Army JROTC Leadership & Academic Bowl
General Colin Powell - A Study in Leadership

65th United States Secretary of State

(This document was created for the sole purpose of providing information on the life and leadership of General Colin Powell for the participants of the Army JROTC Leadership Bowl (JLAB). No other use of this document is authorized. The information contained in this document was derived from the three sources listed and are readily available on the internet.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Summary</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early life and education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military career</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam War</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the Vietnam War</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A “political general”</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential presidential candidate</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life after public service</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal life</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Powell’s 13 Rules of Leadership</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Colin Powell - A leadership Primer</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates of rank</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards and decorations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Summary
65th United States Secretary of State
In office: January 20, 2001 – January 26, 2005
President: George W. Bush
Deputy: Richard Armitage
Preceded by: Madeleine Albright
Succeeded by: Condoleezza Rice

12th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
In office: October 1, 1989 – September 30, 1993
President: George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton
Deputy: Robert Herres and David Jeremiah
Preceded by: William Crowe
Succeeded by: David Jeremiah

16th National Security Advisor
President: Ronald Reagan
Deputy: John Negroponte
Preceded by: Frank Carlucci
Succeeded by: Brent Scowcroft

Personal details
Born: Colin Luther Powell on April 5, 1937 in New York City, New York, U.S.
Political party: Republican
Spouse(s): Alma Johnson (m. 1962)
Residence: McLean, Virginia, US
Alma mater: City College of New York (B.S.) and George Washington University (M.B.A.)
Religion: Episcopalian
Awards: 34 (16 unique) U.S. awards, 7 foreign awards, and 10 badges
Signature

Military service
Allegiance: 🇺🇸 United States of America
Service/branch: 🇺🇸 United States Army
Years of service: 1958–1993
Rank: ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐ General
Unit: ⚽ 3rd Armored Division
🛡️ 23rd Infantry Division
Commands: ⭐ V Corps
.spy Chairman of the Joint Chiefs
.flags Army Forces Command
Battles/wars: Vietnam War, Invasion of Panama, Persian Gulf War

Colin Luther Powell (born April 5, 1937) is an American statesman and a retired four-star general in the United States Army. He was the 65th United States Secretary of State, serving under U.S. President George W. Bush from 2001 to 2005, the first African American to serve in that position. During his military career, Powell also served as National Security Advisor (1987–1989), as Commander of the U.S. Army Forces Command (1989) and as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (1989–1993), holding the latter position during the Persian Gulf War. He was the first, and so far the only, African American to serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and was the first of two consecutive black office-holders to hold the key administration position of U.S. Secretary of State.

Early life and education
Powell was born on April 5, 1937, in Harlem, a neighborhood in the New York City borough of Manhattan, to Jamaican immigrant parents Maud Arian (née McKoy) and Luther Theophilus Powell. He also has Scottish ancestry. Powell was raised in the South Bronx and attended Morris High School, a former public school in the Bronx, from which he graduated in 1954. He received his BS degree in geology from the City College of New York in 1958 and was a self-admitted C average student. He was later able to earn an MBA degree from the George Washington University in 1971, after his second tour in Vietnam.

Military career
Powell was a professional soldier for 35 years, holding a variety of command and staff positions and rising to the rank of General.

Training
Powell described joining the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) during college as one of the happiest experiences of his life; discovering something he loved and could do well, he felt he had “found himself.” According to Powell: “It was only once I was in college, about six months into college when I found something that I liked, and that was ROTC, Reserve Officer Training Corps in the military. And I not only
liked it, but I was pretty good at it. That’s what you really have to look for in life, something that you like, and something that you think you’re pretty good at. And if you can put those two things together, then you’re on the right track, and just drive on.”

Cadet Powell joined the Pershing Rifles, the ROTC fraternal organization and drill team begun by General John Pershing. Even after he had become a general, Powell kept on his desk a pen set he had won for a drill team competition.

Upon graduation, he received a commission as an Army second lieutenant. After attending basic training at Fort Benning, Powell was assigned to the 48th Infantry, in West Germany, as a platoon leader.

**Vietnam War**

In his autobiography, Powell said he is haunted by the nightmare of the Vietnam War and felt that the leadership was very ineffective. Captain Powell served a tour in Vietnam as a South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) advisor from 1962 to 1963. While on patrol in a Viet Cong-held area, he was wounded by stepping on a punji stake. The large infection made it difficult for him to walk, and caused his foot to swell for a short time, shortening his first tour.

He returned to Vietnam as a major in 1968, serving in the Americal Division (23rd Infantry Division), then as assistant chief of staff of operations for the Americal Division. During the second tour in Vietnam he was decorated for bravery after he survived a helicopter crash, single-handedly rescuing three others, including division commander Major General Charles Martin Gettys, from the burning wreckage. He was charged with investigating a detailed letter by Tom Glen (a soldier from the 11th Light Infantry Brigade), which backed up rumored allegations of the My Lai Massacre. Powell wrote: “In direct refutation of this portrayal is the fact that relations between American soldiers and the Vietnamese people are excellent.” Later, Powell’s assessment would be described as whitewashing the news of the massacre, and questions would continue to remain undisclosed to the public.

In May 2004 Powell said to television and radio host Larry King, “I mean, I was in a unit that was responsible for My Lai. I got there after My Lai happened. So, in war, these sorts of horrible things happen every now and again, but they are still to be deplored.”

**After the Vietnam War**

Powell served a White House fellowship, a highly selective and prestigious position, under President Richard Nixon from 1972 to 1973. During 1975-1976 he attended the National War College, Washington DC.

In his autobiography, My American Journey, Powell named several officers he served under who inspired and mentored him. As a lieutenant colonel serving in South Korea, Powell was very close to General Henry “Gunfighter” Emerson. Powell said he regarded Emerson as one of the most caring officers he ever met. Emerson insisted his troops train at night to fight a possible North Korean attack, and made them repeatedly watch the television film Brian’s Song to promote racial harmony. Powell always professed that what set Emerson apart, was his great love of his soldiers and concern for their welfare. After a race riot occurred, where African American soldiers almost killed a Caucasian officer, Powell was charged by Emerson to crackdown on black militants; Powell’s efforts led to the
discharge of one soldier, and other efforts to reduce racial tensions.

A “political general”
In the early 1980s, Powell served at Fort Carson, Colorado. After he left Fort Carson, Powell became senior military assistant to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, whom he assisted during the 1983 invasion of Grenada and the 1986 airstrike on Libya. In 1986, Powell took over the command of V Corps in Frankfurt, Germany, from Robert Lewis “Sam” Wetzel.

Following the Iran Contra scandal, Powell became, at the age of 49, Ronald Reagan’s National Security Advisor, serving from 1987 to 1989 while retaining his Army commission as a lieutenant general.

In April 1989, after his tenure with the National Security Council, Powell was promoted to four-star general under President George H. W. Bush and briefly served as the Commander in Chief, Forces Command (FORSCOM), headquartered at Fort McPherson, Georgia, overseeing all Army, Army Reserve, and National Guard units in the Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. He became only the third general since World War II, joining Dwight D. Eisenhower and Alexander Haig, to reach four-star rank without ever serving as a division commander.

Later that year, President George H. W. Bush selected him as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Powell’s last military assignment, from October 1, 1989, to September 30, 1993, was as the 12th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest military position in the Department of Defense. At age 52, he became the youngest officer, and first Afro-Caribbean American, to serve in this position. Powell was also the first JCS Chair who received his commission through ROTC.

During this time, he oversaw 28 crises, including the invasion of Panama in 1989 to remove General Manuel Noriega from power and Operation Desert Storm in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. During these events, Powell earned his nickname, “the reluctant warrior.” He rarely advocated military intervention as the first solution to an international crisis, and instead usually prescribed diplomacy and containment.
As a military strategist, Powell advocated an approach to military conflicts that maximizes the potential for success and minimizes casualties. A component of this approach is the use of overwhelming force, which he applied to Operation Desert Storm in 1991. His approach has been dubbed the “Powell Doctrine”. Powell continued as chairman of the JCS into the Clinton presidency but as a dedicated “realist” he considered himself a bad fit for an administration largely made up of liberal internationalists. He clashed with then-U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright over the Bosnian crisis, as he opposed any military interventions that didn't involve US interests.

During his chairmanship of the JCS, there was discussion of awarding Powell a fifth star, granting him the rank of General of the Army. But even in the wake of public and Congressional pressure to do so, Clinton-Gore presidential transition team staffs decided against it.

Potential presidential candidate

Powell’s experience in military matters made him a very popular figure with both American political parties. Many Democrats admired his moderate stance on military matters, while many Republicans saw him as a great asset associated with the successes of past Republican administrations. Put forth as a potential Democratic Vice Presidential nominee in the 1992 U.S. presidential election or even potentially replacing Vice President Dan Quayle as the Republican Vice Presidential nominee, Powell eventually declared himself a Republican and began to campaign for Republican candidates in 1995. He was touted as a possible opponent of Bill Clinton in the 1996 U.S. presidential election, possibly capitalizing on a split conservative vote in Iowa and even leading New Hampshire polls for the GOP nomination,[40] but Powell declined, citing a lack of passion for politics. Powell defeated Clinton 50-38 in a hypothetical match-up proposed to voters in the exit polls conducted on Election Day. Despite not standing in the race, Powell won the Republican New Hampshire Vice-Presidential primary on write-in votes.

In 1997 Powell founded America’s Promise with the objective of helping children from all socioeconomic sectors. That same year saw the establishment of The Colin L. Powell Center for Leadership and Service. The mission of the Center is to “prepare new generations of publicly engaged leaders from populations previously underrepresented in public service and policy circles, to build a strong culture of civic engagement at City College, and to mobilize campus resources to meet pressing community needs and serve the public good.” Powell was mentioned as a potential candidate in the 2000 U.S. presidential election, but decided against running. Once Texas Governor George W. Bush secured the Republican nomination, Powell endorsed him for president and spoke at the 2000 Republican National Convention. Bush eventually won, and Powell was appointed Secretary of State. He served as Secretary of State from 2001 until 2005.

Life after public service

After retiring from the role of Secretary of State in January 2005, Powell returned to private life. In July 2005, Powell joined Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers, a well-known Silicon Valley venture capital firm, with the title of...
“strategic limited partner.” In 2006, Powell began appearing as a speaker at a series of motivational events called Get Motivated, along with former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. In 2007 he joined the Board of Directors of Steve Case’s new company Revolution Health. In 2008, Powell served as a spokesperson for National Mentoring Month. In 2014, Salesforce.com announced that Powell had joined its Board of Directors.

Personal life
Powell married Alma Johnson on August 25, 1962. Their son, Michael Powell, was the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) from 2001 to 2005. His daughters are Linda Powell, an actress, and Annemarie Powell.
GEN POWELL’S 13 RULES OF LEADERSHIP
First printed in the August 13, 1989 issue of Parade magazine, these are Colin Powell’s 13 Rules of Leadership

1. **It ain’t as bad as you think.** It will look better in the morning. This rule reflects an attitude and not a prediction. I have always tried to keep my confidence and optimism up, no matter how difficult the situation. Things will get better. You will make them better.

2. **Get mad, then get over it.** I’ve worked hard over the years to make sure that when I get mad, I get over it quickly and never lose control of myself.

3. **Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.** Accept that your position was faulty, not your ego. Loyalty is disagreeing strongly, and loyalty is executing faithfully.

4. **It can be done!** Don’t surround yourself with instant skeptics. At the same time, don’t shut out skeptics and colleagues who give you solid counterviews.

5. **Be careful what you choose.** You may get it. Don’t rush into things.

6. **Don’t let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision.** Superior leadership is often a matter of superb instinct. Often, the factual analysis alone will indicate the right choice. More often, your judgment will be needed to select from the best courses of action.

7. **You can’t make someone else’s choices.** You shouldn’t let someone else make yours. Since ultimate responsibility is yours, make sure the choice is yours and you are not responding to the pressure and desire of others.

8. **Check small things.** Success ultimately rests on small things, lots of small things. Leaders have to have a feel for small things—a feel for what is going on in the depths of an organization where small things reside. The followers, the troops, live in a world of small things. Leaders must find ways, formal and informal, to get visibility into that world.

9. **Share credit.** People need recognition and a sense of worth as much as they need food and water. Share the credit, take the blame, and quietly find out and fix things that went wrong. Whenever you place the cause of one of your actions outside yourself, it’s an excuse and not a reason.

10. **Remain calm. Be kind.** In the “heat of the battle”—whether military or corporate—kindness, like calmness, reassures followers and holds their confidence. Kindness connects you with other human beings in a bond of mutual respect. If you care for your followers and show them kindness, they will recognize and care for you.

11. **Have a vision. Be demanding.** Purpose is the destination of a vision. It energizes that vision, gives it force and drive. It should be positive and powerful, and serve the better angels of an organization.

12. **Don’t take counsel of your fears or naysayers.** Fear is a normal human emotion. It is not in itself a killer. We can learn to be aware when fear grips us, and can train to operate through and in spite of our fear. If, on the other hand, we don’t understand that fear is normal and has to be controlled and overcome, it will paralyze us and stop us in our tracks. We will no longer think clearly or analyze rationally. We prepare for it and control it; we never let it control us. If it does, we cannot lead.

13. **Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.** Perpetual optimism, believing in yourself, believing in your purpose, believing you will prevail, and demonstrating passion and confidence is a force multiplier. If you believe and have prepared your followers, the followers will believe.
Lesson 1: Being responsible sometimes means pissing people off.

Good leadership involves responsibility to the welfare of the group, which means that some people will get angry at your actions and decisions. It’s inevitable, if you’re honorable. Trying to get everyone to like you is a sign of mediocrity: you'll avoid the tough decisions, you'll avoid confronting the people who need to be confronted, and you'll avoid offering differential rewards based on differential performance because some people might get upset. Ironically, by procrastinating on the difficult choices, by trying not to get anyone mad, and by treating everyone equally “nicely” regardless of their contributions, you’ll simply ensure that the only people you’ll wind up angering are the most creative and productive people in the organization.

Lesson 2: The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help them or concluded that you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.

If this were a litmus test, the majority of CEOs would fail. One, they build so many barriers to upward communication that the very idea of someone lower in the hierarchy looking up to the leader for help is ludicrous. Two, the corporate culture they foster often defines asking for help as weakness or failure, so people cover up their gaps, and the organization suffers accordingly. Real leaders make themselves accessible and available. They show concern for the efforts and challenges faced by underlings, even as they demand high standards. Accordingly, they are more likely to create an environment where problem analysis replaces blame.

Lesson 3: Don’t be buffalowed by experts and elites. Experts often possess more data than judgment. Elites can become so inbred that they produce hemophiliacs who bleed to death as soon as they are nicked by the real world.

Small companies and start-ups don’t have the time for analytically detached experts. They don't have the money to subsidize lofty elites, either. The president answers the phone and drives the truck when necessary; everyone on the payroll visibly produces and contributes to bottom-line results or they’re history. But as companies get bigger, they often forget who “brought them to the dance”: things like all-hands involvement, egalitarianism, informality, market intimacy, daring, risk, speed, agility. Policies that emanate from ivory towers often have an adverse impact on the people out in the field who are fighting the wars or bringing in the revenues. Real leaders are vigilant, and combative, in the face of these trends.

Lesson 4: Don’t be afraid to challenge the pros, even in their own backyard.

Learn from the pros, observe them, seek them out as mentors and partners. But remember that even the pros may have leveled out in terms of their learning and skills. Sometimes even the pros can become complacent and lazy. Leadership does not emerge from blind obedience to anyone. Xerox’s Barry Rand was right on target when he warned his people that if you have a yes-man working for you, one of you is redundant. Good leadership encourages everyone’s evolution.

Lesson 5: Never neglect details. When everyone’s mind is dulled or distracted the leader must be doubly vigilant.

Strategy equals execution. All the great ideas and visions in the world are worthless if they can’t be implemented rapidly and efficiently. Good leaders delegate and empower others liberally, but they pay attention to details, every day. (Think about supreme athletic
coaches like Jimmy Johnson, Pat Riley and Tony La Russa). Bad ones, even those who fancy themselves as progressive “visionaries,” think they’re somehow “above” operational details. Paradoxically, good leaders understand something else: an obsessive routine in carrying out the details begets conformity and complacency, which in turn dulls everyone’s mind. That is why even as they pay attention to details, they continually encourage people to challenge the process. They implicitly understand the sentiment of CEO leaders like Quad Graphic’s Harry Quadracchi, Oticon’s Lars Kolind and the late Bill McGowan of MCI, who all independently asserted that the job of a leader is not to be the chief organizer, but the chief dis-organizer.

**Lesson 6: You don’t know what you can get away with until you try.**

You know the expression, “it’s easier to get forgiveness than permission.” Well, it’s true. Good leaders don’t wait for official blessing to try things out. They’re prudent, not reckless. But they also realize a fact of life in most organizations: if you ask enough people for permission, you’ll inevitably come up against someone who believes his job is to say “no.” So the moral is, don’t ask. Less effective middle managers endorsed the sentiment, “If I haven’t explicitly been told ‘yes,’ I can’t do it,” whereas the good ones believed, “If I haven’t explicitly been told ‘no,’ I can.” There’s a world of difference between these two points of view.

**Lesson 7: Keep looking below surface appearances. Don’t shrink from doing so (just) because you might not like what you find.**

If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” is the slogan of the complacent, the arrogant or the scared. It’s an excuse for inaction, a call to non-arms. It’s a mind-set that assumes (or hopes) that today’s realities will continue tomorrow in a tidy, linear and predictable fashion. Pure fantasy. In this sort of culture, you won’t find people who pro-actively take steps to solve problems as they emerge. Here’s a little tip: don’t invest in these companies.

**Lesson 8: Organization doesn’t really accomplish anything. Plans don’t accomplish anything, either. Theories of management don’t much matter. Endeavors succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds.**

In a brain-based economy, your best assets are people. We’ve heard this expression so often that it’s become trite. But how many leaders really “walk the talk” with this stuff? Too often, people are assumed to be empty chess pieces to be moved around by grand viziers, which may explain why so many top managers immerse their calendar time in deal making, restructuring and the latest management fad. How many immerse themselves in the goal of creating an environment where the best, the brightest, the most creative are attracted, retained and, most importantly, unleashed?

**Lesson 9: Organization charts and fancy titles count for next to nothing.**

Organization charts are frozen, anachronistic photos in a work place that ought to be as dynamic as the external environment around you. If people really followed organization charts, companies would collapse. In well-run organizations, titles are also pretty meaningless. At best, they advertise some authority, an official status conferring the ability to give orders and induce obedience. But titles mean little in terms of real power, which is the capacity to influence and inspire. Have you ever noticed that people will personally commit to certain individuals who on paper (or on the organization chart) possess little authority, but instead possess pizzazz, drive, expertise, and genuine caring for teammates and products? On the flip side, non-leaders in management may be formally anointed with all the perks and frills associated with high positions, but they have little influence on others, apart from their ability to extract minimal compliance to minimal standards.
Lesson 10: Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it.

Too often, change is stifled by people who cling to familiar turfs and job descriptions. One reason that even large organizations wither is that managers won’t challenge old, comfortable ways of doing things. But real leaders understand that, nowadays, every one of our jobs is becoming obsolete. The proper response is to obsolete our activities before someone else does. Effective leaders create a climate where people’s worth is determined by their willingness to learn new skills and grab new responsibilities, thus perpetually reinventing their jobs. The most important question in performance evaluation becomes not, “How well did you perform your job since the last time we met?” but, “How much did you change it?”

Lesson 11: Fit no stereotypes. Don’t chase the latest management fads. The situation dictates which approach best accomplishes the team’s mission.

Flitting from fad to fad creates team confusion, reduces the leader’s credibility, and drains organizational coffers. Blindly following a particular fad generates rigidity in thought and action. Sometimes speed to market is more important than total quality. Sometimes an unapologetic directive is more appropriate than participatory discussion. Some situations require the leader to hover closely; others require long, loose leashes. Leaders honor their core values, but they are flexible in how they execute them. They understand that management techniques are not magic mantras but simply tools to be reached for at the right times.

Lesson 12: Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.

The ripple effect of a leader’s enthusiasm and optimism is awesome. So is the impact of cynicism and pessimism. Leaders who whine and blame engender those same behaviors among their colleagues. I am not talking about stoically accepting organizational stupidity and performance incompetence with a “what, me worry?” smile. I am talking about a gung-ho attitude that says “we can change things here, we can achieve awesome goals, we can be the best.” Spare me the grim litany of the “realist,” give me the unrealistic aspirations of the optimist any day.

Lesson 13: “Powell’s Rules for Picking People:” Look for intelligence and judgment, and most critically, a capacity to anticipate, to see around corners. Also look for loyalty, integrity, a high energy drive, a balanced ego, and the drive to get things done.

How often do our recruitment and hiring processes tap into these attributes? More often than not, we ignore them in favor of length of resume, degrees and prior titles. A string of job descriptions a recruit held yesterday seem to be more important than who one is today, what they can contribute tomorrow, or how well their values mesh with those of the organization. You can train a bright, willing novice in the fundamentals of your business fairly readily, but it’s a lot harder to train someone to have integrity, judgment, energy, balance, and the drive to get things done. Good leaders stack the deck in their favor right in the recruitment phase.

Lesson 14: Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate and doubt, to offer a solution everybody can understand.

Effective leaders understand the KISS principle, Keep It Simple, Stupid. They articulate vivid, over-arching goals and values, which they use to drive daily behaviors and choices among competing alternatives. Their visions and priorities are lean and compelling, not cluttered and buzzword-laden. Their decisions are crisp and clear, not tentative and ambiguous. They convey an unwavering firmness and consistency in their actions, aligned with the picture of the future they paint. The result: clarity of purpose, credibility of leadership,
and integrity in organization.

**Lesson 15: Part I:** “Use the formula $P=40$ to $70$, in which $P$ stands for the probability of success and the numbers indicate the percentage of information acquired.”

**Part II:** “Once the information is in the 40 to 70 range, go with your gut.”

Don’t take action if you have only enough information to give you less than a 40 percent chance of being right, but don’t wait until you have enough facts to be 100 percent sure, because by then it is almost always too late. Today, excessive delays in the name of information-gathering breeds “analysis paralysis.” Procrastination in the name of reducing risk actually increases risk.

**Lesson 16: The commander in the field is always right and the rear echelon is wrong, unless proved otherwise.**

Too often, the reverse defines corporate culture. This is one of the main reasons why leaders like Ken Iverson of Nucor Steel, Percy Barnevik of Asea Brown Boveri, and Richard Branson of Virgin have kept their corporate staffs to a bare-bones minimum - how about fewer than 100 central corporate staffers for global $30$ billion-plus ABB? Or around 25 and 3 for multi-billion Nucor and Virgin, respectively? Shift the power and the financial accountability to the folks who are bringing in the beans, not the ones who are counting or analyzing them.

**Lesson 17: Have fun in your command. Don’t always run at a breakneck pace. Take leave when you’ve earned it: Spend time with your families. Corollary: surround yourself with people who take their work seriously, but not themselves, those who work hard and play hard.**

Herb Kelleher of Southwest Air and Anita Roddick of The Body Shop would agree: seek people who have some balance in their lives, who are fun to hang out with, who like to laugh (at themselves, too) and who have some non-job priorities which they approach with the same passion that they do their work. Spare me the grim workaholic or the pompous pretentious “professional;” I’ll help them find jobs with my competitor.

**Lesson 18: Command is lonely.**

Harry Truman was right. Whether you’re a CEO or the temporary head of a project team the buck stops here. You can encourage participative management and bottom-up employee involvement, but ultimately the essence of leadership is the willingness to make the tough, unambiguous choices that will have an impact on the fate of the organization. I’ve seen too many non-leaders flinch from this responsibility. Even as you create an informal, open, collaborative corporate culture, prepare to be lonely.
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<th>Promotions</th>
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## Medals and ribbons
- Defense Distinguished Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters
- Distinguished Service Medal, Army with oak leaf cluster
- Defense Superior Service Medal
- Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
- Soldier’s Medal
- Bronze Star
- Purple Heart
- Air Medal
- Joint Service Commendation Medal
- Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters
- Presidential Medal of Freedom (1991)
- Presidential Medal of Freedom (1993)
- Presidential Citizens Medal
- National Defense Service Medal with bronze service star
- Vietnam Service Medal with silver service star
- Army Service Ribbon
- Army Overseas Service Ribbon with award numeral 4

## Foreign decorations
- Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal
- Skanderbeg’s Order (Albania)
- Honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB) (United Kingdom)
- Légion d’honneur, Grand Cross (France)
- Meritorious Service Cross (M.S.C.) (Canada)
- Order of Stara Planina in the First Order (Bulgaria)
- Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation
Sources:

1. Quotations from Chairman Powell: A Leadership Primer  By Oren Harari
   http://govleaders.org/powell.htm