

MP White Letter 10.95

White Letter of 05-03-95

WHITE LETTER NO. 10-95

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps To: All Commanding Generals All Commanding Officers All Officers in Charge

Subj: ANOTHER LEADERSHIP TOOL

1. Since the days of our 13th Commandant, General John A. Lejeune, the Marine Corps has emphasized the importance of passing on professional knowledge to those we are privileged to lead. General Lejeune described the imparting of that knowledge "as a teacher does to a scholar." Some may call this leadership responsibility mentoring. By definition, a mentor is a trusted counselor or guide; although not specifically mentioned in General Lejeune's comments, the concept of mentoring as a leadership tool was surely applicable then and is certainly applicable now.

2. Throughout our history, we have probably had sporadic mentoring occurring in some form or another; however, we need to ensure that every Marine in a leadership position is prepared to be a mentor. I view mentoring as another leadership tool that can benefit both the individual Marine and the organization. Further, the concept of mentoring is consistent with the strategies for achieving one of the goals outlined in our vision of the future--to utilize fully the talents of our people.

3. The mentoring leadership tool has been effectively utilized in our officer candidate screening process at Officer Candidates School and in the development of the young lieutenants at The Basic School. A natural follow-on is the Fleet Marine Force and supporting establishment. This will aid the career development of our young officers, and as they become more senior in rank and grade, provide them with the impetus to mentor others.

4. The mentoring relationship should be voluntary. It may develop as a result of shared interests, common background, or personality; or as a result of the senior to junior relationship described by General Lejeune. Every aspect of the professional growth and development of an officer are probable topics of discussion. Senior officers should encourage junior officers to seek professional guidance.

5. I urge you to take appropriate steps to develop and implement a voluntary, informal mentoring program that allows the opportunity for each officer to be involved throughout his or her career. Your commitment to the philosophy of mentoring will ensure a successful program.

C. E. MUNDY, JR.