

Senior Leaders / Emerging Leaders Conference - Trip Report

The following report is my nuggets of learning, impressions and thoughts of the Senior Leaders / Emerging Leaders Conference in Chicago 03 – 10 August 2001. The conference was broken into two different sections of learning, first was the Dynamics of Leadership then second, the Senior Leaders Conference.

1. Mr. Nap C. DuFault, Ph.D. hosted the Dynamics of Leadership workshops 03-06 August 2001. The workshops main focus was to provide a self-understanding of some of the basic questions of leadership. We explored questions of am I an effective leader, why do I believe what I do, my salient behaviors, how do I act in groups, and can I be better at what I do? Mr. DuFault used a series of test from Herman Brain Dominance, Myers-Briggs, Peer Reviews and the 16PF test to start to unlock the answers to these questions. After all the testing and lectures on the results of the tests, I found that this weekend was the starting point for me to understand my style of leadership. The workshop gave me the knowledge and insight on how I work interact with other team members. The real challenge is to be able to take this information home / work and use it to bring out the best in others and myself. During the weekend I found the following nuggets of learning to be the most important to me:
 - a. Always assume positive intent.
 - b. The greater the threat – the more difficult it is to hear.
 - c. There is a book written about us – in many versions.
 - d. The saddest words in the English language – If Only!!!
 - e. You can be your Boss' leader.
2. During the second half of the week 06-10 August 2001 was the Senior Leaders Conference. The conference gave me the unique opportunity to look, learn, and listen to the Chief and the Senior Leaders. I was impressed with the intent of our leadership to bring the entire Corps into focus with the Chief vision and goals. The vision of people, process, and communication on the surface appears simple, but the evolvment and commitment of our senior leadership is very deep. To me it was appeared that every function illustrated and reinforced the spirit of the vision. Just as the EL's were looking at ways to define our commitment to the vision and ways to bring that message to the Corps, the senior leaders were addressing the same issues. During the conference the Chief also drove home his desire that the Corps is to be a learning origination. This was illustrated by having Mr. Grunwald of the Washington Post talk about his articles on the Corps. This provided us opportunities to self examine how we do or jobs and need to learn from our past.

In conclusion I found the Senior Leaders / Emerging Leaders Conference to be a great learning experience, but it is now the time to take the expense of this conference and make it into an investment.

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