

2 Phrases I Learned From a Senior CIA Officer That Changed My Leadership Style

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Since the days of the first James Bond movie, the life-and-death game of international espionage will always be exciting. Covert operations in high-risk environments conducted by intelligence services certainly make a fantastic theme for novels, movies, and TV shows. But the reality of intelligence work is far from what is portrayed in the movies. It is a deliberate and methodical process-driven profession where the entire team must be precise and perfectly coordinated. The slightest error could compromise the mission and run the risk of losing lives.

That said, it is not surprising that the leadership skills of intelligence professionals are constantly being redefined and studied. Whether you are a business owner or an aspiring entrepreneur, you can learn some key lessons from these professionals that will make you a smarter leader. I had the opportunity to interview one of these leaders, and this is what I learned.

Marc Polymeropoulos is one of the CIA's most decorated senior intelligence professionals – he even wrote a book about his time there. Marc spent 26 years working in the world's most dangerous places and leading covert operations. His tried-and-true leadership techniques also have broad applications beyond the world of the CIA. Two of his approaches stuck with me, not only for their operational utility but also for the catchy nicknames: respecting the process monkey and honoring the glue

guy.

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