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PERSONAL POLICIES OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Since assuming command of the Naval Operational Medicine Institute (NOMI), I have been impressed with the dedication and performance of our military and civilian staff at the headquarters level and the deckplates in all the detachments.

NOMI is Navy Medicine's crown jewel in representing operational medicine and training. We train aviators, medical department officers and selected corpsmen for success. Whether it is survival training, medicine within the undersea, aerospace and shipboard communities, or in Fleet Hospital operations, we are the best and we are vital to the health of the Navy and Marine Corps. We are the best because each of you are professionals at taking care of professionals. I am honored to be your Commanding Officer.

I believe that mission accomplishment must come first but that taking care of your people must occur always. When you take care of your people, they will take care of executing the mission. From a Commanding Officer's perspective this means taking an active interest in all aspects of professional development, safety, training, military advancement, recreation, berthing, messing, and quality of life issues which affect all our military and civilian staff.

My job is to see to it that the Command accomplishes its mission. I need to provide leadership, direction, a clear understanding of the Mission, and a vision to all staff to ensure unity of effort. You are the ones who must execute the Command's mission and I owe you the support necessary to get your jobs done. Moreover, I need to provide you the tools to perform your duties and I need to create the conditions which support a command environment for you to succeed. In this, you have my full support.

"I care about the NOMI family." We have different work forces, military, civilian, and contractors, each with a different set of rules which must work in synchrony toward the common goal of accomplishing our tasks. Teamwork is something I value highly and is an absolute essential in creating the unity of effort needed for the Command to function. Our civilian

workforce provides a wealth of experience and knowledge. They represent the continuity behind the Command's efforts. Value their presence and their contributions. Those in leadership positions also have obligations to foster the advancement and development of our military staff. We are stewards of the Navy's most precious asset - its people.

There are a few fundamental, interrelated tenets I believe are critical to teamwork and mission accomplishment.

(1) Know yourself: Then know your people. What are my strengths? What are my weaknesses? How can I better serve my country? Wisdom comes from knowing where you stand.

(2) Your people: What are their interests? What are their concerns? How are their families? An individual's preoccupation with personal problems can impact on performance. As leaders or teammates you must know their stresses and be able to assist them in fulfilling their own goals and dreams.

(3) Communication: Effective communication is the key to situational awareness. Quality communication begins with access, promoting exchange of thoughts and ideas. If individuals feel that they are part of the information and decision process they will take greater responsibility in the quality of their efforts and will increase unit productivity. No one has all the answers, so seek others' perspectives and help create an environment for creative thinking.

(4) Demand standards of professionalism and excellence: Be an example of the core values of Honor, Courage, Commitment. Remember what General Robert E. Lee said, "Do your duty in all things. No man (person) can do more; none should do less."

(5) Be critical: In any organization there is room for improvement. We are operating in a fast-paced environment and must not rest upon our laurels. We must as an organization remain relevant, realistic, efficient, and above all effective. Each leader should canvass not only his/her staff, but our customers and stakeholders for input about their needs and the effectiveness of our efforts.

A Command's efforts will be judged by mission accomplishment. Individuals will be judged on their performance and character. A useful acronym for leadership is what is called the "FIRM" principle.

F = Faith or Trust: Trust in your seniors and instill trust in your subordinates.

I = Integrity and Innovation: Integrity is the key personal value from which I believe all others follow. Those other important attributes of character include commitment, courage, compassion, loyalty, and teamwork. I also believe in being proactive and look for those leaders who can be innovative in finding solutions to complex problems.

R = Responsible, Realistic, Reliable: Responsibility goes without saying. One must also be realistic in both expectations and responses. Focus on relevant issues and projects. Be known for reliability and meeting deadlines.

M = Mentoring and Moderation: Everyone can be a mentor to someone. None of us got to this point in life without having help from someone else. Be a teacher -- you will find it one of life's great rewards. Moderation - take the pack off periodically and smell the roses. Have fun with your family and each other. Endeavor to make the Command a fun place to live and work. Remember, "Shipmates stand together."

I look forward to seeing you on my travels and in and out of the workspace, and I look forward to serving you as your Commanding Officer.

D. H. FREER
Captain, Medical Corps
United States Navy
Commanding Officer