



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMMAND  
950 JEFFERSON AVENUE  
FORT EUSTIS, VIRGINIA 23604-5700



VICTORY STARTS HERE!

ATCG

29 May 2018

MEMO FOR LEADERS, TROOPERS & CIVILIANS OF U.S. ARMY TRAINING & DOCTRINE COMMAND

SUBJECT: CG Policy Letter #1: Commander's Intent and Leadership Philosophy

1. This memo provides my commander's intent and leadership philosophy so commanders and key staff understand how I will lead this organization and how I expect them to lead their part of it.
2. This policy is the primary and enduring framework from which all other U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command policies and guidance flow. In the absence of a specific order or policy in a particular area, leaders can find guidance here that will enable them to act within my intent in any situation.
3. **Commander's Intent. *We are the team that builds the greatest Army in the world.*** The nation depends on TRADOC to recruit, train, educate, change and constantly improve America's Army. We are a learning organization that evolves and adapts.
4. Overarching Policy Guidance.
  - a. ***We are one team.*** Trust and the philosophy of mission command are our foundation. I expect commanders, directors, leaders and staffs to think, speak and operate as such.
  - b. ***I will involve Commanders in all decisions that will significantly affect their units.*** Before I decide, you can expect me to seek your input. I expect you to do the same.
  - c. ***If it's dumb, it ain't our policy...let's change it!*** Policies are usually emplaced for good reasons at the time. If the policy no longer makes good sense – let's work together to change it.
  - d. ***In all cases, use your best judgment and take action.*** I expect you to use disciplined initiative and take action rather than waiting for instructions or following orders that no longer fit the situation.
5. Until otherwise modified or rescinded, all other standing policies and procedures remain in effect.
6. Be proud of your role and contributions in building the greatest Army in the world. I am proud to stand in the phalanx alongside all of you as we do this important work. **Victory Starts Here!**

Encl  
Commander's Leadership Philosophy

  
STEPHEN J. TOWNSEND  
General, U.S. Army  
Commanding

## Enclosure – Commander’s Philosophy on Soldiering and Leading...Four Things to Remember

### 1. Keep Your Honor Clean—Live and Soldier by the Army Values, Warrior Ethos, Discipline

- **Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage...** 'nuf said
  - Never embarrass your family, your unit or your country
- **I will always place the Mission First**
  - Be dependable, enforce standards, build a reputation for getting the job done
  - Get everything you have into the fight... do everything you can to accomplish the mission
  - You can't be afraid to give the order that may risk your Soldiers...accept prudent risk
- **I will never accept Defeat...I will never quit...**
  - Do your best...Be Tenacious...Refuse to Quit or Lose... *Get comfortable being uncomfortable... Persevere despite privation, chaos, uncertainty... Adapt, Improve, Overcome*
- **I will never leave a fallen Comrade**
  - We Move Forward Together, We Fight Together, We All Come Back Together
  - If you need help, just ask...If you are in trouble, we will come

### 2. Live on Amber...Stay Alert...Aware...Always Ready to Deploy, Move or Fight

- **Keep yourself physically and mentally prepared...Expect the Unexpected**
- Plan carefully in advance, it gives you options later, but stay flexible, ready to react to the unexpected or take advantage of a sudden opportunity
- **“The best form of welfare for the troops is first-class training”** (Erwin Rommel)
  - Before anything else, train our Soldiers for war so they are ready to win and come home alive
- **“The more we sweat in peace, the less we bleed in war”**
  - You will fight just like you have trained...You DO have to practice being miserable!
  - We must remember the lessons we learn in peace or war—get a little better every day
- **Before we bed down: our horses are fed, our guns are oiled, and sentries are posted**
  - Your unit is always secure and ready to move or fight on no notice
  - Before the lights go out, ensure your unit is ready for what may come...Don't be surprised
  - Be ready to fight with the people and equipment you have on hand.

### 3. Act with Disciplined Initiative ...Take Decisive Action to Achieve the Commander’s Intent

- **Do what's right—even when nobody's looking...See what needs to be done and do it**
- Follow the plan but be smart enough to see when it no longer fits or is going to fail; be smart enough to come up with a plan that will work, and have the guts enough to do it
- Deviate from the plan if you must—Inform others that you are doing so as soon as you can
- When you know you must act, use common sense and your best judgment...I'll back you up

### 4. Lead by Example - Every TRADOC Trooper and Civilian is a role model for someone

- **Treat others as you want to be treated...Be the leader you want to be led by**
  - Get to know your troops and civilians as people, keep them informed
- **Take your work seriously but not yourself—enjoy the journey, have a little fun**
  - Balance: Enjoy the experiences in your life, the people around you and your Family
  - Soldiering can be an adventure--even if the task at hand isn't fun, make the best of it
  - Our troops will find something humorous even when things are bleak—encourage this
- **It all boils down to leadership by example... There's only one standard...it applies to all**
  - Be responsible and accountable for your decisions, your troopers and your equipment
  - If it's hard, sucks or is risky, be there with them...be ready to go first and lead them