DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
USA MEDDAC
KENNER ARMY HEALTH CLINIC
700 24TH STREET
FORT LEE, VIRGINIA 23801-1716

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

MCXO-CO

31 August 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR KENNER ARMY HEALTH CLINIC STAFF

SUBJECT: COMMANDER'S PHILOSOPHY

1. This memo briefly summarizes my Command Philosophy as the senior leader at Kenner Army Health Clinic. This philosophy nests within the NRMC Commander's Philosophy and the KAHC Vision and Mission statements and is rooted in the seven Army Values (LDRSHIP). Although the basic concepts of this guidance are directed towards KAHC leaders at all levels, I wish all of our employees to be aware of this philosophy.

2. The 10 tenets of my philosophy are:

a. PEOPLE ARE OUR GREATEST ASSET AND OUR STRENGTH. Respect them, Listen to them, Trust them, Solicit their opinions, Invest in them and Serve them. If you do not reach out and talk to your staff, they will not feel appreciated and may choose to place their loyalties and trust elsewhere.

b. SET EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICE ACCOUNTABILITY MUTUALLY. Make setting expectations between you and your staff a priority (i.e. through counseling sessions, informally and formally), and once you agree on the expectations, hold each other accountable to them. Set expectations with your peers and your superiors.

c. LISTEN FIRST, THEN SPEAK. There is a reason why you have two eyes and two ears (inputs) and one mouth (output). Keep this ratio in mind when resolving issues. Hear all sides of the story, then make the decision. Don't make the error of being decisive before you know the facts and understand them. Avoid the "Ready, Fire, Aim" mentality.

d. CONSENSUS IS NOT THE GOAL: BUY-IN IS. Not everyone will agree with your decisions, but they will more likely respect and follow them if you allow them the opportunity to give you their input FIRST. This takes time, but reaps huge benefits later. It will also allow you to understand other perspectives you may not have previously considered.

e. RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR PEOPLE. Simply consulting someone for his or her opinion can be considered high praise and says: "You are a valued member of the team." Go out of your way to acknowledge each person individually. And keep in mind GEN Eisenhower's famous quote: "…leadership consists of nothing but taking responsibility for everything that goes wrong and giving your subordinates credit for everything that goes well."

f. INSPIRE OTHERS TO ACT AND LEAD. Leader develop your direct reports. Let them be your acting when you are not in town. Give them a "warm" hand-off so they are set up for success. Empower them to make decisions and support them, as long as their decisions are Safe, Legal, Ethical and Moral. Read and discuss literature on leadership. Mentorship of your subordinates is the way you repay your mentors.

g. MODEL EXCELLENCE, COMPETENCE AND COMPASSION AND BE A TEAM-PLAYER. Excellence, compassion, and being a team-player are the trademarks of a valued member of a top-quality health care team. Ensure you model these qualities always and insist on them for the teams you lead.

h. DON'T FEAR FAILURE. Fear of failure will stifle good ideas and progress. Greatness requires risk of failure. Sometimes this is the hardest part of good leadership. Admit your mistakes early on, take responsibility for them, learn from them and move on. Remember Sir Winston Churchill: "Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm."

i. DEFINE YOUR LEGACY. How will you be remembered after you leave? Leave the organization better than it was when you arrived.

j. HAVE FUN, on the job and off. This is probably the most important tenet. That means breaking up the monotony of clinic work should be encouraged. Take breaks and use your entitled leave time. Avoid sacrificing family time for work time. Balance mission accomplishment (a must) with mission relief (also a must).

Joseph S. Pina
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Commanding