

THE FORMATION



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HUMILITY

- 1: The quality or state of not thinking you are better than other people.
- 2: Showing that you do not think of yourself as better than other people

"Many people believe that humility is the opposite of pride, when, in fact, it is a point of equilibrium. The opposite of pride is actually a lack of self esteem. A humble person is totally different from a person who cannot recognize and appreciate himself as part of this world's marvels."

- Rabino Nilton Bonder

DISCUSS

- ⇒ Are humility and confidence mutually exclusive?
- ⇒ What does humility look like in a military leader?

COMMANDER'S COLUMN

What does it look like to be humble as a military commander?

To me, servant leadership fits really well with military service because it's not about me. I'm not the king at the top of the pyramid. Every single person has a role to play to make an organization run. You can always tell the difference between people who are really excited to be a general or colonel, and the person who realizes that role is going to allow them to do so much more for the organization. It's about making sure that you're serving the people who are serving you. Because, who are the people out there who are performing the mission? I mean, I get to occasionally go see patients. But it's our young officers, it's our providers, our young airmen that are giving immunizations or working a records issue or helping people navigate through systems. They're the ones doing it, so how do I make their job easier?

How do you reconcile confidence with humility?

I don't look at confidence as being the opposite of humility. I look at it as humility — meaning it's not about me — and confidence being more about how my experience has given me a special opportunity to know who to reach out to in order to make things better for our Airmen. I think you can be confident in your leadership. I'm confident in what I'm able to do because of all the steps I did to get here—squadron commander, training officer, etc. — those things helped to mold me into who I am.

How do you develop humility?

Understanding where other people are coming from will make you a more humble person. Ask people for their stories. Find out one thing new about the people you supervise everyday, something you wouldn't know about them if you didn't ask.

— Sharon Bannister, 79th MDW Commander

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

22 Jan, 0800-1300: [PACE: Enhancing Human Capital](#), Capitol Ballroom, JBAB Club

29 Jan: [5 Levels of Leadership](#), Smart Building, JBA

For more info on these and other opportunities, contact CMSgt Pineiro: manuel.pineiro3.mil@mail.mil

AFDW FIRST SHIRT COLUMN

How do you stay humble? How do you remind yourself each day of your place in the world, while still pursuing excellence? I believe that humility is the foundation of all virtues. Humility is an important human quality. But did you know that humility can help you be a better leader, too?

There's a very old story, from the years of the Roman Empire, that reminds us of the importance of humility: A general returning from a great victory in battle is greeted with great acclaim by the population of the city. They cheer for him as he travels in a grand procession through the streets, hailing him as a mighty warrior and leader. But the general, aware of his own weaknesses and wanting to be sure he doesn't get too caught up in the celebration, asks a fellow soldier to do something to keep him humble. So as the procession winds through the city streets, this soldier's one job is to crouch on the floor of the chariot, where only the general can see and hear him, and whisper, "You're only a man. You're only a man. You're only a man...."

That general understood that he needed to avoid letting all the attention go to his head. He knew that by remaining humble, he would be able to keep growing and improving as a leader and warrior.

In our military service, we also see this growth as we increase in rank. Unfortunately, there are some that forget how they actually achieved that status. The fact that it was a team effort; family, friends, co-workers, and yes, even those crusty leaders who inspired them at one point in their career and just took the time. In my experience, truly successful and sustainable teams are filled with engaged people, and a key to engagement is to cause or allow everyone to shine. One of the opportunities/burdens/obligations of a good leader is to cause others to receive the credit and to assume the critique when situations don't work out the best. Not a lot of people are secure enough in their own skin for this, which is why truly great and humble leaders are rare.

In order to be a good and effective leader you have to have the humility first of all to admit to yourself that without the "team" that you lead, you are not leading. Secondly, a good leader knows instinctively that a well focused team will produce the results needed to get the job done. The only way to keep that team focused is to reward them for the rights and minimize the wrongs so they don't over-shadow the accomplishments. The wrongs still need to be addressed and remedied ... but they should NEVER become the focus! Finally, a good leader will wake up at the start of the day, look in the mirror and be thankful for the blessings he/she has.

The funny thing is that they're no different than you. They start the day off and like you, are the first people they see in the mirror. Rick Warren put it this way: "Humility is not denying your strengths. Humility is being honest about your weaknesses.

Leading by example is best done when those you lead can see your example and understand the principles behind it. Humility is an important component of effective leadership in all types of organizations. Remember, as a leader, you must rely on those who have relevant qualifications and expertise. Know what you don't know.

Humility inspires loyalty and in the end, produces teamwork. Ask yourself, am I humble? You know what they say, as soon as you think you're humble, you're not. *- CMSgt Manny Pineiro, AFDW First Sergeant*

CHECK OUT THIS PACE VIDEO: "Heritage Today: Selflessness"

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/415886/heritage-today-video-series-selflessness#.Vp5G3fYUuCA>

CHECK OUT THIS 2-PAGE ARTICLE: "Humility as a Leadership Attribute"

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/milreview/doty.pdf>

"Humility, or the quality of genuine modesty and unpretentiousness, is often disregarded when describing traits of good leaders because it seems to suggest a lack of toughness and resolve essential in an effective leader. However, the humble leader lacks arrogance, not aggressiveness. The will to serve others eclipses any drive to promote self."