

PARAMOUNT VALUES SHOULD POSSESSED BY EVERY LEVEL OF MILITARY
COMMANDER, IN ORDER TO HAVE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT CONSTANT OF
LEADERSHIP

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Effective Command and Leadership are duo combination of unique arts which dreamed by each and every level of military commander in the Armed Forces. Regardless in any services you are, Command and Leadership skills play a vital role to a commander, especially to steer or directing their respective subordinate efficiently and effectively in accomplish any mission given by the higher authorities. The best integration of command and leadership skills can be seen through the Normandy Landing Operation, which conducted on Tuesday, 6 June 1944 in World War II. The brilliant Commander at that particular moment was General Dwight D. Eisenhower from Allied Expeditionary Force who led that mission, had performed great orchestration of command and leadership to his subordinate, which subsequently contribute to the successful of enormous amphibious landing operation in history of world war. In this decisive amphibious battle, the former United States 34th President was well known by his subordinate as a Commander who led their men by applied the concept of “Leadership without presumption”. Hence, to become an outstanding commander in the military organization, that particular person must possess his or her own genuine art of command and leadership style that simply can be suit and flexible with the uncertain or ambiguity of circumstances that frequently change. In this writing, I would like to highlight five main paramount values that all level of military commander in Malaysia Armed Forces (MAF) must have in order to achieve their constant of leadership at their respective organization.

The first and foremost value is **Loyalty**. According to the Rear Admiral Grace Hopper, she quotes that “Leadership is a two-way street, loyalty up and loyalty down. Respect for one’s superiors; care for one’s crew.” While as a good military commander, especially to those who uphold and follow the guidance of Islam, it is compulsory to possess this kind of element. This statement supported by referring to the word of God (Allah) in Holy Quran that mention “O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you” (Surah An-Nisa, verse 59). From this word of god, it is clearly stated that as a human being who believed in Islam, that person is mandatory to have loyalty to Allah, His Messenger and their authorities (Commander/Leader). Therefore, in the context of military commander, they must firstly inculcate themselves with loyalty value to their higher commander and able to provide them with unconditional support as long as their instructions didn’t breach or violate the Islamic rules. Instead of loyalty to higher authorities, every level of military commander also must nurture themselves with loyalty to their own subordinate. Loyalty to subordinate can be shown by how commander treat their subordinate in the organization, such as by being honest to each of them while they are working for you, protect their confidential information, avoid reprimanding them until they feel humiliated and last but not least is never backstab or put the blame on them in order to hide your mistakes. In the nature of Malaysian Army organization, especially for those who served as commander at the infantry battalion, loyalty value shown from their respective subordinate are always at high level and this value will gradually increase if the commander able to winning their subordinate heart and mind effectively. Hence, wise commander must be able to firmly

uphold loyalty to these both level in order to gain trustworthy feeling, while this action will indirectly develop and strengthen the cohesion of their organization.

The second value is **Courage and Bold**, this value can be considered as a foundation that every military personnel regardless whatever rank they are must possessed. In military context, courage is known as an ability to withstand fear and danger while bold is an ability to take any risk confidently. By utilizing these values accurately, every level of commander will be able to execute any mission and task given by the higher authority effectively. As a result, every smart commander in military organization are able to produced firmed decision with courage and boldly in facing any unpredictable situation. Therefore, in order to achieved these values, every level of commander should never confuse their subordinate with such words like “No, I think so” or “Yes, maybe” during the decision-making process. It is because, each ambiguity or unclear statement that verbally came out from your mouth will subsequently affect the course of action taken by your subordinate in executing their mission or task given. Usually, clear, courage and bold decision will contribute to the bold course of action taken, while hesitant and unclear decision will contribute to wrong course of action taken by your subordinate. Therefore, as a wise commander, it’s compulsory for you to always vigilant and predict the possible consequences that can happened in whatever decision you’ve made. Beside courage and bold decision, commander also must lead their subordinate by showing courage and bold action. This situation usually observed by subordinate when commander especially Commanding Officer, Company Commander and Platoon Commander embarked to the operation area as a ground commander. In this situation, commander himself or herself

must make sure their existence is well acknowledged by their subordinate and this existence proven when the commander can be seen and heard by their subordinate on the ground directly or indirectly. According to the Malaysian Army history, Lieutenant Adnan Saidi was set the best example and he was the only commander and leader who genuinely show their courage and bold action during the battle with Japanese Army at Pasir Panjang in Singapore on World War 2.

The third value is **Integrity**. According to the Oxford languages dictionary, Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. This value, needed by every level of military commander in order to sincerely and transparently gained your subordinate unconditional trust. In the military environment, commander who are always being honest to their higher authorities and subordinate, never lied and never violate their subordinate trust is considered as integrity commander. By possessing value of integrity, commander will stand firm with their own principle and this principle will always influence their daily decision-making process. As a result, commander with high value of integrity never involved with the abusing power issue through out his command journey because they always uphold with the strong morale principle. Usually, commander who possessed lacked of integrity will directly or indirectly erode their subordinate trust on him and this circumstances subsequently contribute to the disloyalty behavior among their subordinate in the organization. As a result, commander with lacking of integrity will have multiple dilemma in making a decision or action, especially during facing the critical incident or situation through out their command journey. Nevertheless, the value of integrity among Malaysia Armed Forces commander nowadays are getting less and this

critical situation can be seen through the nabbed of a few higher commanders which involved with the abusing of power and corruption by Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission. This embarrassing incident had become hot potato and subsequently erode civilian trust to the Malaysia Armed Forces credibility and reliability. Moreover, this negative perception may require long period of time to completely recover.

The fourth value is **Professionalism**. As a military commander who led and direct their subordinate regardless in any operation or mission, they are mandatory to have a value of being professionalism. Professionalism in military working environment is not only base on their qualification but also their competency level in facing multiple and unpredictable tasking in one situation. By wearing a prestige camouflage uniform and carrying the M4 Carbine, doesn't means that you are professional enough in your daily working routine. Being a professionalism commander, you must be clear and know your job precisely without any hesitant. Therefore, as a good commander with value of professionalism, they always keep on upgrading their "know how" level before they give an instructions or orders to their respective subordinate. However, current state of professionalism condition among all level commander in military work environment nowadays become worryingly and this critical situation may become worsening if there is no decisive action plan taken to overcome this issue. Before we looking further on professionalism level towards the top level of command, lets direct our attention to the current generation of our young officers (Low level Commander) who responsible as Platoon or Troop Commander in their respective unit. Most of them are fresh graduated from high level academic institution, while some of them undergo cadet life up to four years and nine months training at military

academy. Nevertheless, most of them are unable to performed themselves as professionalism commander when reported to their respective unit and sometimes, a few of them completely failed to adapted with the environment of work in unit. Therefore, in this writing I would like urge all level of commander must know their role and keep on enhancing their knowledge and pertaining skills in order to achieved the standard of professionalism for the betterment of our prestigious organization.

The Fifth value is **Communication Skill**. Living in the military environment of work requires all level commander to have effective and efficient communication skill. Without mastering this ability, some commander may unable or even worse, failed to perform their command and show their leadership in front of subordinate effectively. As a result, commander will be portrayed as a useless person in their own organization by their subordinate. In order to support above statement, if we looking to the history of World War, most of the successful war commander are able to convinced and inspired their subordinate until they felt willing to go for war because they want to do it, instead of being forced to do it. Therefore, we can observe that an extrovert commander who possessed a great communication skill will enable him to approached their higher authorities, colleagues with same rank and their subordinate easily rather than an introvert commander who choose to worked in silo and seldomly speak with people surroundings. Hence, in the nature of Malaysia Armed Forces, those sociable commander with an extra great communication skill are easily well known by their higher authorities and as a result, most of them are easily to get promoted to next level of rank with good appointment. In this writing, I would like to share the communication circle diagram in military environment of

work that every level of commander should understand in order to have better relation and networking with their surroundings.

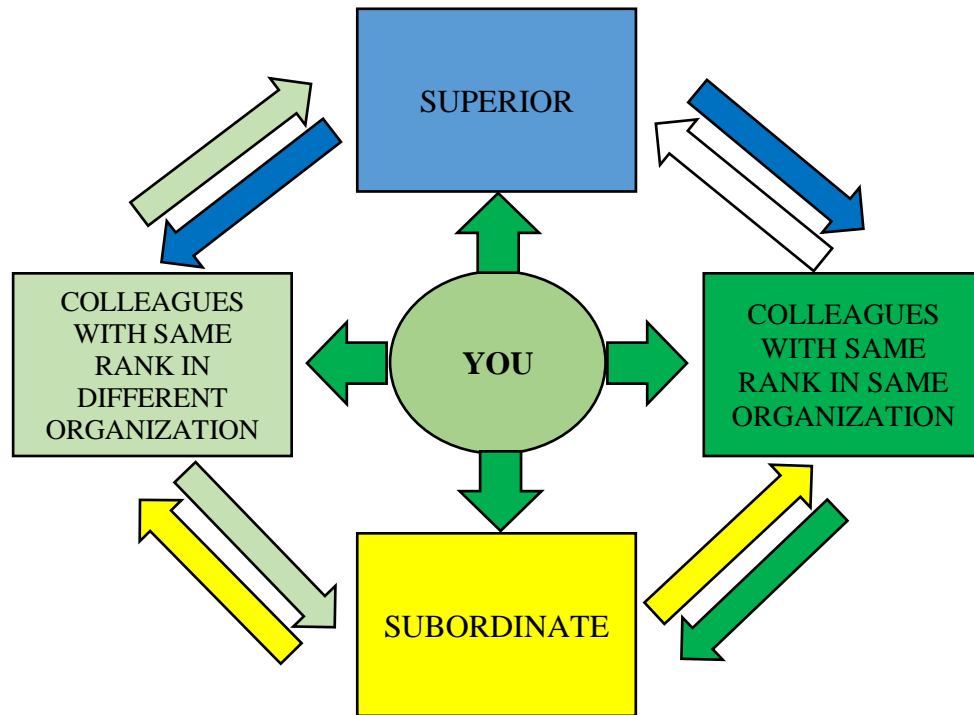


Figure 1: Cycle of communication diagram in military environment of work

By referring to Figure 1 diagram, you as a commander are located in the middle and you are also surrounded with four different categories of people which are your superior (one level up), your subordinate (one level down), your colleagues with same rank or appointment in the organization and your colleagues with same rank or appointment in different organization (other formations or units). Arrows with different colors indicate the way of communication that occurred inside this cycle. Base on this diagram, in order to gain latest information regarding on any issue and maintain your networking, you have to frequently communicate to all categories of people around you. In case, if you missed to communicate with any categories inside this circle, you may have a potential to left behind

and missed with the current information update. Hence, to become a good commander, you are mandatory to frequently communicate and exchange information within your cycle.

In a conclusion, these five paramount values which consist of loyalty, courage and bold, integrity, professionalism and communication skill must be possessed by every level of commander in Malaysia Armed Forces regardless in any service you are. If the commander can understand and assimilate themselves naturally with these values, they can simply orchestrate these values and subsequently apply it throughout their command journey. Moreover, these values can be suit with any level of commander regardless they are at low, intermediate or high level of command function. Therefore, I would like to encourage those people who read this essay, could share and expand these five paramount values to other military members in order to allowing us to produce future commander that able to achieve effective and efficient constant of leadership in Malaysia Armed Forces.

(2,071 words)