

# Professional Reading Program

Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program



## *Hal Moore on Leadership* by Harold G. Moore and Mike Guardia

### Why Read *Hal Moore on Leadership*?

*“Leadership is a highly personal, individual matter. Each leader must establish his own approach based on an internal compass using a method geared toward his personality, his capabilities but always oriented towards accomplishing the mission while knowing and taking care of his men.”*

*“Leaders at all levels must know their stuff, be dead honest, have unquestioned personal integrity, set the example, and treat their people ‘fair and square.’”*

*“Most importantly, a leader proves himself by demonstrating his concern for and relationship with the people under him. The old adage: ‘Take care of your people and they will take care of you.’”*

*Hal Moore on Leadership* is an excellent book for leaders at all levels, and contains ideas and concepts learned from experience. Lieutenant General Hal Moore was a highly respected leader who served for many years in the U.S. Army, before, during, and after Vietnam, in various roles from leading troops in combat to overseeing training for a large portion of the Army. The leadership lessons he learned during his service are applicable to any leadership environment, and many of them are especially useful for fireline leaders.

There are a few videos on the author’s leadership principles available online. Find some of them at the links below, or by using an internet search engine.

- **Hal Moore's Lessons in Leadership (5 minutes):**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57CLvPAPbJ4>

For more leadership ideas and to dig deeper, check out the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP) blog, Facebook page, Professional Reading Program, and more at the links below:

**Blog:** <http://wildlandfireleadership.blogspot.com/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/WFLDP>

**Professional Reading Program:** <https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp/toolbox/prp>

**Main WFLDP page:** <https://www.fireleadership.gov>

## *Hal Moore on Leadership Discussion Questions*

### **Chapter One: The Four Basic Principles of Leadership**

What do you think of the four basic principles of leadership? How do they compare with the WFLDP's values and principles? (found at <https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp>) What are your personal leadership principles?

### **Chapter Two: Call of Duty**

How do you feel about the ideas in this chapter? Do you agree or disagree with any of them? What do you think about his recommendation for leading yourself and being a lifelong learner? How can you apply the ideas in this chapter in your situation? Have you seen these kinds of toxic leaders in your organization? How can you avoid being a toxic leader?

### **Chapter Three: Learning the Ropes**

What do you think about Moore's philosophy of giving respect until given a reason to lose it? How does that compare to attitudes about respect in the wildland fire service? In your organization? On your team? Why might this idea be important for a leader? How can you push authority down the chain while still keeping responsibility? Why might you want to do that?

### **Chapter Four: Trial by Fire**

Take a pair of questions directly from the chapter, what are you doing that you shouldn't be doing? What are you *not* doing that you should be? Why is it important to ask questions like this as a leader? What kind of environment are you encouraging in your team, crew, module, or organization with your attitudes and actions? Is there room for improvement?

### **Chapter Five: Vietnam**

Have you ever used something like the "rule of doubts" to evaluate decisions, and who should make them? As a fire leader at any level, why is it important to make decisions at the right level? How can you plan for the two kinds of "what ifs" described in this chapter? How does Moore's take on the role of judgement in leadership apply in the wildland fire service?

### **Chapter Six: The Guiding Hand**

What do you think about the "five activities that must be kept in balance" as a leader? Can you think of anything else that's not on that list that needs to be kept in balance? Did anything on the list surprise you? How important is it for a leader to not overreact, or overreact to an overreaction? What kinds of negative effects have you seen, or could you see, when a leader overreacts or overreacts to an overreaction? What does that do to your team, crew, module, or organizational dynamics? What can you do to keep from overreacting in your leadership role?