



(U) Leaders Really Do Make a Difference

FROM: Charles H. Berlin III
SID Chief of Staff
Run Date: 08/26/2003

(U) Management and leadership, leadership and management. Same thing right? Well, no, management ensures we are doing things right, leadership ensures we are doing the right thing. More importantly, leadership takes us through uncertainty and charts a path where none exists. If not for leadership, we would merely be expertly doing what we did before. Aside from being boring, this is no way to tackle an uncertain future.

(U//FOUO) A few years ago, I was the G-2 of the 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Carson, Colorado. We got the call to deploy a battalion-sized element (about 500 men) to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to set up an internment camp for Haitian refugees. As staffers, we were required to develop a plan of action for the Commanding General to approve. On the appointed day we briefed our plan to send our combat engineer battalion (suitably augmented with medics and cooks). The engineers were the logical choice since they had equipment and expertise in construction. The General wagged his head and said we would send one of our infantry battalions instead!

(U//FOUO) The staff, confused, asked why. The General said he selected the best-led unit in the division rather than the "logical" staff choice. He explained that the mission was going to be hard on the troops and was full of uncertainty. He wanted to bet on leadership rather than technical expertise. Boy, was he right. We went to Cuba and built the camp (on the golf course - which was the only open area - a true heartbreak for the golfers) and it was indeed a tough mission. When the refugees arrived in the oppressive summer heat, they were very angry that they had not been transported to the United States and began to take their anger out on the infantrymen of the 4th Division. Leadership made a difference as the leaders and commanders showed by example the values of the American citizen and the dedication of the men to the refugees' welfare. Leading by example, the Americans pitched in with the emerging refugee leadership to physically improve the camp.

(U) The rank and file on both sides saw the establishment of the standards of conduct in this tough situation and joined the team. It was a remarkable turnaround from near riot conditions to cooperative working relationships. Both sets of leaders demonstrated the important function of communicating values and expectations. Leading by example didn't hurt. Leadership made the difference.

(U) Leaders keep hope alive. I observed a Haitian doctor minister to the sick and infirm and constantly tell them all that things would be all right. This effort has a self-fulfilling prophecy characteristic. It is the most important gift a leader bestows on his people when things are uncertain or desperate: the gift of hope.



SERIES:

(U) Charles Berlin Discusses Leadership

1. [Leadership: Your View of People](#)
2. Leaders Really Do Make a Difference
3. [What Does a Leader Do?](#)
4. [Are Leaders Made or Born?](#)

(U) Our future has a lot of uncertainty. Leadership will always make a difference.

(U) What value-added does leadership have day to day? What is the role of the leader in a technical mission? What is all this Generation X and Y stuff?

(U) Next part: Valued-Added Leadership in a Technical World

"(U//FOUO) SIDtoday articles may not be republished or reposted outside NSANet without the consent of S0121 ([DL sid comms](#))."

DYNAMIC PAGE -- HIGHEST POSSIBLE CLASSIFICATION IS
TOP SECRET // SI / TK // REL TO USA AUS CAN GBR NZL
DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108