
Marine Corps Leadership Traits & Principles

Quick reference: the 14 leadership traits (JJ DID TIE BUCKLE) and the 11 leadership principles. Objectives of Marine Corps leadership: **mission accomplishment** and **troop welfare**.

The 14 Leadership Traits: JJ DID TIE BUCKLE

Trait	Definition
J Justice	Giving reward and punishment according to the merits of the case in question. The ability to administer a system of rewards and punishments impartially and consistently.
J Judgment	The ability to weigh facts and possible courses of action in order to make sound decisions.
D Dependability	The certainty of proper performance of duty.
I Initiative	Taking action in the absence of orders.
D Decisiveness	Ability to make decisions promptly and to announce them in a clear, forceful manner.
T Tact	The ability to deal with others in a manner that will maintain good relations and avoid offense. More simply stated, tact is the ability to say and do the right thing at the right time.
I Integrity	Uprightness of character and soundness of moral principles. The quality of truthfulness and honesty.
E Enthusiasm	The display of sincere interest and exuberance in the performance of duty.
B Bearing	Creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance, and personal conduct at all times.
U Unselfishness	Avoidance of providing for one's own comfort and personal advancement at the expense of others.
C Courage	Courage is a mental quality that recognizes fear of danger or criticism, but enables a [person] to proceed in the face of danger with calmness and firmness.
K Knowledge	Understanding of a science or an art. The range of one's information, including professional knowledge and an understanding of your Marines.
L Loyalty	The quality of faithfulness to country, the Corps, the unit, to one's seniors, subordinates, and peers.
E Endurance	The mental and physical stamina measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress, and hardship.

The 11 Leadership Principles

#	Principle	What it means
1	Be technically and tactically proficient	Know your job well enough to do it yourself and to teach it. People follow competence.
2	Know yourself and seek self-improvement	Understand your own strengths and weaknesses, and keep working on them.
3	Know your Marines and look out for their welfare	Know your people as individuals: their goals, their situations, what drives them. Take care of them.
4	Keep your Marines informed	Share what's happening and why. Informed people make better decisions and trust you more.
5	Set the example	Don't ask your people to do anything you wouldn't do yourself. Your behavior sets the standard.
6	Ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished	Give clear instructions, check that they were understood, follow up, and make sure the job gets done.
7	Train your Marines as a team	Build a unit that works together, not a collection of individuals.
8	Make sound and timely decisions	Gather the facts, decide, and act quickly enough for the decision to matter.
9	Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates	Give people real ownership so that they grow into leaders themselves.
10	Employ your unit in accordance with its capabilities	Assign tasks your team can actually accomplish. Don't set them up to fail.
11	Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions	Step up for hard assignments, and own the results, good or bad.

Self-check (rate 1-5)

Rate yourself on each trait, then ask a colleague to rate you. Your biggest gap is your next development goal.

Justice	1 2 3 4 5	Enthusiasm	1 2 3 4 5
Judgment	1 2 3 4 5	Bearing	1 2 3 4 5
Dependability	1 2 3 4 5	Unselfishness	1 2 3 4 5
Initiative	1 2 3 4 5	Courage	1 2 3 4 5
Decisiveness	1 2 3 4 5	Knowledge	1 2 3 4 5
Tact	1 2 3 4 5	Loyalty	1 2 3 4 5
Integrity	1 2 3 4 5	Endurance	1 2 3 4 5

Source: U.S. Marine Corps leadership doctrine (MCWP 6-10, *Leading Marines*). Plain-English explanations and workplace examples: leadersperception.com