



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Get on the Bus!

I want to thank all of you for the warm welcome you have extended me as I begin my tour as the agency's director. I look forward to meeting each of you as I visit each of our operating locations, centers, offices and divisions.

I know that DCMA had already undergone significant changes in management philosophy and organization under both Maj. Gen. Darryl Scott and Keith Ernst. You have embraced performance-based management, successfully implemented the National Security Personnel System and are now boarding the Lean/Six Sigma train. There's one more concept I would like us to try on for size. I would like to see us take the agency from good to great.

Jim Collins, the author of *Built to Last*, has written a book entitled *Good to Great*. In his first book, Collins wrote a management study of how great companies triumphed over time and how long-term sustained performance could be engineered into the DNA of an enterprise from the very beginning. In his follow-up book, Collins answers the question, "What about

the company that is not born with great DNA?" Is it possible for good companies, mediocre companies, even bad companies to achieve enduring greatness?

Collins and his research team identified a set of companies that became great and sustained that greatness over at least 15 years. He then set about trying to determine what it was about 28 such companies that made the leap to greatness and were able to sustain it for a long period.

To put it succinctly, Collins determined that there were five findings common to all of the "great" companies:

- "Level 5 Leaders" — leaders who channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company. It's not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or self interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious — but their ambition is first for the institution, not themselves.
- "The Hedgehog Concept" — transcending the "curse of competence."
- "A Culture of Discipline" — combining a culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship can produce great results.

- Technology Accelerators — good-to-great companies think differently about the role of technology.
- "The Flywheel and the Doom Loop" — those who launch radical change programs and wrenching restructurings usually fail to make the leap to greatness.

So, what does all this mean to you?

I think Collins has given us a road map that can take DCMA to greatness. My first challenge is to build what Collins calls "Level 5 leaders." Collins discovered that rather than have high-profile leaders with big personalities who make headlines and become celebrities, the companies that became great had quiet, self-effacing, reserved, even shy leaders with a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will. The great companies had leaders more like Abraham Lincoln or Socrates than Patton or Caesar.

Collins also found that when leaders took over organizations, rather than begin by setting a new vision and strategy, leaders who took their companies to greatness first got the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus and the right people in the right seats — and then they figured out

where to drive it. The old adage “people are your most important asset” isn’t exactly true. The right people are.

Therefore, I see my first challenge as cultivating Level 5 leadership in DCMA. I believe that potential Level 5 leaders exist all around us, if we just know what to look for and that many people have the

potential to evolve into Level 5.

We will be talking more about Level 5 leadership and Collins’ other principles in the months ahead. It is my goal to take DCMA from good to great.

If you’re with me, there is a seat for you on the bus!

Warmly,



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