

LEADERSHIP MAXIMS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

By

Colonel Royal P. Mortenson, USMC (Ret)

Director, IFSI

1. Be a good person, **a person of character and strength**, and you will always be a good Leader.
2. **Never be afraid** to **take a moral or ethical stand** on something you believe in your gut to be right. Stand up and be counted.
3. **Always hold your self accountable** for all you do and don't do. Hold others accountable for their actions commensurate with their position and responsibilities at every level.
4. **Listen** to and help anyone, anytime. Expect and demand that your subordinate leaders do the same, however, remember, every person must reach out and grab the "offered hand."
5. **Don't lie, steal or cheat** and never tolerate those that do.
6. **Someone has to lead**, in the absence of authority---take charge.
7. **"Band of brothers"** is not just a line from Shakespeare's *Henry the V*. *Your unit should be* a Band of brothers. Like a brother, never turn your back on your fellow Marine or Sailor. Take care of each other. The organization's success depends on it.
8. **Always** strive to be tactically and technically proficient in all you do. The price of anything less is far too costly. You will certainly play a role in an uncertain world. Never let it be said that your unit failed or you lost a member of your team because you didn't do your homework.
9. **Everything you do** must prepare yourself and your team for mission success and survival.
10. **Mistakes of omission will not be accepted**. Tell your people; "if you act and make a mistake because you lacked accurate information but you did your best---all can be fixed. If your mistake is bedded in a failure to try---all will be painful."
11. **Take care of your families**. Stress at home tears at the fiber of your unit.
12. **Never** accept hazing, racism or otherwise cruel, demeaning behavior, it is the hallmark of the ignorant and the unprofessional.