

Chief of Chemical



**Brigadier General
Thomas Spoehr**

Greetings Dragon Soldiers! Welcome to another edition of Army Chemical Review, our professional journal! Our theme for this issue is the development of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) leaders—I cannot think of a more important topic. Oftentimes, we tend to focus on the newest gadget or piece of equipment as representing a step forward in capability. But without the training and skills necessary to operate and understand the equipment, new equipment is a liability rather than an asset. I'd rather have well-trained CBRN Soldiers with M8 paper on the ends of sticks than poorly trained Soldiers trying to operate gas chromatograph/mass spectrometers.

Chemical Soldiers and units continue to assist our Army in the prosecution of the War on Terrorism. Their collective efforts should make us all proud! Numerous Chemical companies will be rotating in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in the next few months. Many units will perform “nontraditional” missions such as security, convoy escort, and other key tasks. These are missions that our Army needs done, and the Soldiers of the U.S. Army

Chemical Corps are proud to play a part. Every day, we create new pages in our Corps history—a history hallmarked by adaptability and versatility.

What qualities do we need in the CBRN leaders of the future? . . . The first attribute is an ability to learn and adapt. . . . The second attribute is leaders who are confident and persuasive.

On 18 September 2007, Command Sergeant Major Alston and I attended the activation ceremony for the 48th Chemical Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas. This Active Army brigade will provide a central focus for the training and readiness of Chemical units in the continental United States. This proud day would not have been possible without the contributions of many who have come before us—great individuals who fought for this unit. We visited with many great Dragon Soldiers while we were at Fort Hood!

What qualities do we need in the CBRN leaders of the future? This issue will offer some thoughts on this subject. From my perspective, a few key attributes stand out. The first attribute is an ability to learn and adapt. How quickly can our leaders take the education and training that they have been given and apply them to new and differing situations? Are they able to take what they know, offer advice to their commanders, and get it around 80 percent right? Or will they freeze and wait for the experts in sanctuary to provide a 100 percent solution? The second attribute is leaders who are confident and persuasive. Leaders must project competence! I remember being at the scene of a “white-powder incident” at a nearby hospital. When the local weapons of mass destruction—civil support team arrived on-scene, one of their officers, a Chemical captain, projected such a sense of confidence that the overstressed fire chief and hospital administrator were immediately reassured that the experts were on-site. CBRN leaders must project that same sense of confidence. And confidence comes from a good grounding in technical and tactical skills.

Equipment and doctrine change, but people endure. And investment in CBRN leader development is the most important investment we can make as a Corps. It is a topic that warrants our continued interest. I encourage you to give it some thought and reflection as you read the articles in this issue. Thank you for what you are doing for our Nation and the Chemical Corps.

Elementis, Regamus, Proelium!

Regimental Command Sergeant Major

Leadership—Merriam-Webster defines it as “an act of directing or guiding.” I define it as “influencing others to accomplish a mission.” The concept of leadership is comprised of a team of distinct parts that work together to arrive at a common goal. In the Chemical Corps of today, leadership is the most prominent tool that we possess to advance the Corps beyond the barriers and limitations that we have faced in the past. However, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) leadership should not be encapsulated or isolated in the chemical arena. Leadership is about what you do every day—mentoring and guiding those around you to secure a better force for tomorrow.



**Command Sergeant Major
Patrick Z. Alston**

Leadership is a process where a person or group influences others to operate an organization or accomplish objectives in a more cohesive and consistent manner. The art of leading is obtained by applying what most leaders relate to as the “be, know, and do concept.” Many aspects have changed within the structure of the Army; however, many also remain the same. Leaders must influence others with true leadership attributes—their beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills. The one aspect that remains constant is that an organization is only as strong as its weakest link. But the weakest link is only as strong as his leader empowers him to be.

A great leader is one who works at being the best. Through consistent and constant acts of self-improvement, leaders expand their knowledge base and learn more about themselves. Additionally, a great leader seeks to implement what he learns by providing purpose, motivation, and direction to his peers and subordinates through mentorship, guidance, and tutoring.

There is a level of authority or power that accompanies the title *leader*. A leader can be a positive or negative influence. The power that a leader possesses can be misappropriated if not implemented in a manner that will increase an organization’s effectiveness and productivity. A leader who has a proclivity to lead from an “I’m the boss” mentality and rule like a dictator is less likely to possess the characteristics necessary to empower subordinates to be motivated and dedicated to an organization’s goals.

Leaders are expected to have an arsenal of tools—knowledge, experience, proficiency, honesty, trust, loyalty, respect, dignity, pride, and concern—that impact an organization and its people while consistently and professionally accomplishing a mission. An organization is only as good as its leadership—the people assigned the task of providing direction to every vein that causes the organism to live and prosper. Leaders must be concerned about the total well-being of every Soldier under their charge; this includes ensuring that physical, emotional, material, and spiritual needs are met. The Army’s system of well-being ensures that when these needs are met within an organization, mission preparedness and overall effectiveness increases.

What makes a person want to follow a leader and entrust that leader with his life? I believe that people want to be guided by someone who is proficient in what he does—someone who possesses ethics and a clear sense of direction. Leaders are not born; they are made. A great leader operates ethically to gain respect; possesses a vision and focused tenacity that is honest and sincere; admits mistakes; compliments a subordinate, peer, or another leader; asks questions; says please and thank you; and uses “we” instead of “I.”

A leader is someone who has followers. If someone is unsure of his leadership capabilities, I urge him to look behind himself to check for eager followers.

Great leadership attributes are important in our everyday lives—on our jobs, in our homes, and in our communities. I deeply and sincerely feel that a true leader looks outside the box and his own life to develop and implement ways to motivate and provide direction. A leader must **be** who he says he is by acting as a role model every second of every day, **know** himself as well as his Soldiers, and **do** everything in his power to ensure a positive investment in the lives of his Soldiers. This will secure and solidify a better force for tomorrow.

Leadership is about you! What are you going to do?