

Greetings. I would first like to thank all of you for taking time out of your day to help me celebrate my retirement. Your being here means a lot to me.

I would especially, like to thank the individuals who have helped to put this on. Capt Johnson, Lt Beunrostro, and MSgt Mills. I would like to thank my wife for being at my side throughout the good and the bad. She has been valuable sounding board. She has had to put up with her own career loss because of the Air Force. I thank her for the sacrifices she has made. I would also like to thank the best crew I have had an opportunity to work with. The folks in the training section have done what I have asked, and have produced results better than expected. You will certainly be missed.

Before I begin, I would first like to say that I have loved my time in the Air Force. I can not think of a greater profession than to service my country. Since I was a child I could not think of anything I would rather do, that may explain why I joined at 17. When I began, it was still the 1970's and the NCOs that led the flights had spent time supporting the Vietnam War. They therefore had a certain outlook on how security was to be carried out. When I first joined, you did not speak back to a NCO, wall-to-wall counseling was still the norm, and discipline was handled on the flight. In twenty years much has changed, some changes have been for the better and well ... some changes have not.

Through out my twenty years, I have been to six different assignments. All of the assignments have been rewarding except for two. Both of those assignments have dealt with missiles. I am not sure why those assignments have been less rewarding, however, I vowed after the first missile assignment I would not return to a missile base. Unfortunately, the Air Force had other plans. Because the Air Force and I no longer see eye-to-eye on issues, it is time for me to leave and try other endeavors. I have taken a considerable amount of time thinking about what I would like to say on the way out. I could easily write reams on the good and bad, I have found in the Air Force; I will however, focus on issues that I believe could only help the Air Force during its periods of change. During the years, we have continuously downsized and we have been asked to do more with less or in some cases nothing at all, we have been asked to follow sound business practices. What we fail to understand is that we are not a business; we are a force of destruction, we are a military instrument for national policy. What we need are leaders not business managers. With this thought in mind, I will illustrate what I have to say by using some of the thoughts penned by General George Patton. Many these quotes, I learned while at the Prep School. I know all the officers that graduated from the Air Force Academy had to learn them. Unfortunately, many have forgotten the meaning behind them.

The issues I am about to discuss focuses on the need for leading from the front rather than managing from the rear. I will discuss the need for doing duty, the need for effective use of technology, and the need to trust.

On November 6, 1942, General Patton penned the words, "If I do my full duty, the rest will take care of itself." These words were not only important for him in that day but they are equally important for us in this day. I can only present my viewpoint on this subject; hopefully, you will be able to find personal correlations. In the security forces training section, our workload continuously increased because others failed to do their full duty. We had to constantly follow-up on phase II certifications to see that they had been completed, a task specifically assigned to the squadrons and supervisors. Additionally, we had to follow-up to see that individuals completed mandatory training, again a responsibility of the supervisor. We were then tasked to create a class to certify personnel as ART members because squadrons and supervisors were not able to accomplish this task, although it was their responsibility. The list continues; however, the bottom line is that others were not doing their full duty.

In some cases, individuals did not carry-out their full duty because they felt that various Air Force Instructions did not pertain to them. Because of their grade or position, they felt they did not have to follow various AFIs. The violations I have observed primarily fall into the computer security and training realm. Some may argue that rank has its privileges and that they can afford to not attend training; however, I argue back that the AFIs say training is mandatory and that you should be leading from the front and setting the right example. If this does not sit well with you then move aside and let others lead. I have witnessed other cases where troops did not like the orders they received; therefore, they ignored the orders. What made the situation worse is that these individuals were allowed to get away with it. The individuals assigned to the training sectioned have been frustrated with me on numerous occasions because I had them follow unpopular orders. What many are failing to remember is their oath of enlistment; it clear states that we must follow all regulations and orders. Failing to do so results in a break down in discipline. General Patton wrote, "There is only one kind of discipline -- PERFECT DISCIPLINE. If you do not enforce and maintain discipline, you are potential murderers."

In other cases, individuals did not carry-out their full duty because they did not know how to accomplish a task. I can understand this for airmen who have to contend with learning about the military and their duties. However, I do not understand this from NCOs. I have seen OJT records entirely pencil-whipped, and when called on it, the NCO said that they did not know how to properly fill them out. There is no excuse for this, the individual could have simply asked about the proper procedures or even read the CFETP which outlines the proper procedures. Ignorance is not a good excuse.

Because our business is security and warfare, it is critical that we become well versed in our profession. In my opinion, documenting OJT records is minor; conducting the training correctly is of most importance.

During the past couple of years, the Air Force has been showing concern over an increasing problem. First term and career airmen are not staying and new people are not joining the Air Force. In many ways, we are contributing to the problem. Let me mention a few reasons why I believe this. One area that causes unnecessary frustration surrounds the obsession on perfection on other than mission related tasks. Rather than having NCOs spend time training their troops to be combat ready, we are having them become English majors. We are spending an unproductive amount of time striving for perfection while writing EPRs, decorations, and 1206s. What we are failing to realize is that a great majority of our NCOs are simply not skilled with the written language. Because they spend so much time chasing the minutiae, they do not have time to take care of their primary tasks, training their troops to be combat ready. Again, General Patton understood the need for specialists who took care of the administrative chore of report and decoration writing. I have personally witnessed decorations being kicked-back because they were 1/16th of an inch off. My question is, who is going to see them and notice after the decoration is awarded? My second question is why was it kicked back in the first place? Why was it not simply fixed? Again, we are creating more work simply because we are not correcting the problem as we see it. Some may argue that it is the NCOs duty to turn in a perfect decoration or EPR; I argue that they should specialize in what matters, and that is warfighting. Assign others the specialize task of perfecting administrative products, some individuals are simply better suited for the task.

While speaking on administrative tasks, the tight hold on decorations must cease. Again, General Patton saw the value of awarding decorations. In his letter of instruction dated 6 March 1944, he wrote, "Decorations are for the purpose of raising the fighting value of troops; therefore, they must be awarded promptly. Have a definite officer on your staff educated in writing citations and see that they get through." Because of the cutbacks, decorations are one of the few awards still available for the supervisor. There used to be a time when a flight sergeant could give an EFD for exceptional performance, in most cases, that option is gone. A decoration is a formal way of saying thanks for exceptional service. I have been frustrated by this command because I can not see that one of my troops gets a decoration that they deserved. If troops are not shown some appreciated, why should they stay?

Let's get back to the reason we exist, let's get back to warfighting. One of the ways we can make more time for learning our craft is to use the tools we have at our disposal more efficiently. One of the most misused tools we have is the computer.

Although, the Air Force has made great advances in acquiring computer technology; its use of the technology for the most part is horrid. When the Air Force issues someone a weapon, they do so only after sending the individual to training. Before driving vehicles, individuals must be first trained. We even train troops before issuing them night vision technology. However, when we issue a troop a \$2,500 computer system, we expect them to know how to use it straight out of the box. Because of this process, Air Force members are not using the technology to its full benefit. We are duplicating effort because documents are not centrally maintained. How many times have you had to write a bullet paper, only to find out one had been previously written? We should spend time improving documents not writing them from scratch. Self-inspection checklists, bullet papers, presentations, etc. should all be collectively stored.

We are also letting technology rule our time. We are being barraged by worthless electronic messages. Because individuals are too lazy and believe their message is important to everyone, they send it to everyone. Because they do not recognize their audience, they are in turn wasting hundreds of man-hours. Each person must determine if the message applies to them or not, this wastes time. To make matters worse, commanders are forwarding base-all, 90 OG-all messages to members in their organization. Now worthless e-mail messages are being duplicated. This is a waste of time and resources.

Because of technology, we are spending more time and resources looking for perfection. EPRs and decorations did not have the attention they now have simply because they were created on a typewriter. We are now wasting time and resources because we are striving for the perfect look. Again, it is insignificant, because no one has ever read my decorations nor will they. Even if they do, they will probably not notice any imperfections. Let us get back to our primary duties of warfighting. Although tracking and striving for administrative perfection is easy to accomplish, it will not help us fight wars. We are stealing valuable time from our supervisors that could be better spent training their troops.

Our chain of command is deteriorating rapidly because of electronic mail. My commander is being routinely bypassed because officers outside our organization can contact me directly with E-mail. Just because the technology is available to touch base with an individual does not give the right to violate the chain of command. I have had the 90 OG, the 90 Space Wing, 20th Air Force, and Space command contact me directly how I am to do business without advising my commander. I routinely have individuals directing my troops how to do their job without advising me. This has diluted my authority and confused the troops.

I have watched my commander become a slave to technology and meetings. Because of technology's simplicity and speed, individuals rapidly become tied to it. I watch my commander spend hours addressing e-mails that need a reply now. Because senders expect results immediately, people are jumping through hoops to answer them. In most cases, the individuals sending the e-mail are asking for information that is at a deeper level than they really need to have. But more on that later. Commanders should make more efficient use of their executive officers. Their executive officers should screen all the commanders e-mail and summarize the results. By taking on this task, commanders can then get out from behind their desks and visit with their troops.

Commanders also need to reduce or eliminate the number of meetings the staff must attend. The greatest number of meetings I have attended have been an absolute waste of time. In the majority of meetings I have attended, nothing has been achieved other than passing on information and planning for the next meetings. I have even seen meetings for the sole purpose of planning for a future meeting. According to Jan Norman, Orange County Register, "The average manager spends 17 hours a week in meetings, and one third of the time is wasted." This time could be better spent leading our troops or training them to do their job better. You may challenge that you need to get "Vital" information out to your troops. There are other ways to get information out, you can e-mail the information, create a bulletin board, or even visit the various duty sections.

Meetings should be used to solve specific problems not for a how goes it. In most of the meetings, I have attended, my time has been wasted because I have to listen to issues that do not affect me. I should be called into meetings that have a direct impact on my duty section and our ability to move the mission forward. If commanders want to know what is happening in the various duty sections that report to them, they should then visit the sections and have a thorough briefing from that section. They are more likely to discover more and be more informed through these visits.

Using slides during a meeting as a show and tell can be better handled by making the information available to the commander's in real time. Again, we are not using technology to its full potential. Commanders should be able to instantly get a feel for their unit by pulling up information from various spreadsheets at their desk.

The bottom line is that we are wasting a lot of valuable time because we are not using our tools correctly. I advocate that the Air Force needs to train computer users on how to more efficiently use the technology they have, so that the user can have more time to carry out their primary task of warfighting. The last issue I am going to harp on concerns the trust needed to carry out my primary duties.

One of the reasons I am leaving the Air Force is that I am no longer trusted to do my full duty. For eighteen of twenty years of service, I have been trusted to do my duties. In return, I have carried them out to the best of my ability. However, the commanders in this command do not allow me to do what I was trained to do. The Air Force has spent a great deal of money to teach me to do specific skills, yet they are now not allowing me to carry out my duties as training. Case in point. My section was tasked to create a lesson plan on HMMWV operations. So far, no problem, because this is our duty. Yet, we had to have it done within three days in spite of the fact we did not have the materials to properly develop it. Additionally, the lesson plan had to be reviewed by the vice wing commander. Certainly, the vice wing commander has better things to do than review lesson plans. Naturally, the lesson plan was returned with the criticism that it was inadequate. The whole preparation of the lesson was carried out against everything I had learned. The worst part of this ordeal was that the lesson plan was created in August and we just received the HMMWVs. I have illustrated only one example; however, I can easily cite others. Simply let the troops carry out their duties as they are trained to do. It is curious to note that everyone is a security specialist, even though they do not hold the AFSC, yet how many of these individuals will direct a fire chief how to put out a fire.

General Patton was successful as a commander for a number of reasons, most importantly; he understood the responsibilities of each level of command. He stress to his commanders that they command one echelon down and know the position of units two echelons down. The wing should set the direction for the groups and the group should set the direct for the squadron. The wing should not however meddle with the operations at the duty section or flight level. Patton believed that commanders who command at too low of a level lose their efficiency. There are a number of incidents of this happening at this installation and in this Command. As I have said, there are a number of times I have been contacted outside of my chain of command. This has resulted in an uncomfortable situation for all involved. General Patton also said that you should not tell someone how to do something, tell them what to do and let them impress you with their ingenuity. Unfortunately, micromanagement seems to be the rule rather than the exception in this command. By micromanaging projects, the workers are becoming frustrated. They are losing their motivation to develop because others are constantly directing even the smallest of details. Why should I bust my butt to do my job when others insist on constantly telling me how to do it?

Well, enough of my rhetoric. I am just weary of people pursuing their careers at the expense of others. I am tired of being lied to. I simply want commanders to stand up and lead rather than manage, especially managing their careers. I am tired of seeing troops crushed for honest mistakes and accidents. You learn from mistakes, especially if you are making mistakes and you are trying to lead. A zero-defect Air Force will

result into a force where no one does anything because they are afraid they will be punished for what they do. I am tired of seeing individuals shirk their responsibilities and duties. With the cuts in forces, we have to do more with less. Let's cut out the things that waste time, let's simply prepare to be the best in our business. Lives depend on having a well-trained force.

Before I end, I would like to recognize a group that has helped keep my sanity while I have been stationed here. They are the members of the Civil Air Patrol. What many may not know is that Civil Air Patrol is an auxiliary of the Air Force. While the Air Force is responsible for all inland search and rescue for the United States, Civil Air Patrol flies 80 percent of all Air Force search and rescue missions. Additionally, the Civil Air Patrol since its beginnings has had a wartime mission. In fact, Civil Air Patrol is credited with sinking two submarines during world war two.

Presently, Civil Air Patrol has three missions; emergency services, aerospace education, and the cadet program. They are always looking for leaders. They have an important role for this state and nation. If you want to help your community, this is a worthwhile program to be involved in. Semper Vigilans.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would again like to thank you for attending this special occasion. Please remember, "If you do your full duty, the rest will take care of itself."