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Leadership Lessons From The US Marines

By Wally Bock

I was sixteen years old when I decided that if I went to college right after high school, I'd probably party too much and study too little. My plan was: go into the armed forces; grow up a little; and make some money for college.

That's how I found myself standing in the Marine Corps Recruiting Office. It wasn't much, just a tiny space, not nearly as fancy as the offices of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The entire space was almost filled by a man with razor-sharp creases in his shirt and the shortest haircut I'd ever seen.

He was looking down at his desk and writing on a form when I came in. I described in detail the educational, job training and assignment offers all the other services had made. Then I asked, "What will the Marine Corps offer me?"

The Marine looked up for a second, his expression serious. "Four years of hell. A haircut every week. And a rifle." I chose the Marines.

I chose the Marines because it was a challenge. Most people like to be challenged. Give them something that stretches them and they'll rise to the occasion. Treat them like they're lazy and incompetent and that's what you'll get.

The US Marine Corps is the world's largest elite fighting force. Marines do great things. But the Marine Corps isn't great because it chooses the top candidates. The Marines pick from the same pool as the other services. Instead, Marines do great things because they're Marines and great things are expected of them.

Challenge your people and they'll do great things. That's the first of many lessons I learned in the Marines. Here are some others.

I learned that people emulate their leaders. Sometimes that happens in funny ways.

Leadership Lessons From The US Marines

When I was in language school, one of my classmates was a Gunnery Sergeant (we called him "Gunny") who had been a Drill Instructor. He'd also been in the Korean War and a wound from that time caused him to walk with an odd gait where he swung his right leg out in a half circle with every step.

One night Gunny invited us over to his quarters for beer and home movies. They included movies of graduation ceremonies for the platoons that he'd trained.

There on the screen we saw them, marching in perfect unison. That was like every graduating platoon. But everybody he'd trained walked just like the Gunny did, ninety of them at a time swinging their right legs in a half circle.

If you're a leader, your people will watch what you do. And they'll follow your example. You do great work and so will they. You cut corners and so will they. Part of your job is to set a good example, one that you want your people to follow.

A good example is important, but it isn't enough. You also have to tell people what you want. The way one older sergeant put it to me: "You either tell them, or they'll guess and you just might get a bad surprise." So part of your job is learning to give clear directions, but not too many of them.

The Marines are famous for the "mission order." A mission order is defined as "an order to a unit to perform a mission without specifying how it is to be accomplished." Let them decide how to do it.

Of course that only works if you've got engaged people who know how to accomplish the mission. So another part of your job as a leader is to develop your people.

When I was preparing for my first promotion board I learned that Marine leaders are expected to do two jobs. They are expected to accomplish the mission. And they are expected to care for their people.

Caring for your people means keeping them safe. It means making sure they have the resources they need to do their jobs. And it means helping them develop to become the best they can be.

You do some of that with formal training, but you do most of it with day to day contact, counsel, correction and encouragement. You do some of that with positive consequences that encourage people to continue good practices and try new things. And you do some with negative consequences that encourage people to abandon behavior you don't want.

Wally Bock is an author, speaker, and coach who helps leaders improve the performance and morale of their teams. Wally is the author of *Performance Talk: The One-on-One Part of Leadership* (

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Overview Of Military Loans

By Joseph Barker

Military loans for those that are currently or formerly in the Air Force, Navy, Marines, National Guard, or Army are becoming common place. They offer those military personnel the opportunity to get cash in a hurry, for a low interest rate, and without much hassle. How, though, does the repayment of the loans work? There are actually a few things you need to know about military loans that will help you understand your repayment process.

First, you should understand that the fast military loans do have a maximum. You can generally only borrow up to \$3,000 at a time. If you need a larger loan, there are other ways to go. With a little research you will be able to find a military benefit that can help you in such a situation. For the purposes of military loans in general, though, we must look at a maximum of \$3,000. Once you have your money, then you should think about how you pay it back.

For most military loans, the member of the Air Force, Marines, or other branch of the military will get one full year, or 12 months, to pay back the money. The payments can be made a number of ways, which are totally up to you in most cases. You can pay monthly, weekly, or through your paycheck. It just depends on how you would like to set it up. Just remember, though, that even though the interest rate is low, you will likely be compounding it daily as your loan sits unpaid.

The most common way to pay back your military loan is through allotments. When the money is taken directly from your military paycheck to pay off your military loan, you are taking late fees out of the equation. In fact, some companies will require that you pay back your loan this way. They know the money is coming, you don't have to remember to write a check each month, and your entire loan will undoubtedly be paid off in time. It is a great deal.

You should note as well that there are no pre-payment penalties on military loans. No matter how early you pay off the money you borrowed, you will only pay the amount. No fees, no extra interest, and no problems with early payment. That means that you can save on interest if you are able to get the money together earlier. Good news for you and your bank account if you are a military personnel.

Military loans are becoming a benefit that is used often by those in the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, or even National Guard. With the information above, you now have a better understanding not only of what a military loan is, but also how the repayment of such a loan is possible. It is a great way to get your emergency cash and the repayment is easy.

Personal military loans (

<http://Mili-Loans.com>

) are available at reasonable interest rates if you know

your facts. Pioneer Lending (

<http://PioneerLending.info>

) is a leader in military loans for active duty and

retired armed forces members.



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