



CPC CyberFlash

HONOR

RESPECT

COMMITMENT

From the Director's Desk

BOTC 109

The 109th Basic Officer Training Class starts February 8, 2006. Sixteen temporarily appointed ensigns will begin their careers in the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps. These officers begin their journey in Norfolk, Virginia, travel to Silver Spring, Maryland for one week before arriving at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York for 13 weeks of training. If the opportunity presents itself, I encourage all officers to introduce themselves to the new ensigns and begin the mentoring process.

Awards

When you recommend an officer for an award, please be sure to read Chapter 12, Part 7 of the NOAA Corps Directives (NCDs) to ensure that the nominee meets the eligibility requirements set forth for that award. Gregory Raymond initially reviews all award nominations to ensure compliance with the NCDs. He has been instructed to return award nominations that do not meet the eligibility requirements for that particular award. If an award nomination is returned, you may resubmit with an appropriate description meeting the eligibility requirements for that award or submit the officer for another award.

Good to Great and the Social Sector

Jim Collins

After reading Jim Collin's book *Good to Great*, I thought you might find the following excerpt from the monograph *Good to Great and the Social Sector* very interesting:

We must reject the idea—well-intentioned, but dead wrong—that the primary path to greatness in the social sectors is to become “more like a business.” Most businesses—like most of anything else in life—fall somewhere between mediocre and good. Few are great. When you compare great companies with good ones, many widely practiced business norms turn out to correlate with mediocrity, not greatness. So, then, why would we want to import the practices of mediocrity into the social sectors?

I shared this perspective with a gathering of business CEOs, and offended nearly everyone in the room. A hand shot up from David Weekley, one of the more thoughtful CEOs—a man who built a very successful company and who now spends nearly half his time working with the social sectors. “Do you have evidence to support your point?” he demanded. “In my work with nonprofits, I find that they’re in desperate need of greater discipline—disciplined planning, disciplined people, disciplined governance, disciplined allocation of resources.”

“What makes you think that’s a business concept?” I replied. “Most businesses also have a desperate need for greater discipline. Mediocre companies rarely display the relentless culture of discipline—disciplined people who engage in disciplined thought and who take disciplined action—that we find in truly great companies. A culture of discipline is not a principle of business; it is a principle of greatness.”

Later, at dinner, we continued our debate, and I asked Weekley: “If you had taken a different path in life and become, say, a church leader, a university president, a nonprofit leader, a hospital CEO, or a school superintendent, would you have been any less disciplined in your approach? Would you have been less likely to practice enlightened leadership, or put less energy into getting the right people on the bus, or been less demanding of results?” Weekley considered the question for a long moment. “No, I suspect not.”

That’s when it dawned on me: we need a new language. The critical distinction is not between business and social, but between great and good. We need to reject the naive imposition of the “language of business” on the social sectors, and instead jointly embrace a language of greatness.

The pivot point in Good to Great is the Hedgehog Concept. The essence of a Hedgehog Concept is to attain piercing clarity about how to produce the best long-term results, and then exercising the relentless discipline to say, “No thank you” to opportunities that fail the hedgehog test. When we examined the Hedgehog Concepts of the good-to-great companies, we found they reflected deep understanding of three intersecting circles: 1) what you are deeply passionate about, 2) what you can be the best in the world at, and 3) what best drives your economic engine.

Social sector leaders found the Hedgehog Concept helpful, but many rebelled against the third circle, the economic engine. I found this puzzling. Sure, making money is not the point, but you still need to have an economic engine to fulfill your mission.

Then I had a conversation with John Morgan, a pastor with more than 30 years of experience in congregational work, then serving as a minister of a church in Reading, Pennsylvania. “We’re a congregation of misfits,” said Morgan, “and I found the idea of a unifying Hedgehog Concept to be very helpful. We’re passionate about trying to rebuild this community, and we can be the best in our region at creating a generation of transformational leaders that reflects the full diversity of the community. That is our Hedgehog Concept.”

And what about the economic engine?

“Oh, we had to change that circle,” he said. “It just doesn’t make sense in a church.”

"How can it not make sense," I pressed. "Don't you need to fund your work?"

"Well, there are two problems. First, we face a cultural problem of talking about money in a religious setting, coming from a tradition that says love of money is the root of all evil."

"But money is also the root of paying the light and phone bills," I said.

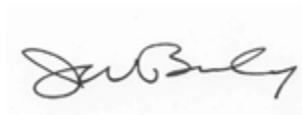
"True," said Morgan, "but you've got to keep in mind the deep discomfort of talking explicitly about money in some church settings. And second, we rely upon much more than money to keep this place going. How do we get enough resources of all types—not just money to pay the bills, but also time, emotional commitment, hands, hearts, and minds?"

Morgan put his finger on a fundamental difference between the business and social sectors. The third circle of the Hedgehog Concept shifts from being an economic engine to a resource engine. The critical question is not "How much money do we make?" but "How can we develop a sustainable resource engine to deliver superior performance relative to our mission?"

I do not mean to discount the systemic factors facing the social sectors. They are significant, and they must be addressed. Still, the fact remains, we can find pockets of greatness in nearly every difficult environment—whether it be the airline industry, education, healthcare, social ventures, or government-funded agencies. Every institution has its unique set of irrational and difficult constraints, yet some make a leap while others facing the same environmental challenges do not. This is perhaps the single most important point in all of Good to Great. Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice, and discipline.

Business executives can more easily fire people and—equally important—they can use money to buy talent. Most social sector leaders, on the other hand, must rely on people underpaid relative to the private sector or, in the case of volunteers, paid not at all. Yet a finding from our research is instructive: the key variable is not how (or how much) you pay, but who you have on the bus. The comparison companies in our research—those that failed to become great—placed greater emphasis on using incentives to "motivate" otherwise unmotivated or undisciplined people. The great companies, in contrast, focused on getting and hanging on to the right people in the first place—those who are productively neurotic, those who are self-motivated and self-disciplined, those who wake up every day, compulsively driven to do the best they can because it is simply part of their DNA. In the social sectors, when big incentives (or compensation at all, in the case of volunteers) are simply not possible, the First Who principle becomes even more important. Lack of resources is no excuse for lack of rigor—it makes selectivity all the more vital.

You may read more about the author and his work by visiting his web site at jimcollins.com.



Captain Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

PROMOTIONS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 23, 2006:

To Be Captain:

Philip R. Kennedy

To Be Commander:

Mark H. Pickett

To Be Lieutenant Commander:

Peter C. Fischel

To Be Lieutenant:

William D. Whitmore
Douglas E. MacIntyre

To Be Lieutenant (junior grade):

Mark A. Blankenship

RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION MID-WINTER LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Washington Hilton and Towers Hotel Washington, DC from February 5-8, 2006

http://www.roa.org/events/events_details.asp?id=40

The Joint Services Luncheon will be held on Monday, February 6 from 1200-1415 in the International Ballroom. The ROA/ACO, NOAA Corps, Junior Officer of the Year Award will be presented during this Luncheon.

From 1545-1700 in the Chevy Chase (T) Room, RADM De Bow and Captain Bailey will host a presentation on the NOAA Corps Vision and facilitate a Q&A session immediately following the presentation. Your attendance and participation at the conference, luncheon, and presentation are requested.

Online advance registration is closed. You may still register on-site for the events.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE AWARD

SUBMISSION DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL FEBRUARY 15, 2006

The National Association of Commissioned Officers requests nominations for the NOAA ACO Engineering Award and NOAA ACO Science Award. Any NOAA Corps officers or members of another service assigned to NOAA, who has distinguished him/herself by making outstanding engineering or scientific contributions that distinguish the individual above those performing similar services are eligible. All commands and field offices are invited to submit nominations for these awards. The National ACO will select the nominees in late February 2006.

Please submit nominations to CDR Brian Taggart, President, National Association of Commissioned Officers via E-mail to Brian.K.Taggart@noaa.gov, no later than February 15, 2006.

Requests for Training

In order to expedite the processing and tracking of training requests, an online form and email account has been developed by CPC. Officers wishing to apply for correspondence courses, leadership and management training should complete the form at:
<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/training.html>.

Submit the form to cpc.training@noaa.gov via an email attachment or by using the “submit by email” button at the bottom of the training form.

This message was generated for the Director of Commissioned Personnel