

## HT-18 Command Philosophy



**HT-18 is a team of professionals dedicated to the mission of training and mentoring student naval aviators in order to prepare them for service as Fleet Naval Aviators in the entire spectrum of military operations.**

The following principles of my Commander's guidance are provided to explain my leadership philosophy and how I want each member of the Vigilant Eagles to prioritize their efforts. These three principles are all linked together, and we cannot succeed if we fail at any of them.

**Mission.** Mission accomplishment is our primary goal. This is what guides every decision. HT-18's mission is to train helicopter pilots **AND** mentor them so they are prepared for their Fleet assignments. I expect every instructor to be a humble professional, a patient teacher, and an eager mentor. Instructors will instruct, mentor, and evaluate—in that order. Students will be prepared for every event, flexible and able to react to changes, resilient to recover from bad circumstances, and train with the attitude they might be in combat as soon as they leave NAS Whiting Field and their FRS.

**People.** Mission accomplishment cannot happen without all members of the squadron taken care of and pulling their weight. People make this business happen. If you are in a managerial role, know your people. Be intrusive and ask questions. If you are in a peer leadership role, I charge you to say something if you see a squadron member acting out of the normal. I need everyone functioning at 100% to ensure safe mission accomplishment.

**Self.** If each individual squadron members does not take care of themselves, they will be unable to execute their jobs at 100%. After accomplishing the mission and taking care of our people, then it is time to take care of ourselves. I expect each member of this squadron to maintain their own "work-life balance." Use your leave, take time to attend family events, maintain a solid PT schedule—do not become all consumed by your job! There are times when the squadron has to sprint, but I will decide that as the CO and clearly lay out those parameters—but we cannot do that if each person is already burned out and unable to contribute any more to the squadron's mission!

If we execute the "Mission-People-Self" mantra properly, each individual is prepared and ready to do their job, leaders are managing their people properly and able to identify any human factors, and ultimately the squadron is able to meet mission and train the next generation of Naval Aviators, who are resilient and ready to accomplish any mission assigned!

**LtCol Daniel W Caroffino, USMC  
Commanding Officer, HT-18**