



LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM MEMORIAL DAY



This article was written for and originally published on the ACP AdvisorNet site. The site is no longer available. Edited for clarity.



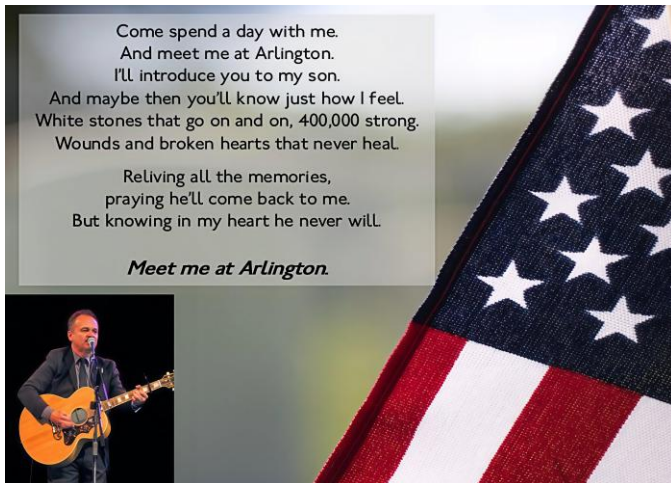
Online Community
Assisting Veterans

*In each of the last few years, including the first year in which I wrote this article, I have used the month of May to revise and update this project, *Career Commands for Veterans*. Last year, 2025, I acknowledged the emerging world of AI/ChatGPT and its impact on the wide range of career issues for veterans. This year, 2026, after another year where AI's impact on hiring, interviewing, resumes, assessments – really everything related to career issues – has been an almost continuous tsunami, I took an even deeper dive into the issues and implications. The result is a complete overhaul and reorganization of the “Career Commands” and a detailed review of AI's impact. I also decided to do a major rewrite of this chapter. It's both an introduction and a dedication to all who have served.*



Memorial Day is a revered observance dedicated to honoring the men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the military. Beyond its significance as a day of remembrance, Memorial Day offers profound leadership lessons that can inspire and guide individuals in various domains. By reflecting on the values exemplified by those who have laid down their lives for a greater cause, we can uncover essential leadership principles that foster success and create a lasting impact. Here, we explore several leadership lessons derived from Memorial Day and their application in leadership.

Sacrifice and Service: Leading with Selflessness

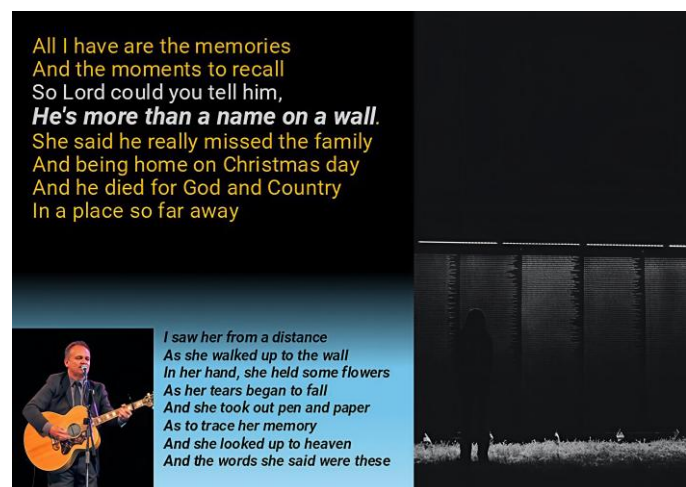


The men and women we honor on Memorial Day embody the spirit of sacrifice and service. Their selflessness in putting others' needs above their own teaches us a vital leadership lesson: the importance of selfless leadership. Influential leaders prioritize the well-being and success of their team members, demonstrating a willingness to

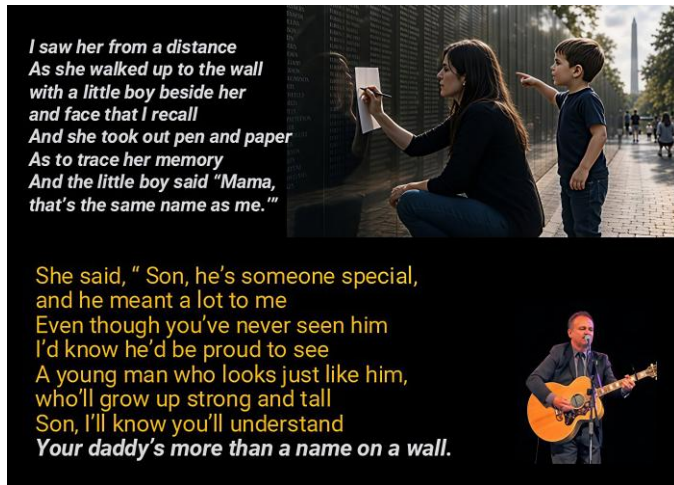
make personal sacrifices for the greater good. By embracing a servant leadership mindset, leaders can inspire trust, loyalty, and dedication within their teams.

Courage and Resilience: Embracing Adversity

The brave individuals who have faced adversity on the battlefield display unwavering courage and resilience. Leaders must set an example and embrace adversity as an opportunity for growth. Great leaders do not shy away from challenges but confront them head-on, rallying their teams and instilling confidence. By leading with courage and resilience, leaders create an environment that encourages innovation, risk-taking, and the pursuit of excellence.



Teamwork and Unity: Fostering Collaboration

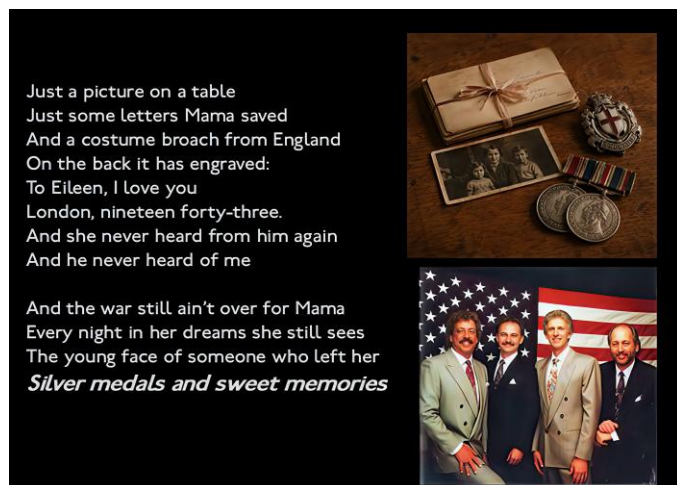


Memorial Day reminds us of the power of teamwork and unity. Military units operate as cohesive teams built on trust, communication, and a shared sense of purpose. Leaders should strive to foster a similar collaborative environment in their organizations. By

promoting open dialogue, active listening, and a sense of belonging, leaders can create high-performing teams capable of achieving remarkable results.

Reflection and Gratitude: Cultivating Purposeful Leadership

Memorial Day encourages reflection and gratitude for the sacrifices made by others. Leaders can embrace these practices to cultivate purposeful leadership. Taking time for introspection allows leaders to clarify their values, define their vision,



and align their actions accordingly. Expressing gratitude for team members' contributions fosters a culture of appreciation and motivates individuals to go above and beyond. By incorporating reflection and gratitude into their leadership approach, leaders inspire a sense of purpose and create an environment conducive to personal and professional growth.

Legacy and Inspiration: Leaving a Lasting Impact

Memorial Day reminds us of the enduring legacy left by those who have served. Leaders, too, have the opportunity to leave a lasting impact on their teams and organizations. Leaders can inspire greatness and create positive change by setting a positive example, nurturing talent, and empowering others. This creates a ripple effect that spreads positivity and encourages growth. Leaders who prioritize mentorship and invest in developing their team members ensure their influence endures long after they move on.

Memorial Day serves as a poignant reminder of the values and virtues that define exceptional leadership. Sacrifice, service, courage, teamwork, reflection, gratitude, and the power to inspire are the lessons we can draw from the brave men and women we honor. As leaders, we must incorporate these principles into our leadership approach to create an environment that fosters collaboration, resilience, and purpose. By learning from the sacrifices of those who came before us, we can honor their memory and strive to be the leaders our teams and organizations deserve.



Scan the QR Code to visit 212-Careers.

