



# TRAITS & PRINCIPLES OF USMC LEADERSHIP

Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines,  
31st MEU, Talisman Saber. Australia. 2017

# OVERVIEW

A group of six soldiers in military uniforms and helmets are seated in a black inflatable boat on a calm body of water. The boat is moving, creating a wake. The background shows a clear blue sky and distant mountains. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey layer.

THE 14 LEADERSHIP TRAITS

THE 11 LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

# **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

A group of soldiers in military gear are seated in a small, dark-colored inflatable boat on a body of water. The soldiers are wearing helmets and jackets, and some are looking towards the camera. The background shows a clear blue sky and distant mountains. The water is calm, and the overall scene is a military training exercise.

**READ YOUR TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES  
AND  
ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES**



# LEADERSHIP DEFINED



*The sum of those qualities of intellect, human understanding, & moral character that enable a person to inspire & control a group of people successfully.*

# Gen Clifton B. Cates

## 19<sup>th</sup> Commandant



*“Leadership is intangible, hard to measure, & difficult to describe. Its quality would seem to stem from many factors. But certainly they must include a measure of inherent ability to control & direct, self-confidence based on expert knowledge, initiative, loyalty, pride, & sense of responsibility. Inherent ability cannot be instilled, but that which is latent or dormant can be developed. Other ingredients can be acquired. They are not easily learned. But leaders can be & are made.”*

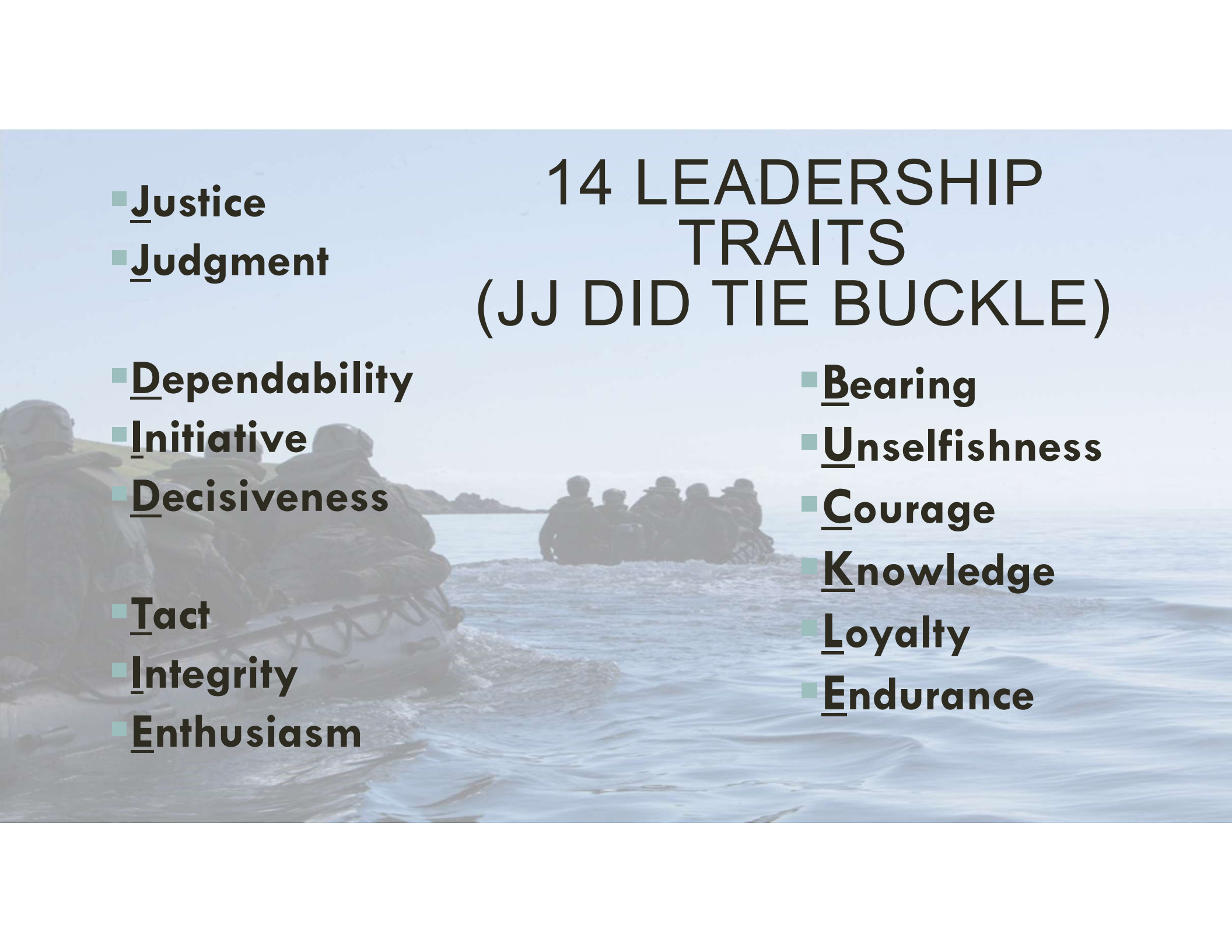
Primary Goal of Marine Corps  
Leadership



**MISSION  
ACCOMPLISHMENT!**







# 14 LEADERSHIP TRAITS (JJ DID TIE BUCKLE)

- Justice
- Judgment

- Dependability
- Initiative
- Decisiveness

- Tact
- Integrity
- Enthusiasm

- Bearing
- Unselfishness
- Courage
- Knowledge
- Loyalty
- Endurance

# JUSTICE

A background image showing a group of Marines in a boat on the water. The scene is slightly hazy, with the water in the foreground and the Marines in the middle ground. The sky is a pale blue.

*Giving reward & punishment according to the merits of the case in question. The ability to administer a system of rewards & punishments impartially & consistently.*

**A leader must demonstrate fairness & impartiality with his Marines in order to maintain their trust & respect.**

# JUDGEMENT

A background image showing a group of Marines in a landing craft on the water. The scene is slightly hazy, with the Marines in the foreground and middle ground looking towards the horizon. The water is blue and the sky is light blue.

*The ability to weigh facts & possible courses of action in order to make sound decisions.*

**Sound judgment allows a leader to make appropriate decisions in the guidance, training, & employment of his Marines.**

# DEPENDABILITY

A background image showing a group of Marines in a landing craft on the water. The Marines are wearing helmets and gear, and the scene is slightly hazy, suggesting a military operation or training exercise.

*The certainty of proper performance of duty.*

**A leader who is dependable gives his Marines confidence in his abilities to make the right decisions.**

# INITIATIVE

*Taking action in the absence of orders.*

**Marines must understand their Commander's Intent & use it to make appropriate decisions in the absence of direct guidance or supervision.**

# DECISIVENESS

*The ability to make decisions promptly & to announce them in a clear, forceful manner.*

**It is often better that a decision be made promptly than a potentially better one be made at the expense of more time. A leader who is confident in his decisions instills confidence in his Marines.**

# TACT

***The ability to deal with others in a manner that will maintain good relations & avoid offense. More simply stated, tact is the ability to say & do the right thing at the right time.***

**Consistently treating peers, seniors, & subordinates with respect & courtesy is a sign of maturity & is conducive to mission accomplishment.**

# INTEGRITY

*Uprightness of character & soundness of moral principles. The quality of truthfulness & honesty.*

**Integrity means doing the right thing even when no one is looking.**



# ENTHUSIASM

*The display of sincere interest & exuberance in the performance of duty.*

Displaying interest in a task & showing optimism that it can be successfully completed greatly enhances the likelihood that the task will be successfully completed.

# BEARING

*Creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance, & personal conduct at all times.*

**Bearing bestows a Marine the ability to conduct himself as a leader & a professional that others will respect.**

# UNSELFISHNESS

*Avoidance of providing for one's own comfort & personal advancement at the expense of others.*

**The quality of looking out for the needs of your subordinates before your own is the essence of leadership.**

# COURAGE

*The moral, mental, & physical strength to do what is right, to adhere to a higher standard of personal conduct, & to make tough decisions under stress & pressure.*

**Marine leaders must know & stand for what is right, even in the face of popular disfavor. Additionally, Marine leaders are expected to demonstrate physical courage in training & on the battlefield.**

The background of the slide is a photograph of several Marines in a boat on the water. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid. The Marines are wearing helmets and are positioned in the boat, which is moving across the water. The sky is a clear, light blue.

# KNOWLEDGE

***Understanding of a science or an art. The range of one's information, including professional knowledge & understanding of your Marines.***

**Knowledge gives a leader credibility with his Marines & enhances his ability to make appropriate decisions.**

# LOYALTY

*A leader expresses loyalty to his subordinates by supporting their needs and ensuring their welfare in a number of ways. Subordinates express loyalty by positively and efficiently carrying out the leader's orders.*

**The quality of faithfulness to country, the Corps, the unit, to one's seniors, subordinates and peers.**

# ENDURANCE

*The mental & physical stamina measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, & hardship.*

**Marines leaders must be able to hold up to extraordinary feats of physical & mental endurance if mission accomplishment so requires.**







# THE 11 LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES



# **1. KNOW YOURSELF & SEEK SELF IMPROVEMENT**

**Constantly evaluate yourself to determine your strengths & weaknesses. Work to improve upon your weaknesses.**



## **2. BE TECHNICALLY & TACTICALLY PROFICIENT**

**A Marine leader must know his job thoroughly in order to make good decisions & have credibility with his Marines.**



### **3. KNOW YOUR MARINES & LOOK OUT FOR THEIR WELFARE**

**This allows a leader to keep his forces strong & to most effectively employ them in accordance with their capabilities.**

A Marine in the foreground, seen from behind, wearing a helmet and tactical gear, looks out over the ocean. In the distance, two amphibious assault vehicles (LVTs) are landing on a beach, with waves crashing against them. The scene is set on a bright, sunny day with a clear blue sky.

## **4. KEEP YOUR MARINES INFORMED**

**When practical, a leader should inform his Marines of all happenings & give reasons why things are to be done. Informing your Marines of the situation makes them feel that they are a part of the team & promotes morale.**



## **5. SET THE EXAMPLE**

**A Marine leader's personal conduct is always on display for his Marines. Remember that Marines tend to emulate the characteristics of their leaders.**



## **6. ENSURE THAT THE TASK IS UNDERSTOOD, SUPERVISED, & ACCOMPLISHED**

**Leaders must give clear orders that cannot be misunderstood & then by close supervision, ensure that his orders are properly executed.**

A photograph of Marines in the water. In the foreground, a Marine in full combat gear, including a helmet and a tactical vest, is seen from the back, looking out towards the ocean. In the middle ground, two groups of Marines are in the water, appearing to be in a small inflatable boat or performing a water landing exercise. The water is blue with white foam from the waves. The sky is a pale, clear blue.

## **7. TRAIN YOUR MARINES AS A TEAM**


**Teamwork is essential from the smallest unit to the entire Marine Corps. As a leader, you must insist on teamwork from your Marines. Ensure that your Marines know their roles & responsibilities within the team framework.**



A photograph of a Marine amphibious landing. In the foreground, a Marine in full combat gear, including a helmet and a tactical vest, stands on a sandy beach looking out at the ocean. In the middle ground, two amphibious assault vehicles (AAVs) are in the shallow water, with waves crashing against their hulls. The sky is clear and blue, and the water is a deep blue. The overall scene is one of a military operation in progress.

## **8. MAKE SOUND & TIMELY DECISIONS**

**Marine leaders must be able to rapidly estimate a situation & make good decisions. Hesitation to make a decision - or failure to make a smart decision - leads subordinates to lose confidence in their leaders.**



## **9. DEVELOP A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AMONG YOUR SUBORDINATES**

**Doing so allows subordinates to accomplish tasks & remain productive in the absence of direct guidance or supervision. It promotes initiative & wholehearted cooperation in accomplishment of the mission.**



## **10. EMPLOY YOUR COMMAND WITHIN ITS CAPABILITIES**

**In order to ensure mission accomplishment, a Marine leader must have a thorough knowledge of the tactical & technical capabilities of his Marines.**

A photograph of a Marine amphibious landing. In the foreground, a Marine in full combat gear, including a helmet and a tactical vest, stands on a sandy beach looking out at the ocean. In the middle ground, two amphibious assault vehicles (AAVs) are in the shallow water, with waves crashing against their hulls. The sky is clear and blue, and the water is a deep blue. The overall scene is one of a military operation in progress.

## **11. SEEK RESPONSIBILITIES & TAKE RESPONSIBILITY**

**Seeking out responsibilities will ensure that you continue to grow & remain productive as a Marine leader. Taking responsibility for your actions & decisions is a matter of integrity.**



# Summary

- **Leadership defined**
- **The primary goal of Marine leadership**
- **The 14 leadership traits**
- **The 11 leadership principles**

