



Lt. Gen. Paul Van Riper

Expert on 21st Century Leadership and Decorated Marine Corps General

TOPIC: Leadership and Management

SUBTOPICS: Security; Inspiration

BIG IDEAS:

How To Be In Command and Out Of Control

This widely respected warfare scholar repurposes lessons learned in combat to help executives improve leadership and decision-making capabilities amidst chaos and uncertainty.

BIOGRAPHY

Paul Van Riper served more than 41 years in the United States Marine Corps, including wartime service in Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm. One of the keenest minds on the future of warfare and military strategy, he continues to teach at the National Defense University, the Marine Corps University, and other military education institutions. He also consults part-time for the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) and to a variety of private companies and organizations.

In 2002, Lt. Gen. Van Riper was chosen to lead Team Red, the "enemy forces" in Millennium Challenge 02, a \$250 million war game designed by the DOD's Joint Forces Command to test the adaptability and resiliency of the new military. After only four days into the simulated three-week battle, he had sunk a large part of the US naval forces, using decidedly low-tech and unconventional maneuvers and tactics. For example, his forces evaded eavesdropping by sending messages through motorcycle couriers, and he launched a preemptive attack using air-, land- and sea-launched Cruise missiles. He stepped aside from the exercise when the American forces decided to "re-float" the fleet and restart the game. He continues to advocate a better understanding of the nature of warfare, and cautions against relying too heavily on unproven technologies or concepts.

Lt. Gen. Van Riper carries many of these learnings into his speaking and advisory work in the corporate world. Understanding your opponent, preparing for conflict, making contingency plans, and responding to the chaotic, messy, and uncertain outcomes of battle all have direct parallels in business competition.

"The art of war and the science of war are not coequal: it's science in support of the art. While the role of technology is critical, if you lead with technology, you are bound to make mistakes," he says.

Lt. Gen. Van Riper sits on variety of defense and service advisory boards and panels, including the Army Science Board, the Institute for Defense Analyses' Joint Advanced War-Fighting Program Senior Advisory Group, and the National Reconnaissance Office's Operational Support Office Gold Team. His decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star Medal with Gold Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V", the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, and the Combat Action Ribbon with Gold Star.

Lt. Gen. Van Riper received a B.A. from California University of Pennsylvania. He also is a graduate of the Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School, the U.S. Army's Airborne and Ranger Schools, the Navy's College of Command and Staff, and the Army War College.