



## VMM-263 Commanding Officer's Philosophy of Command

The purpose of this letter is to provide all hands with some basic guidance and understanding into the way I view leadership at the squadron level. This command philosophy is built on the following four principles and provides the foundation for the manner in which I shall lead this unit:

**1. Mission accomplishment:** The Marine Corps is our nation's premier force-in-readiness. When others are least prepared, we must be most prepared and ready to respond at a moment's notice. Our mission as a VMM is to "Support the MAGTF Commander by providing assault support transport of combat troops, supplies and equipment, day or night, under all weather conditions during expeditionary, joint, or combined operations." Whether assigned to a MEU, an OEF deployment, or a SPMAGTF, we shall accomplish every mission assigned to us in a professional manner, responding with speed and precision, and completing without damage to equipment or injury to personnel. Mission accomplishment through operational excellence shall be the cornerstone of our success.

**2. Highest level of mission readiness:** While in garrison, we shall use proper procedures, aggressive and creative training, common sense, expert assistance, small unit leadership, and individual initiative to achieve the highest level of combat readiness. This will include both local and non-local training events. Our squadron shall excel in the following fields:

- Decisive leadership
- Tactical aircraft employment
- Professional maintenance practices
- Aircraft and equipment readiness
- Individual preparedness
- Family readiness

**3. Any actions which infringe upon the rights of individuals and are destructive to the integrity and cohesion of our squadron shall not be tolerated.** The following items shall be prosecuted with swift justice in accordance with the UCMJ:

- Sexual harassment/sexual assault
- Hazing
- Discrimination
- Illegal drug use and/or prescription drug abuse
- Alcohol related incidents

**4. Band of Brothers:** Being a Marine is more than a job, it's a calling! The Marine Corps, more so than any other military organization in our country, holds reverent those customs and traditions which define who we are. Terms such as "Devil Dog" and "Leatherneck" were christened through the blood, sweat, and tears of our predecessors. We shall honor their sacrifices and our own positions through events such as the Marine Corps Birthday Ball. **Honor, courage, and commitment** are the core values of Marines and these are the values that all Thunder Chickens

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will live by each day. Our practice of this warrior ethos will continue in garrison, on the road, and in combat by observing the following:

- **We are Marines 24/7**, and shall live up to our high standards **at all times**.
- **“I am my Brother’s keeper”**, and as such we shall always take care of each other both on duty and off.
- It is our duty to display the **moral courage** to: tell a fellow warrior when he is not able to drive due to consuming too much alcohol; step in when someone is hazing or making racial or sexist comments; and stop someone who may be conveying thoughts or signs of injuring themselves or others.

We all joined the Marine Corps because it offered us a challenge, a calling, and a brotherhood. Be true to yourselves, your fellow Marines, and your country by living up to this each and every day by doing the right thing all the time.

  
T.P. MITALSKI  
Commanding Officer