

Key Characteristics and Skills for Success: Generalist Officers

RADM Arthur J. Lawrence
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Capacities That Underpin Everything

- **THINK**
- **BE HONEST**
- **BE EVALUATIVE**

**You might believe these are simple to do,
but they aren't !**

Foundations

- **Ground everything in principles; take no positions before engaging principles.**
- **All analysis is done “straight up” and starts with science.**
- **Never attempt to apply only an ideological or political solution to a substantive problem.**
- **At all times, in all decisions, seek to limit the casualties.**
- **Never treat people as means only, but as ends.**

Learning and Development

- **Develop a robust personal philosophy, and be willing to change.**
- **Develop a “familiar” personal analytic framework.**
- **Learn how to use your “radar.”**
- **Learn how to be your own “compass.”**
- **Read in a broad range of subjects.**
- **Know and understand what democracy and the American republic means.**

Learning and Development

- **Learn and seek to understand history.**
- **Become adept and adroit on your feet (remember, principles first).**
- **If you have an opinion or position, be prepared to explain and defend it.**
- **Never reduce complex issues and problems to personalities.**
- **Look for tasks where there is a reasonable chance for failure.**

Learning and Development

- **Learn and seek to understand social networks.**
- **Learn about your opposition.**
- **Where legal, moral, and ethical, help people do what they want to do.**
- **Refine critical thinking skills.**
- **Learn how to incorporate skills as needed – every problem is a custom job.**