

Azimuth Check: On Leadership
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Editor's note: This is the first in a series of eight articles on leadership

CG: As we continue to move towards full-spectrum operations capability, it's encouraging to see so many of you rucked-up, moving with a purpose towards the objective. As I told you back in December, I am passionate about the importance of leaders and leader development ... and the impact they can make on an organization. This hasn't changed.

CSM: Among the many areas the CG and I see eye-to-eye on, this is perhaps the most important. Leaders need to be motivating and mentoring Soldiers so they can become the leaders of tomorrow. NCOs have a key role in making it happen. The NCO in any organization brings with them a wealth of knowledge and experience. In this headquarters, the NCO's role is diverse; they take guidance from the commander and assist staff officers in getting products put together. NCOs are teachers and mentors.

CG: Over the next seven weeks, the CSM and I will lay out many of our thoughts on leadership and leader development.

CSM: I'll be writing about training NCOs and Soldiers on full-spectrum operations to better prepare them to work inside a joint headquarters environment. In another column, I'll address our NCO professional development program.

CG: And I'll be sharing my leadership philosophy and some thoughts on officer development. You'll also hear from us both again, about how we can better assist our Soldiers and their Families, whether they just arrived at the unit or if they are long time members. Finally, we'll both talk about leaders and safety.

CSM: We have a lot of work to do in taking care of Soldiers and taking care of Families. One thing I would like to improve as we go along is the sponsorship program. You really need the Family on board, especially in a unit like ours, where parts of the unit are deployed for six months or a year at a time, especially if you are assigned to the forward headquarters, but even the folks who are stationed in Atlanta will spend quite a bit of time away from home and away from our Families. The Army is the strength of the Nation and Families are the strength of the Army. The CG and I aim to strengthen our Family Readiness Groups.

CG: Families are so vitally important ... our strength on this team and as this team relies in a vital way on them. That's why one of the four initiatives of the command deals directly with Families. The CSM and I will both be talking more about throughout this series.

CSM: I look forward to working with the Soldiers on making every Soldier a leader. This series of articles will provide some ideas, but it is up to the junior officers and NCOs who work with the Soldiers on a daily basis to make it stick. I need you to be the example and enforce the standards. It's an exciting time to be part of this unit. We're a one-of-a-kind unit, blazing trails and transforming this headquarters to provide the Army a standing headquarters able to take on any mission in the AOR. That's something the Army has never had, until now.

CG: Remember — every member of this team is a leader, whether you've got two days in the unit or 25 years in the Army. Leaders make things happen ... the right things, in the right way, at the right time. I'm truly excited about the road ahead in USARCENT ... and I couldn't be happier to have you along, rucksack full, as we break trail on our way to the objective.

Patton's Own!