

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
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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?