



TO: Employees of the Defense Distribution Center

My four months of command at DDC have been busy and very rewarding. The breadth and scope of the work DLA and DDC perform, while behind the scenes, is awesome and so very important to the success in the war against terrorism. I have been very impressed by your depth of knowledge and your strong commitment to our warfighters. As I visit and learn more about you and your organizations, I also want to make sure that you are aware of my command philosophy.

First and foremost, I want you to love your job and enjoy being a member of the DDC. My job is to create an environment where you can excel. My job is to make you successful—get you the resources needed, coach you, and shield you from distracters. The essence of my command philosophy is **MISSION FIRST, PEOPLE ALWAYS**. There are five key components: 1) Do what's right - legally and morally; 2) Treat people with respect and dignity; 3) Ensure everyone has an opportunity to be all they can be; 4) Power down - train and empower subordinates; 5) Instill - teamwork and values.

Resources:

People: Take care of yourself, your family, and your people. Understand my intent and guidance. Challenge me when you disagree (disagreement is not disrespect). Hold yourself and your subordinates to high standards—be a first class operation. Train your people on what “right” looks like and enforce it. Mentor them to excel and provide honest feedback through formal feedback sessions. Then, recognize those who excel and counsel those who fall below the standard. Educate your folks on the importance of doing their job correctly and quickly. Diversity – every person brings a special talent to the table – figure out what that is and leverage the multitude of talent.

Take initiative—You know what to do. You do not need me to validate your good ideas. If it means changing a policy or expending resources, pass the recommendation up the chain of command. The only way we make things better is to push the edge of the envelope. Let's experiment with different ideas in peacetime, so we know what does or does not work before we go to war!

Communications—The chain of command is effective if used properly. Up the chain—listen to what your subordinates

tell you. Once they trust you, they will share concerns and problems with you. I have very few great ideas. The great solutions and ideas come from you and your subordinates—pass them up. Down the chain—tell them what is going on—dispel the rumors. Get to know your people—their dreams and concerns. E-mail—E-mail is an effective means to pass information, but don't eliminate talking with individuals to assess a solution or morale.

Candor/Loyalty—I am not a yes person and do not expect anyone else to be. I want your opinions and reasons why. Share your good ideas with others. I will reward teamwork, not back-stabbing. I expect each of you to be technically competent – in your field. However, we can't know everything—tell me you don't know—then go and research the answer.

Equipment/Funds/Safety: Perform preventative maintenance on your equipment. Ensure your personnel are trained on how to operate your equipment and that it is properly accounted for. Monitor your funds expenditure and put in place controls for supply and travel credit cards. Commanders, you are the Safety Officer. Safety is always first in any task. Ensure your folks know that anyone can halt an unsafe act. Correct violations on the spot or you have just endorsed a lower standard.

Customers:

Know who they are and dialogue with them to see where we can add value. Educate them on what we bring to the table. Understand the metrics—ensure the measures are correct. Stand in their shoes and look back at our processes and procedures—are we responsive or bureaucratic?

Mission:

We are providing materiel to sailors, airman, marines, and soldiers on point for the nation. The people of the USA have entrusted us with supplying materiel to their sons and daughters and they expect us to do our jobs effectively and efficiently. Know your business, but look left and right—where do you fit in the picture - how can you better facilitate input to you and output to next stage? Benchmark—evaluate, improve, re-evaluate.