We often hear that it is not the school system or teacher's responsibility to teach discipline and values to our children. That is viewed as the parent's responsibility to teach at home. A similar analogy applies to officership. It is not the Professional Military Education (PME) system or the educators at these institutions or the instructors at technical schools that are solely responsible for building and developing officership. That responsibility rests with the senior leaders "at home" (the office, flight line, cockpit, o'club, etc.). Certainly our academic and training institutions can have a big impact on teaching values and reinforcing proper behavior. Yet, the primary responsibility remains with the commanders, supervisors, and senior leaders back at home base.

Over the past few years, the Air Force has experienced many unfortunate and tragic events that have called Air Force members to re-examine their values and commitments to the Air Force way of life. The crash of a B-52 during a practice for an air show, the shoot-down of two Army Black Hawk helicopters, and the removal of several senior officers from duty because of their unprofessional behavior, represent behavior that suggests something may be wrong with officership in the Air Force. Both Secretary of the

Air Force Sheila Widnall and Air Force Chief of Staff General Ronald R. Fogleman have spoken and published several articles about core values: authority, responsibility, discipline, and service before self.

In a recent article entitled "The Profession of Arms," General Fogleman pointed out that "We Airmen are part of a unique profession that is founded on the premise of "service before self." We are entrusted with the security of our nation, the protection of its citizens, and the preservation of its way of life. ". . . If you would be successful in our profession in the United States Air Force, then take your lead from those who have gone before."[10] Military officers are sworn to defend the very principles of the United States Constitution and may often be asked to put their lives on the line in defending these principles.

The Commission and the Oath of Office

The officer's commission and oath of office has a meaning attached to it like no other known document or commitment. The commission or oath of office is more than a "handsome framed parchment that once hung proudly on the young officer's office wall but which may now be moldering somewhere in an old packing box."[11] As Col Orwyn Sampson pointed out in his analysis of the military oath of office, the oath is to be taken seriously. It embodies the principles of liberty for all men and women. It represents an ideal that has been tried by fire and found to be genuine, lasting, and valuable. The individual's complete loyalty is tied up in the commitment. It is clearly and without question a commitment to excellence and an allegiance to God.[12]

It is the commission and the oath of office that gives the Air Force officer the foundation to serve. It requires a commitment and an allegiance to a set of values, principles, and standards that are far above those expected of the average American citizen. It allows our officers to embrace the same commitment for which thousands of their fellow officers paid the ultimate price—their lives in the service of their country.[13] It is the commission and oath of office that provide the architectural framework for officership and for sustaining the Air Force in the future.

Notes

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Chapter 3

Key Principles of Officership

> *I am an American fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense. I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender the members of my command while they still have the means to resist. . . . I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, 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.*
>
> —Articles I, II, VI of the Code of Conduct

Whether we are talking about strategy, doctrine, life, or officership, there are always guiding principles—those factors that make up the fabric of the subject. Officership is composed of a set of basic principles. It is deeply rooted in leadership and heavily influenced by the institutional values of the military and United States Air Force.

The Basic Officership Principles

Officership embodies a learned set of principles and values that guide an officer's judgment, decisions, behavior, philosophy, and vision. Once again, officership must be viewed as a recipe or formula versus a "textbook" definition. Therefore, it is important to fully understand the principles and values that guide (or should guide) the officer on a day-to-day basis. These include loyalty, morals, and ethics. An officer that lacks these basic principles is likely to be void of officership. It is not enough to simply wear the rank, the

uniform, or even have a signed commissioning document. Officership extends far beyond the signs and symbol of the commission. It also embodies the key principles of honesty, integrity, loyalty, morals, and ethics, in every facet of the officer's life and career.

First, let's look at honesty and integrity. From the time we are small children through adulthood, we hear "always tell the truth." Therefore telling the truth, being honest and straightforward with others, should come as natural as breathing. But this is not always the case. Unfortunately, we often find many who occupy senior leadership positions doing things such as bending the truth, stretching the truth, or simply avoiding the truth. "I will not lie, steal or cheat" is the officer's motto. Yet, it happens, and in the eyes of many, it happens too often. Consider squadron, group or wing commanders who lie to their people. Will they be trusted? Will their people go the extra mile for them? Would you risk your life for someone who is dishonest?

Donald T. Phillips, author of *Lincoln on Leadership*, writes, "Part of the Lincoln myth is that Abraham Lincoln was fair, trustworthy, sincere, straightforward, of sound moral principle and, like George Washington, truthful. He even had the nickname Honest Abe."[1] Phillips points out it is the principle of honesty we best remember about Abe Lincoln. Phillips also stresses that "the architecture of leadership, all the theories, and guidelines, fall apart without honesty and integrity. It's the key that holds an organization together."[2] That same principle holds true in the Air Force. People must trust their leaders before they will follow them, especially into battle. They must believe their leaders possess honesty and integrity. The real underlying issue here is credibility—the faith, belief, and confidence we have in others. Throughout my career in the Air Force I have

heard the saying: "An officer's word is his bond." This motto or axiom is also a fundamental tenet of officership.

Former Air Force Chief of Staff General (Ret) Charles A Gabriel stated that "Integrity is the fundamental premise of military service in a free society. Without integrity, the moral pillars of our military strength—public trust and self-respect—are lost."[3] It is incumbent upon every military officer to understand the importance and ramifications of integrity. I am reminded of a story I once heard about a wing commander who instructed all of his people to sign an integrity statement to confirm their commitment to integrity in the Air Force. Unfortunately, many of the officers in a particular unit deployed on Temporary Duty (TDY) and failed to sign their statements before the commander's suspense date. Upon arrival at the TDY location, the squadron commander asked all of the people to sign and "backdate" the Integrity Statement in order to meet the wing commander's suspense. Unfortunately, too many people in the Air Force have elected or have been asked to compromise their integrity. Without integrity, we clearly lose our strength as a military service, our public trust and our self-respect.

Another key principle of officership is loyalty. We often think of loyalty as a commitment, a faithfulness to our superiors, peers and subordinates. Our loyalty is most often called into question when the going gets tough. People will ask "Where is your loyalty?" Often this question is asked to determine which side of the issue the individual will take or with which camp they will align themselves. One hopes the answer is the "side of right, truth, justice, and fairness." Unfortunately, there are those who believe that loyalty to one's superior, peers, and subordinates is incompatible. I beg to differ. A key fundamental principle of officership must be a clear and demonstrated sense of loyalty to

your boss, your fellow officers, and your people. General George S. Patton Jr. highlighted the importance of loyalty saying, "There is a great deal of talk about loyalty from the bottom to the top. Loyalty from the top down is even more necessary and much less prevalent."[4] Many young officers and NCO's will tell you that General Patton's statement still has merit today.

Finally, morals and ethics must certainly be a part of any officership formula. Today we hear more and more about the breakdown in the moral fabric of our society. In the military, we are seeing more and more moral and ethical scandals that not only embarrass those in uniform but send the wrong signal to our young people and those that have entrusted us to safeguard the nation. Cheating at our military academies has raised questions of ethics in the military. Officers in uniform lying before congress and carrying out unlawful and unauthorized missions further damage the image of the military officer.

Officers who knowingly and blatantly disobey rules of engagement or hide the facts after an incident or accident break the basic rules of ethics. Those who engage in inappropriate behavior bringing embarrassment and disrespect to themselves, their families and the military have lost the true meaning of morality.[5] Consequently, military academies and professional military education courses have invested significant time and attention to the subject of ethics and morals in an attempt to rekindle the true meaning of these critical values. However, ethics and morals must be rekindled from within and then sharpened through education and review. The article "Military Ethics, In Search For An Honest Man" put it best: "Officers don't teach ethics, they are ethics"[6]

Officership must include honesty, integrity, loyalty, morals and ethics. They are the very principles that have shaped our military officers, have served great military leaders of

the past, and will promote good officership in the future. Many of these officership principles are built around a concept we call leadership.

Leadership and Officership

Throughout American history there are many classic examples of great military heroes: MacArthur, Eisenhower, Patton, and Marshall just to name a few.[7] These individuals, and thousands more like them, were thrust into combat situations that demanded a special set of skills and talents to accomplish a task. Under the most difficult circumstances, they demonstrated great leadership skills. Leadership is often regarded as "the art of influencing people to accomplish an organization's goal."[8] Leaders employ their skills to influence and motivate people to effectively accomplish the mission and often achieve the impossible. Whether it is on the open field of Gettysburg, the beaches of Normandy, or the sand hills of Kuwait, it was leadership that made the difference between victory and defeat. Leadership is a key principle. It forms the basic structure of officership. Without leadership, there is essentially no officership.

Major Wyrick in his article "Officership and Direct Commissioning Programs" suggested that "Leadership is perhaps the most glamorous, most personalized, and perhaps the most beloved aspect of officership"[9] Leadership is the stuff that people write books about, make movies about, and teach through the military training and education system. Leadership involves courage, intelligence, loyalty, bravery, and ambition. Leaders are driven by a strong sense of mission and total dedication to their causes and their people. Air Force Chief of Staff General Fogleman put it this way: "Any leader has got to take inventory of his organization. By this I mean he's got to know the people . . .

[leaders must] show courage and take responsibility . . . [leaders must] be dedicated to making things happen and make sure that once something happens it lasts.[10]

Leadership provides the officer the tools and structure to develop officership. It is military officers, in the Air Force and the other services, who are called upon to set and enforce the standards. They must ensure our men and women in uniform have a good quality of life and the means to perform their jobs—and they must create visions for the future. Air Force Secretary Sheila E. Widnall expressed her views on leadership in today's Air Force in this manner: "Uncommon leaders—and the Air Force has many—navigate toward the right course of action, then follow through. In doing so, they encourage and inspire others. . . . Leaders by their achievements and high standards, motivate others to do what is right. . . . Air Force leaders do, however, share common responsibilities, and are awarded special trust and confidence: to fulfill the mission, to care for the people, and to commit to core values."[11] Officership requires strong leadership and an unwavering commitment to the institutional values of the Air Force.

Institutional Values

It is the basic individual values, leadership, and a commitment to the core institutional values of the Air Force that must be emphasized and developed within each Air Force officer in order to develop sound officership. Over the past few years, the Air Force and the other services have reexamined and redefined the core institutional values that each member of the Air Force should know, understand, and embrace. Secretary of the Air Force Widnall and Chief of Staff General Foglemen recently articulated the core values of the Air Force. In a joint statement they said, "The Air Force holds certain ideals, certain

values, that are at the heart and soul of the military profession. [These values] are integrity first, service before self, and excellence."[12] In a recent article on "Perspectives on Leadership," the Secretary went on to say that "Integrity, service, and excellence [are] three simple words that epitomize the core of the military profession: the bedrock of integrity, fortified by service to country, which in turn fuels the drive for excellence."[13]

If officership is to be developed and nurtured in the Air Force, then every officer must fully maintain the core values that have guided the Air Force from its beginning and will serve the Air Force of the future. It is not simply enough to do a good job or say the right words. When confronted with new and compelling challenges, Air Force officers must be able to reach within for the substance that enabled the early pioneers to blaze a trail of victory and forge ahead even against the greatest of odds. Senior leaders must remind young officers of the struggles of Hap Arnold, Carl Spaatz, Curtis LeMay, and George Brown.[14] These pioneers, along with hundred of thousands of other brave and industrious airmen, possessed the integrity, made the sacrifices, and had a commitment to excellence that has resulted in the most powerful and respected Air Force in the world.

It is these core institutional values, along with the individual values, and great leadership that have made officership a prerequisite for progress; a formula for success. It is officership that will be the "force multiplier" as the Air Force enters the twenty-first century. Without officership, the Air Force would be little more than just another organization. Officership provides the structure, foundation, values, and principles that will maintain the integrity and strength of the Air Force and serve to safeguard our nation, its people, and the American way of life.

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Chapter 4

Why Senior Leaders Must Develop and Promote Officership

> *When a team takes to the field, individual specialists come together to achieve a team win. All players try to do their very best because every other player, the team, and the home town are counting on them to win. So it is when the Armed Forces of the United States go to war. We must win every time. Every soldier must take the battlefield believing his or her unit is the best in the world. Every pilot must take off believing there is no one better in the sky. Every sailor standing watch must believe there is no better ship at sea. Every Marine must hit the beach believing that there are not better infantrymen in the world. But they all must also believe that they are part of a team, a joint team, that fights together to win. This is our history, this is our tradition, this is our future.*
>
> —General Colin L. Powell

Senior leaders in the Air Force have many responsibilities. It is through their guidance and leadership that the mission gets accomplished. It is thorough their vision, imagination, and foresight that the Air Force is able to sustain its military capability and posture itself for future challenges. It is also the senior leaders who must ensure the professional growth and development of our officers. Consequently, the responsibility for promoting and developing officership rests with our senior leaders. This is an obligation and a duty in order to maintain military professionalism, to promote an attitude and belief in officership first and occupation second, to properly prepare officers for responsibility, and to teach succeeding generations of officers the core values and traditions that are critical to the Air Force as a military institution.

Maintain Military Professionalism

What is it that separates the military member for all others in American society and possibly the world? Is it the uniform they wear; their crisp, starched battle dress uniforms and their other neatly pressed apparel? Is it the extensive training they receive; from basic, boot camp, through officer training? Is it the training they receive on weapon systems that have the capability of literally destroying the world in which we live? Or is it the values and principles that drive them and the very institution they serve? Could it be the professionalism, competence, teamwork and strong sense of dedication they portray?

Yes, it is all this and much more that makes the military service separate, unique and distinct from any other occupation or profession. It is the military member that is expected to safeguard our nation "from all enemies, foreign and domestic." It is the military member who is expected to go to any corner of the world in the name of freedom, justice and democracy. Indeed, the men and women in uniform are the keepers of our nation's security, the instruments for protecting our vital interests, and the means of sustaining the American way of life. General Fogleman captured the essence of the military profession when he commented: "No other profession expects its members to lay down their lives for their friends, families, or freedom. But our profession [the profession of arms] readily expects its members to willingly risk their lives in performing their professional duties."[1] Military professionalism is one of the key reasons senior leaders must develop and promote officership.

Military professionalism does not start with graduation from the Air Force Academy, Reserve Officer Training Corps, Officer Training School, or direct commissioning. If anything, these experiences should be thought of simply as "initiation" into the Air Force.

Completion of technical training does not qualify the individual as a military professional. Granted, commissioning programs and technical schools expose officers to the "study" of professionalism and even provide some laboratory experience. However, the officership and professional development generally starts when an officer reports to his/her duty station. This is where the officer must be "blued" into the Air Force. This is where the "officership curriculum" must be fully developed and implemented. This is where senior leaders must teach, validate, grow, develop, and promote officership and military professionalism.

Put bluntly, if senior leaders are not willing to insist upon a strong sense of professionalism in younger officers; if they cannot weave into the personal fabric the same sense of responsibility, honor, and values that guided military leaders of the past; if senior leaders do not convey that military professionalism demands a sense of a "higher calling" in order to properly serve; then there will be little difference between the military professional and the shoe clerk. Military professionalism is and must be different and special. As a servant of the nation, the military professional must continually put service before self, liberty before gratuity, and freedom before fame. The responsibility for teaching, promoting, developing, and insisting upon military professionalism rests with our senior leaders.

Promote Officership First, Occupation Second

Have you ever questioned why officers from the Army refer to themselves as "soldiers;" Naval officers "sailors;" officers from the Marine Corps "marines;" yet Air Force officers rarely refer to themselves as "airmen?" There may be reasons for this

different sense of identity by Air Force officers that seems to be instilled in officers of the sister services. First, the Air Force has a very short history compared with other services. This certainly has to account for what many refer to as a "service culture." Second, unlike the other services, few people in the Air Force are directly involved in combat. With the exception of aircrews, combat controllers, and a few other specialties, most airmen are involved in "sortie or aircraft generation" support. This also accounts for part of the airmanship identity problem. Finally, a lack of emphasis on officership has a significant bearing on the issue. Unless officership is given the primary emphasis, instead of the individual specialty, Air Force officers will not likely internalize the same sense of officer first, occupation second in their development.

There are negative consequences of putting occupation ahead of officership. First, Air Force officers will not have high regard for the fundamental principles of accountability, responsibility and discipline. Unfortunately, we may have come very close to this point already. Recent incidents such as the unnecessary crash of a B-52 aircraft, the shoot-down of two Army blackhawk helicopters, and the removal of senior officers from their positions of command illustrates something needs to be fixed and fixed now. For the past year, the Air Force Chief of Staff has been on a "campaign" to restore a true sense of accountability, responsibility, and discipline in the Air Force. The actions on the part of the Chief of Staff reflect a growing intolerance for poor officership behavior. General Fogleman is clearly on a crusade to make all Air Force members, especially those in command and senior leadership positions, accountable to a higher standard of conduct. The Chief's message is loud and clear: "It is our responsibility and our duty to hold people accountable for their actions and respond appropriately."[2] We simply cannot

afford an erosion in our standards of conduct and professionalism. If anything, the military must lead the way and set the standards of proper conduct and behavior, not only for ourselves but for our nation. Much of this renewed focus on accountability and professionalism can be accomplished with a revitalized emphasis on officership before occupation.

Second, unless officership is put ahead of occupation, Air Force officers will simply become equipment operators instead of leaders maintaining our national security. We are currently living in a world where, for economic reasons, the military is constantly being challenged to contract out or privatize its operations. Just how far will this go? Unless our civilian leadership and the American public perceive that a uniformed military is necessary to our national security and to safeguard our vital national interest, a case can be made for giving this responsibility to a "hired gun." Unless Air Force officers and the men and women they command and supervise represent more than airplane drivers, computer operators, and mechanics, then the need for a military or an Air Force will continue to be questioned. The American public must view the military for what it can accomplish in terms of national security, instead of the job it performs. The Navy recruiting slogan is correct: "It's more than a job."

Finally, officership must occupy the premier position in developing Air Force officers or they will likely lose respect from non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and young enlisted members. No matter how far we go back in recorded history, the success of any military, especially in combat, has been a by-product of the relationship between its leaders and its followers. The officer must set the tone for this relationship. Unless the officers exemplify strong leadership, professionalism, and commitment, their effectiveness and

probability of success will be drastically diminished. NCOs will not follow "weak officers." In fact, good order and discipline will be compromised when junior or senior officers do not represent the highest characteristics of officership. When officers compromise their position, they then may compromise the mission.

Officership first, occupation second is not a new concept in the Air Force. But it is a concept that is receiving (and rightfully so) a significant amount of attention from the current Air Force senior leadership. Whether we call it officership or accountability, professionalism or discipline, we need to ensure those who wear the Air Force uniform understand first and foremost they are not employees in some "Fortune" 500 corporation—they are the safekeepers of liberty, freedom and the American way of life. This reinvigorated focus on officership and institutional values will serve to counterbalance the occupational mentality that dominates the thinking of too many of our officers in the Air Force today. A renewed focus on officership will also enhance our young officer's commitment to the profession of arms and strengthen their identity with the Air Force.[3] Therefore, senior leaders have a responsibility and a duty to continually develop and promote these vital officership ideals. Understanding and fostering these principles is especially critical for those who occupy positions of command.

Prepare Officers for the Responsibilities of Command

"There's nothing that compares to being a commander" many senior officers have proclaimed. "Until you've commanded you haven't passed the leadership test" many of them say. I've even heard general officers remark about "what they would give" for the opportunity to be a "wing commander again." What is so unique about command and

what is the relationship between officership and the responsibility of command? When an officer marches across the stage, takes the flag, and says, "Sir, I assume command," that individual is stepping into a whole new world filled with challenges and responsibilities. Command is a high-risk environment, where mistakes can be very costly to the mission, the people, and the commander. Commanders are responsible for the care, feeding, safety, behavior, performance, and technical and professional development of their people. "The commander must be a tactician, strategist, warrior, ethicist, leader, manager, and technician."[4] Consequently, commanders must be equipped with the principles of officership to effectively carry out their responsibilities. Senior leaders must ensure officers are being properly groomed for the responsibilities of command.

As General Michael Loh, former Commander of Air Combat Command, stated: "Commanders are awarded a special trust and confidence to fulfill their unit's mission and to exercise good leadership, discipline, justice, fairness and compassion in peace and war. . . . Commanders must foster a strong sense of duty and service. They must create a vision and motivate and instill pride in team performance."[5] In actuality, the commander, especially the squadron commander, is on the "front line" when it comes to developing officership, leadership, and professional values in our younger officers. It is the commander who is responsible for the mission and the people who accomplish that mission. Unless senior leaders have prepared officers for this awesome responsibility, the likelihood of failure and disaster is highly probable.

"Leadership, accountability, and devotion to duty are the foundation of command.[6] The commander must possess the right set of skills and abilities to be able to influence and motivate others to accomplish the mission, especially when the going gets tough. The

commander must possess the right officership values in order to successfully accomplish the mission. Indeed there have been commanders (and probably are right now) who have become successful without having good officership traits. Therefore, it is up to senior leadership to ensure officers get the skills they need before they are permitted to occupy positions of command.

It is the officership skills, more that the technical know-how, that will enable an officer to successfully meet the challenges of command. "Commanders must be decisive, agile, creative, intuitive, culturally sensitive and visionary."[7] Commanders must take care of their people, meeting their personal and professional needs. The art of commanding, just like the art of leadership, must be taught. Officership is not accidental but architectural.[8] If senior leaders do not encourage and develop young officers for greater leadership and command, then these officers cannot be held solely responsible for their shortcomings, inadequacies, and incompetence when they march across the stage and say, "Sir, I assume command."

Teach Values and Beliefs to Succeeding Generations

The Air Force is still a relatively young service. Having recently celebrated its forty-eighth birthday, the Air Force is younger than most of the colonels and generals currently on active duty. Yet the Air Force has developed its own culture, traditions, values, and beliefs. The transfer of knowledge and beliefs about officership in the Air Force can only be sustained through teaching our young. They must understand the rich heritage, history, and core values that gave birth to the Air Force and that has sustained this institution for almost five decades. Our young officers must understand the contributions and sacrifices

of the early pioneers in the Air Force and develop a sense of identify and vision that will enable the Air Force to continue to be a key force in the defense of America's freedom. Promoting and developing officership will ensure the officer force is prepared for the technological and leadership challenges of the future.

Notes

[1] Fogleman, Gen Ronald. The Profession of Arms. Air Power Journal 9:4-5 Fall 1995. pp.4-5.

[2] Watkins, Steven. Accountability: Is Crusade Yielding Results? Air Force Times 56:16-17,Jan 1, 1996.

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[4] Hartle, Anthony E. Moral Issues in Military Decision Making. Lawrence, KS. University Press of Kansas. 1989. pp.12, 36-54.

[5] Loh, Gen Michael. The Responsibility of Command. Combat Edge. 3:4 Dec '94.

[6] Godsey, Brig Gen Orin and Loh, Gen John. Essence of Command. Combat Edge 4:10- 1 June 1995. p.10.

[7] House, Brig Gen Randolph. Officer Leader Development for the 21st Century. Field Artillery. pp 40-41, June 1994. p.40.

[8] Interviews with Dr Richard I. Lester, Educational Advisor to the Commander, Ira C. Eaker College for Professional Development, October 1995–February 1996.

Chapter 5

The Senior Leader's Role: Making It Happen

My fundamental premise is that leaders count, that people at the top can—should—make a difference. By setting standards, goals, and priorities, by establishing and nurturing a network of communications, a leader can make a difference in the daily performance of an organization.

—MGen (Ret) Perry M. Smith, USAF
Taking Charge, 1986

During a recent election campaign, one of the candidates was asked the question: "Why are you running for this office?" The candidate paused for a moment, looked the reporter in the eye and said: "If not me, who; if not now, when?" Although this reply may not go down as the most memorable line in history, it certainly conveys a strong message—a message that not only applies to politics but to officership. Every senior leader must accept the duty and obligation of developing officership—"If not me, who?" And every senior leader must see this as an ongoing, day-to-day responsibility—"If not now, when?"

There are several ways senior leaders can promote and develop officership. First, they can set the example and lead by example. The senior leader must also counsel, mentor and even sponsor company and field grade officers. When unacceptable behavior is observed, it should be corrected. Likewise, acceptable behavior by younger officers must be rewarded and reinforced. Finally, the senior leader must continually stress the

importance of academic and intellectual stimulation. All senior leaders must become teachers and provide their officers with information that covers everything from history and airpower to leadership. There are many ways senior leaders can promote officership and develop leaders of tomorrow.

Set the Example/Lead by Example

The old days of "Do as I say not as I do" are long gone. The days of "If it's good for the goose, it's good for the gander" are alive and well. If senior leaders exhibit poor officership, they can expect their subordinates to follow their example. Likewise, good officership behavior is also contagious. I once worked for a senior officer that set a high standard in the unit for cleanliness and order. He was "spit and polish" and a whole lot more. If you wanted him to make your day miserable, then let him find dirty facilities, tools not properly secured, or vehicles or equipment not properly maintained. Initially, most of his subordinates thought the Colonel was unreasonable. We had a job to do and keeping things "neat and clean" interfered with accomplishing the mission. But we came to learn that keeping things neat and clean was a part of the mission. This was also one of our responsibilities. In short order, the standards of neat and clean were raised throughout the unit and we not only performed better, but looked like a "world class organization."

The troops expect the senior leader to set and maintain the standards. This also includes standards of conduct and personal appearance. "The arrogant or domineering person commands no respect, only resentment. The supervisor who violates basic standards of morality invariably ends up in a compromising situation. A leader who drinks excessively or who abuses controlled drugs sends a dangerous message: I cannot control

myself; how can I control you?"[1] Senior leaders are often on center stage. They are being critiqued, scored, evaluated, and emulated every time they are in public. Consequently, officership behavior must be first-class at all times. People may not remember all the great things the general did in his distinguished career if he retires in disgrace because of an act of impropriety. As General George S. Patton, Jr. once remarked, "You are always on parade."[2]

People will emulate good behavior just as they will imitate bad behavior. They will follow the leader. Leaders who ask their people to work hard, make sacrifices, and risk their lives, but are not willing to exhibit this same behavior, will eventually lose the respect of their followers and will likely jeopardize the mission. During a speech to the ROTC cadets at Virginia Military Institute, General Colin L. Powell remarked: "If you want them to work hard and endure hardship, you must work even harder. They must see you sacrifice for them. They must see you do the hard things, they must see you giving credit to the platoon for something good you did, and they must see you take the blame for something they hadn't gotten just right."[3] Leaders must exhibit the behavior they expect and demand of their followers.

Indeed, one of the first, and possibly the most important actions that a senior leader can take to develop officership is to set the right example and to lead by example. The old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" fully applies to officership development. Senior leaders must give their subordinates a good picture of what officership is all about. They must walk the talk. They must represent the highest standards of excellence both personally and professionally. They must make it happen through their actions and behavior.

Mentoring, Counseling, and Sponsorship

Someone once told me that if you a walking down a road and happen to see a turtle on a fence post, you can conclude one thing: he didn't get up there by himself. This story also applies to most senior leaders in the Air Force. Getting to the rank of colonel or general is not just an individual effort. Most likely, it is combination of factors including hard work, potential, successful assignments, great subordinates, and help from commanders and senior leaders along the way. A good portion of this "help" from commanders and senior leaders comes in the form of mentoring, coaching, counseling, and sponsorship. These efforts contribute significantly to developing sound officership in the Air Force.

First, let's look at mentoring. We hear a lot about mentoring both in military and civilian institutions. There are many definitions of mentoring. Most definitions include some reference to guiding, developing, and teaching. Captain Michael E. Uecker, in a thesis entitled "Mentoring and Leadership Development in the Officer Corps of the United States Air Force," explained that "mentoring is a relatively long-term relationship between an older and a younger adult where the senior member of the relationship plays a major role in shaping and molding the younger member in his or her professional career."[4] In essence, the mentor serves as a teacher, a role model, and a guide in developing the more junior member. In developing officership, mentoring plays a vital role. The younger officer looks to the more senior officer as a model to emulate. Also, the senior officer is expected to help guide the career and professional development of the younger member. Additionally, mentoring helps to direct the younger officer in understanding what is important and how to avoid professional and career pitfalls. The mentor is someone you

should be able to go to for advice, guidance, and counsel. Captain Uechker's research found that "approximately half of the respondents [survey of students at the Air War College and Air Command and Staff College] had experienced the mentoring phenomenon and that those who had mentors were, on average, slightly better educated than their unmentored counterparts. Mentored officers were also more likely to be promoted ahead of their contemporaries, were more highly satisfied with their career progress, and were more satisfied with their jobs."[5] Mentoring plays an important role in officership development.

Another important area of officership development is counseling. Counseling can be both formal and informal, depending on the nature of the subject and the comfort level of the situation. Unfortunately, counseling in the Air Force has a negative connotation. It usually suggests that someone had done something wrong and needs a few words of wisdom. This clearly should not be assumed. Counseling should be used to give feedback, get feedback, to plan, and to set goals. Yes, there are times it will be used for "chewing out" a subordinate, but even then this can be done in a constructive versus a destructive manner. One way to avoid the negative connotation of counseling is to make it routine. Senior leaders can set up scheduled counseling sessions and use this as an opportunity to discuss performance, career development, and of course, officership.

When counseling must be used to correct unacceptable behavior, discipline or chastise a younger officer, it should still be done with dignity and professionalism. One of the best examples of a stern yet constructive session occurred between General Robert E. Lee and General Jeb Stuart during the Civil War. Stuart had failed to carry out the mission given to him by Lee and had been called in to see Lee. Lee immediately began to reprimand

Stuart for failing to do his duty. Lee said to Stuart, "You were my eyes. Your mission was to screen this army from the enemy cavalry and to report any movement by the enemy's main body. That mission was not fulfilled."[6] General Lee could see that Stuart was in pain and elected to make this a moment of learning. Lee then seized the moment to make this a constructive versus a destructive session by saying, "It is possible that you misunderstood my orders. It is possible I did not make myself clear. Yet this matter must be clear: you and your cavalry are the eyes of the army. Without your cavalry we are blind, and that has happened once but must never happen again."[7]

When the senior leader calls in the junior member for corrective action, it can be an opportunity to criticize or an opportunity to teach a valuable lesson. Officership is about teaching lessons, the kind of lessons that allow officers to learn, grow and develop—not the kind that causes them, especially our top quality officers, to leave the Air Force because they made a mistake. Constructive, proactive counseling helps to grow effective officers.

Finally, sponsorship offers a unique opportunity to develop and promote officership. Unfortunately, sponsoring or sponsorship has become a negative word in the Air Force. Let me point out that sponsorship is not cronyism. I'm not talking about the "fair-haired boy or girl" syndrome where the senior leader only takes cares of a favorite officer. Sponsorship is best defined as "the process whereby higher-level leaders with special interest in more junior employees provide advice and see that the junior person is considered for appropriate assignments."[8] Based on this definition, every officer should be sponsored. All officers should have the benefit of a senior person in their chain (or even

outside their chain of command) providing them advice on career development and the assignment process.

The new Air Force Personnel Center Assignment Bulletin Board provides the individual with the potential job openings for company and field grade officers (Lt thru Lt Col). However, colonels and generals must still play an integral role in this process. Senior officers must ensure their officers are seeking and being afforded the leadership, operational, staff, and joint assignment opportunities that will prepare them for more senior level responsibility. In his book, *Taking Charge,* Perry Smith put it this way: "A vital role for a leader is that of ensuring that subordinates are properly rewarded, promoted, and moved on to subsequent and more senior assignments in a deliberate and thoughtful way."[9]

Officership development involves carefully guiding and sponsoring our younger officers, ensuring they have the opportunity to learn those skills so necessary for successful leadership. As we enter the twenty-first century, the Air Force and other services can expect to face challenges we can't even envision today. "As the challenges our leaders face become increasingly complex, the role officers play in providing purpose and direction to units will become more critical."[10] Officership skills will enable our officers to meet the challenges of the next century and beyond.

Correct Unacceptable Behavior and Reward/Reinforce Correct Behavior

Senior leaders must think of themselves as conductors of orchestras. They select the music, control the tempo, set the standard, and ultimately determine the success or failure of their units. When an orchestra performs well the conductor must reward the players.

However, when they fail to produce the level of sound and music expected by the conductor, corrective action must be taken which may include more practice, training, or motivation. This also applies to the football coach. To have a winning team, the coach must insist on hard work, discipline, teamwork, and proper execution. When the team takes the field on game day, the coach expects the players to execute the strategy and established game plan they have been practicing. When players become individuals and decide to "do their own thing," the coach must correct this behavior. When the running back or quarterback scores a touchdown, the coach must also give the rest of the team a pat on the back. This same reward and punishment system applies to the senior leader regarding officership.

When young officers fail to execute the game plan, meet the standards, or exhibit poor officership, the senior leader has a responsibility for correcting this unacceptable behavior. When the safety investigation determines that an accident was caused by improper behavior or a failure to follow proper guidelines, the natural question is, "Didn't someone know that person was doing those kinds of things?" Yes, most likely someone knew about this behavior and failed to do anything about it. How many young officers have essentially "shot themselves in the professional foot" while some senior officer stood around, watched it happen, yet did nothing to correct the inappropriate behavior until it was too late?

The role of the senior leader in this area of officership is simple and straightforward: if you see bad officership, correct it; it you see good officership, reward it. I recall a few years ago attending a sporting event on base and being alarmed at the profanity by a team member and the fans. I was equally alarmed that the stadium was filled with commanders

and senior officers and none of them seem to be bothered. Fortunately, the wing commander heard of the incident and was indeed bothered. His charge to the senior leaders and commanders on base: "If any of you observe this improper behavior at any future event, sporting or otherwise, I expect you to have that person immediately removed from the area. I expect the coach to take that individual out of the game and send him to locker room if he cannot control his language." Ironically, we had no more problem of profanity at games, especially after the star player was benched and eventually left the team.

This senior leader recognized that profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct were improper behavior for military members and could not be tolerated. Equally important, this commander reminded subordinate commanders and other wing leaders of their responsibility to enforce the standards of good order, discipline, and conduct. By the way, this team went on to win the championship without the star player and many of the fans that could not control their inappropriate behavior.

A few words about rewarding and reinforcing good or correct behavior. It is important to recognize the good things people are doing if we want them to continue. A leader that only recognizes bad behavior will likely get that opportunity many times. Perry Smith pointed out that: "In most organizations or units, 80 to 90 percent of the people are working very hard to accomplish the mission, to serve the institution, to make the unit look good and to make you look good. . . . You should spend a lot of time with these people, complimenting and thanking them. . . . The brilliant, efficient individuals who cannot warmly thank, compliment, and commend their people will always fall short of their full potential as leaders."[11] Leaders should give their people continuous feedback.

Let them know when they are doing things right just as you would when they are doing things wrong. Always, reinforce good and correct behavior. Always, always, encourage and reward good officership.

Promote Officership through Teaching

We have all heard the old saying, "Experience is the best teacher." This is true in most cases but unfortunately not possible or cost effective in every case. Since leadership, officership, and professionalism span such a large territory, it is not feasible to give every officer the actual experiences necessary to learn the fundamental lessons in these areas. Furthermore, we want our young officers to learn most, if not all, of the principles of officership before they are confronted with a challenging situation. We want them to have as many tools in their officership bag as possible. Consequently, senior leaders must become teachers, providing their officers with a solid foundation in officership, leadership, history, air power, and a variety of other subjects.

Perry Smith explained the importance of leaders being teachers in this manner: "Teachership and leadership go hand-in-glove. The leader must be willing to teach skills, to share insights and experiences, and to work very closely with people to help them mature and be creative. . . . By teaching, leaders can inspire, motivate, and influence subordinates at various levels.[12] There are many ways you as a senior leader can perform your teacher role. First, develop a required reading list for your officers and ensure they read the books. For example, form a professional book of the month club and take about one hour each month to have your officers discuss their thoughts on the books. Often spouses will want to participate and this can become a family affair. Second, provide

officers videotapes of significant speeches and documentaries. The videotapes can also be viewed at officer's call or during professional training sessions. Finally, encourage your officers to get on the Internet. Many of the top magazines, speeches, and interviews on military subjects are available on the worldwide Internet.

Senior officers must expose their officers to the study of history, especially military history, and particularly Air Force history. It is difficult to plan for the future unless you understand the past. One writer explains it this way: "The utility of history is, it seems to me, self-evident, and I do not feel called upon to defend it. History is simply recorded memory. People without memory are mentally sick. So too are nations, societies, and institutions that reject or deny the relevance of their collective past."[13] Senior leaders must insist their officers are exposed to many of the classics in military history to include major wars and battles, strategy and doctrine, and biographies of great military leaders.

Finally, senior leaders must encourage officers to pursue professional military education (PME) at every level of their careers. Furthermore, these officers must be actively involved in PME programs on base such as seminars and symposiums. Throughout my career, I have heard senior officers express conflicting opinions about PME, especially correspondence and seminar programs. Some feel it is a waste of time and that time should be spent on the job. Others have voiced, "if the Air Force wants you to get PME, they will send you in residence." Fortunately most have advocated taking the appropriate PME for your grade first via seminar or correspondence, then in residence if selected. A side note—I fully agree with the latest goal of getting all company grade officers through Squadron Officers School versus a select few. I would suggest this same policy apply to Air Command and Staff College, even it means shortening the length of the

course to accommodate all majors. However, senior leaders have a responsibility to encourage officers to enroll in PME, to monitor their progress, and to participate in seminar programs as guest speakers and discussion leaders. There is also a need to encourage officers to take full advantage of professional continuing education (PCE) courses. The goal of PCE is to foster a commitment to the profession of arms and enhance occupational effectiveness.[14]

This list of "how to's" is far from complete. Setting the example, mentoring, rewarding good behavior, and being a teacher are just a few of the "good ideas" for developing officership. The bottom line, however, is that senior leaders must be involved. They must participate. They must shape and form the thinking and character of their officers. And this must be an ongoing effort—it is never finished. The future of our people and the Air Force is too important to leave it to chance. Officership is a "center of gravity" for the Air Force. Without sound officership, everything else will begin to crumble.

General Carl E. Vuono, former Army Chief of Staff, once said: "Our leader development programs are one of the most important ways we maintain the quality force and are also our greatest legacy because they provide the leaders that will shape the Army of tomorrow."[15] General Vuono's remarks also have direct application for the Air Force. People, their skills, abilities, and vision will determine the future of the Air Force. Technical skills are not enough. They must also be strong in officership to exercise the leadership and strength of character that has made the United States Air Force the most powerful Air Force in the world.

Notes

[1] Officership Values. Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, AL. Class 95F. pp.1110-R-2, R3, R4, & R10.

[2] Officership Values. Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, AL. Class 95F. pp.1110-R-2, R3, R4, & R10.

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[4] Uecker, Michael. Mentoring and Leadership Development in the Officer Corps of the United States Air Force. Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 1984. p.vi.

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[8] Ritter, Mark. Senior Leader Mentoring: Its Role In Leader Development Doctrine. Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1994. p.25.

[9] Smith, Perry M. Taking Charge: A Practical Guide for Leaders. Washington, D.C. National Defense University Press. 1986. pp.4, 70-71, & 141.

[10] Rocke, Mark and Hayden, Thomas. Officer Development: A Doctrinal Imperative. *Military Review.* 73:27-37 January 1993. p.28.

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[14] Interviews with Dr Richard I. Lester, Educational Advisor to the Commander, Ira C. Eaker College for Professional Development, October 1995–February 1996.

[15] Steele, Brig William. Army Leaders: How To Build Them; How You Grow Them. *Military Review* 72:14-20 August 1992. p.19.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

God grant me the Courage to change the Things I can Change. The Serenity to accept those I cannot change. And the Wisdom to know the difference. But God, grant me the courage not to give up on what I think is right, even though I think it is hopeless.

—Serenity Prayer

There are many factors that influence the strength of a nation and its military. Its industry, ability and will to fight, and leadership are just a few of the myriad of elements that make a nation strong and able to maintain its freedom and way of life. In the United States, the military services have the awesome responsibility of safeguarding the nation, deterring aggression and when necessary, fighting and winning the nation's wars. The United States Air Force is in the business of defending our nation and, if necessary, fighting and winning America's wars. Let there be no doubt about the reason for our existence.

During the recent Persian Gulf, we saw how technology could be used to control the battlefield and overwhelmingly defeat the enemy. We witnessed how planning, coordination, and proper execution in war lead to victory. Our history and the experiences of other nations tell us that technology alone is not enough. Overwhelming forces on the battlefield are not enough. Wars are won by people, not technology. Consequently, the United States Air Force and the other military services must continually

ensure that the human factor remains our "key to victory" in defending our nation and its allies.

As we enter the twenty-first century, the Air Force will confront many new and exciting challenges. We are currently seeing many shifts in our society, many of which have the potential for negatively influencing our military and Air Force. As we see more and more incidents that question the moral judgment, leadership, and values of Air Force leadership, one has to ask: has something gone wrong? From commanders that jeopardize the welfare and safety of their people, to those who focus more on careerism than service to the nation, is it possible that we have some work to do?

We must ensure our officers know, understand, and believe in the principles that have guided our leadership in the past and are critical in taking the Air Force into the future. First and foremost, the judgment, values, and decision of our leaders must be guided by the principles of officership. It is the senior leaders in the Air Force who must take the responsibility for developing officership. There is no doubt, officership is a key factor in building the world's most respected Air Force.

Officership will not happen automatically. Many, if not most, of our young officers will enter the Air Force void of many of the principles of officership. Many will not understand the impact their actions have on their subordinates and can have on the Air Force as a service of our nation. Many may not fully internalize the key principles of officership until late in their careers and, unfortunately, some may never fully come "on board." This is unfortunate, dangerous, and unacceptable. Therefore, senior leaders have a duty and an obligation to develop and promote officership. Our future depends on it—and it "starts at the top."

Glossary

ACC	Air Combat Command
ACSC	Air Command and Staff College
AF	Air Force
AWC	Air War College
AU	Air University
CC	Commander
COL	Colonel
DWI	Driving While Intoxicated
GEN	General
LMDC	Leadership and Management Development Center
LT	Lieutenant
LT COL	Lieutenant Colonel
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
OTS	Officer Training School
PME	Professional Military Education
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
TDY	Temporary Duty

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