

## FOREWORD

**"...A sound body is good; a sound mind is better; but a strong and clean character is better than either."**

**Theodore Roosevelt  
Address at Groton, Mass., 24 May 1904**

The United States Marine Corps is the world's premier fighting force. More than 220 years of success and tradition have helped carve a place for Marines in the hearts of Americans. We epitomize that which is good about our nation and personify the ideals upon which it was founded. Generation after generation of American men and women have given special meaning to the title United States Marine.

The Nation expects more of the Marine Corps than just success on the field of battle. America requires its Marines to represent her around the globe as a symbol of the might, resolve, and compassion of our great country. Feared by enemies, respected by allies, and loved by the American people, Marines are a "special breed." This reputation was gained through and is maintained in a set of enduring core values that form the bedrock and heart of our character.

Ensuring that today's Marines uphold the legacy of those who have gone before begins at the recruit depots and Officer Candidates' School. Here we undertake the transformation of young Americans into Marines, and ultimately into contributing citizens in our communities in a unique and indelible way.

From our earliest days as Marines, we are taught that the Marine Corps is a special team -- a family. Just as the family should play a major role in the upbringing of children, the Marine Corps embraces this noble responsibility in the "upbringing" of Marines in the Marine family.

Part of belonging to the Marine team and family involves incorporating the values of that team into the daily lives of each of its members. We all understand, and must subscribe to, our Corps values: honor, courage, commitment. There are other values which we honor as defenders of the constitution: the ideals of democracy, fairness, faith, and freedom. These values and the basic concept of right and wrong, are cornerstones in building Marines. These basic values are the "anchor points" of many of the lessons contained in this guidebook.

This discussion guide also contains numerous lessons on leadership. Leaders at all levels are charged with instilling the lessons of our heritage and inculcating and reinforcing the values that define our unique character. Just as our values set us apart, our leadership is at the heart of why Marines enjoy a reputation that is unparalleled among those practicing the profession of arms.

This publication is a tool to assist leaders in instilling and sustaining the lessons of values and leadership. I charge leaders from the fire team leader to the force commander to use these lessons in their efforts to ensure that today's and tomorrow's Marines continue to reflect the very best of the legacy of yesterday's Marines.

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