Fort Leavenworth
PHILOSOPHY

LTG Jack N. Merritt



US Army Combined Arms Center
and
Fort Leavenworth

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Integrity is nonnegotiable.

The rock bottom central core of the character of an individual is that anything he says is, to the very best of his knowledge, the **honest, complete, and total truth.** Every action we take must be consistent with that concept.

Don't do dumb things because of orders from "they."

We must be intelligent about responding to requirements. Even the best motivated, most sincere, and intelligent people occasionally generate requirements which simply are not realistic. Disagreement is not disrespect. To bring conflicting or overburdening requirements to the attention of superiors is simply using one's head.

Set high standards and enforce them.

Best results are obtained by setting meaningful, high standards and demanding that those standards be met. **We do this patiently, quietly, helpfully, but we set high standards.** High standards will be enforced when every officer and noncommissioned officer, every enlisted man and woman, and every civilian on this installation feels a fundamental responsibility for those standards.

The chain of command is primary. Use it.

Too many think only of the aspects of the chain of command that send orders down. There is something more important than that. **The chain of command is our primary tool for taking care of people.** People depend on the chain of command for professional accomplishment, ego satisfaction and the care and feeding of themselves and their families. Chain of command also means being responsible and being in charge. To make the chain of command work, people must know who is in charge and those persons must be held accountable for being in charge.

Nobody has a corner on anything.

No activity on this installation is the sole concern of any one person. **All have a legitimate interest if they have a good idea.** Teamwork and suggested improvements go hand-in-hand.

Look for a better way. Always consider the long term. Challenge the assertion.

Everything that is being done well can be done still better. We all have the tendency to react to the immediate, but we must always keep the long term objectives in mind. We must not accept information as gospel simply because we are told it is so. Keep thinking.

Get the job done first then tidy up the battlefield later.

We must not get wrapped up in the sheer artistry of the beautiful scheme—**we must do things.** Ten percent of our effort should go for planning, ninety percent for execution. Figure out what you're going to do, then don't hesitate to jump in and start getting it done.

Be sensitive to and intolerant of misuse of people.

Don't waste people's time. This is one of the biggest problems we have in our Army today. We must keep our people gainfully occupied. When people are bored, we have not done our job. In this day and age, despite our individual heritage, it is inconceivable that a mature man or woman cannot see beyond the color of skin, a person's religion, or the sex of an individual, and see that only their competency in serving the U.S. Army is what is important. We must remind ourselves that all the people in the Army are what is important. **We must remind ourselves that all the people in the Army have the same burdens,** the same responsibilities, and offer us equal opportunities for leadership and performance.

Admit mistakes.

Fixing the problem is more important than affixing the blame. We are here to turn out the best possible products for the Army, not just good statistics. We must admit our mistakes to our subordinates as well as our superiors so others can learn by them.

All acts are rewarded or corrected as appropriate.

Making corrections does not necessarily mean imposing punishment. The idea is to make corrections in a manner that insures the task is done correctly. We must **be equally responsive to good work** by rewarding accomplishment.

Keep your perspective and sense of humor. Work friendly.

We're deadly serious about what we're trying to do, but we also have families, friends and other activities which are a concern to us. If you are not having fun in your work, then somebody's wrong. We ought to be able to do our jobs, do them well, with a degree of happiness, and with a sense of humor and perspective. **Basic to this is the presumption of good intentions on the part of others.** The more senior we are, the greater our responsibilities are to serve people. We are going to serve the soldier and civilian workforce here—by working hard, by working smart and by working friendly.

Teamwork is the Combined Arms Center's most important attribute.

As the Army's principal integrating center, **CAC must be built upon teamwork.** A good team gets things done, and teamwork must extend into everything we do at Fort Leavenworth. The enormity and diversity of the missions at Fort Leavenworth require that all know how their actions affect what others are doing.

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