

Leadership lessons from d-day: a book review

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



For this book review, I chose *Victory Principles: Leadership Lessons from D-Day* by Leonard Kloeber, Jr., a retired army officer.

This book is not only a mere history book but it also provides a lesson on leadership principles based on what was applied by the Allied leaders during those crucial moments that characterized D-Day (also known as Operation Overlord) from the planning stage to the actual execution of the operation which was a success and eventually led to the liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation.

The first part is more of a historical narrative. The Kloeber narrates the important events that were considered the defining moments of D-Day which are organized into chapters. The prelude is included to set the tone and help put the reader on the proper perspective in approaching the book and what it is all about.

Each chapter mentioned important leaders during the operation, not just for trivia but describing what they did that made success possible. These are leaders who were actually there with the men as they saw action.

Such senior leaders were Brigadier General Norman Cota, assistant division commander of the 29th Infantry Division which landed on Omaha Beach and received the brunt of the fighting. It also featured junior leaders such as Lieutenant Richard Winters, of Easy Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne who led the company to neutralize an enemy gun emplacement menacing the beaches (Kloeber, Jr., 2009, pp. 61-62, 83). What these leaders had in common was they made crucial decisions under fire but since

they were in the thick of the action, they had a grasp of the situation and came up with crucial decisions that led to victory.

Part Two provides an analysis as Kloeber spelled out what he called “ Victory Principles” which were applied by the above-mentioned leaders which were key to the success of D-Day. One example of these principles was resilience which was demonstrated by Generals Cota and Roosevelt when their men were under fire.

They did not panic and maintained their composure which was the glue that kept the men together even though they were taking casualties (Kloeber, Jr, 2009, pp. 208-209).

Another principle discussed was making timely decisions as applied by Lieutenant Winters when he and his men carried out their mission which was successful (Kloeber, Jr, 2009, p. 186). It can be seen that the author did a great job organizing his ideas by telling the story first and discussing the relevant principles. He was able to establish a connection between the two parts.

Part Three is what military leaders call the “ Staff Ride” where military students would tour the battlefield to get a feel of what has happened though not necessarily during actual combat as part of applying the lessons learned in the classroom.

The purpose here is to immerse them “ spiritually” and by making them picture themselves being there and it is proven to be an effective method when understanding the principles. An appendix is added which provides supplemental details on D-Day.

Overall, Kloeber's book is not only for history students but also those who wish to be enlightened on leadership principles and the author has done a good job identifying them and showing how they were applied as well as mentioning their applicability in any kind of situation which need not be about combat.

Reference

Kloeber Jr., L. (2009). *Victory Principles: Leadership Lessons from D-Day*. Garden City, New York: Morgan James Publishing, LLC.

.