

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved*  
*OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 27-04-2015		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> Master of Military Studies Research Paper		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b> February 1885 - April 2015	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> Nimitz Leadership: The Future of Today's Navy				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b> N/a	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Newman, Shawn T., Lieutenant Commander, USN				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b> N/A	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> USMC Command and Staff College Marine Corps University 2076 South Street Quantico, VA 22134-5068				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b> N/A	
<b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b> N/A	
				<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b> N/A	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> N/A					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b> Admiral Nimitz is widely recognized by military historians as one of the key leaders during the American campaigns of World War II; however, his leadership is more than just something to be acknowledged, it can serve as a model for today's young leaders. Furthermore, Admiral Nimitz's leadership qualities can be learned through serving a tour onboard a modern U.S. Navy submarine.					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Leadership, Nimitz, Submarine, World War II, Naval Career, Future, Navy, Command					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>			<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UU	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 70	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b> Marine Corps University/Command a
<b>a. REPORT</b> Unclass	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> Unclass	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> Unclass			<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)</b> (703) 784-3330 (Admin Office)

United States Marine Corps  
Command and Staff College  
Marine Corps University  
2076 South Street  
Marine Corps Combat Development Command  
Quantico, Virginia 22134-5068

MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

---

---

**TITLE:**

*Nimitz Leadership: The Future of Today's Navy*

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**AUTHOR:**

LCDR Shawn T. Newman, USN

AY 14-15

---

---

Mentor and Oral Defense Committee Member: CHARLES D. MCKENNA, Ph.D.  
Approved: *Charles D. McKenna*  
Date: 27 APRIL 2015

Oral Defense Committee Member: Craig A. Swanson, PhD  
Approved: *CAS*  
Date: 27 April 2015

## Executive Summary

**Title:** *Nimitz Leadership: The Future of Today's Navy*

**Author:** Lieutenant Commander Shawn T. Newman, United States Navy

**Thesis:** Admiral Nimitz is widely recognized by military historians as one of the key leaders during the American campaigns of World War II; however, his leadership is more than just something to be acknowledged, it can serve as a model for today's young leaders. Furthermore, Admiral Nimitz's leadership qualities can be learned through serving a tour onboard a modern U.S. Navy submarine.

**Discussion:** Admiral Nimitz did not come from an affluent family, he did not have a special seat reserved for him at the United States Naval Academy, nor did he find a secret code by which to live. Instead, Admiral Nimitz's hard work, perseverance, and tremendous interpersonal skills enabled him to be successful. In this model future Naval leaders may find a path to success and accomplishment as a Naval Officer. While not every aspect of Nimitz's career can be emulated today, it is important to note that Admiral Nimitz took command of his first surface ship roughly two years following his graduation from the Naval Academy and subsequently took command of his first submarine, *USS Plunger (SS-2)*, four years after graduation. Today, the opportunity to command a submarine as early in one's career as Nimitz had does not exist. The earliest command opportunities are for Surface Warfare Officers who have the option to apply for the command of a Patrol Coastal (PC) ship or Mine Countermeasures (MCM) ship at about nine years of commissioned service. By contrast, providing a young lieutenant the command of a U.S. Navy nuclear submarine may not be the most favorable prospect for U.S.-foreign relations or the future of the program; there are too many expectations to be met and the standards for error are extremely low. The experience of a more senior officer is required. However, Admiral Nimitz's work ethic can be developed through a submarine tour; a job that is known for being difficult, requiring long-hours, and demanding the utmost out of every individual who serves.

**Conclusion:** Every year the Navy spends a great many man-hours recruiting those willing to volunteer for the submarine force. Many fear the submarine program for its demanding training pipeline and the secrecy in which it is shrouded. The Navy knows how many new volunteers it must find each year in order to account for attrition, manning, career progression, and submarine production. However, if all newly commissioned Ensigns were required to serve at least one tour aboard a submarine prior to proceeding to another community, the focus of recruitment could be significantly changed. Furthermore, the same qualities of becoming system experts could be developed in all those who completed their tour, even if they chose not to continue in the program. Admiral Nimitz embodied all these same qualities, namely hard work, expertise, and leadership even when submarine service was not his desire; something the world benefited from greatly during the Second World War.

## DISCLAIMER

THE OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF EITHER THE MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY. REFERENCES TO THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

QUOTATION FROM, ABSTRACTION FROM, OR REPRODUCTION OF ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS DOCUMENT IS PERMITTED PROVIDED PROPER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS MADE.

*Illustrations*

Page

Figure 1. Submarine Officer Career TACAID .....18

*Table of Contents*

	Page
DISCLAIMER .....	i
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	ii
PREFACE .....	vi
INTRODUCTION .....	1
EARLY LIFE.....	1
ACADEMIC PURSUIT.....	2
NAVAL CAREER.....	5
LEADERSHIP BACKGROUND.....	7
LEADERSHIP IN WORLD WAR II .....	10
PRESENT DAY .....	17
CONCLUSION.....	20
ENDNOTES .....	21
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	24

## *Preface*

This project started as an interest piece, reflecting upon Admiral Nimitz's leadership and how he was a recognized authority on submarines in the early 1940s, partly why he was selected as one of the five men to earn the rank of Fleet Admiral, even over some more senior officers. The research was initially focused on finding a turning point in his career that made him break out of the pack; however, no such point truly exists. There are several possible times in Admiral Nimitz's career that could be selected and analyzed for their follow-on significance; conversely, no one transition in particular truly led to a conclusion for me as "The Point" Nimitz became significant. For me, the one underlying factor that seemed to lead to the end result was Admiral Nimitz's work ethic; it was beyond reproach.

Therefore, the project idea sort of grew. As I analyzed Admiral Nimitz's career and his leadership style, there were some contrasts and some similarities with today's Navy. For example, Admiral Nimitz received command of his first ship within only a couple of years following his graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy. While the early leadership experience gained by Nimitz would benefit today's Ensign, it would require a significant amount of risk on the part of the U.S. Navy; risk that the Navy will probably not want to absorb. Admiral Nimitz was also remembered for his interpersonal skills, rarely forgetting a name or birthday, always having a story or anecdote to share, and a warm presence and a smile that made others want to be around him. These are qualities any future leader would potentially like to have and is something the Navy does work to teach its leaders through periodic leadership courses. Yet, each person is going to embody his or her own individual set of interpersonal skills. Of course

they are likely to develop some new ones here and there along the way. But in the end, each person is going to be him or herself with his or her own style when the stress accumulates.

Finally, this left me with Admiral Nimitz's work ethic, probably the single most identifiable aspect of the great man which can be emulated by anyone willing to accept the challenge. This led me to conclude that, based on my limited experiences, all officers should serve one tour on a submarine, as it is the most challenging tour in the Navy, both mentally and organizationally. While I understand this is not a very viable or desirable prospect for most, I think the time could benefit the Navy greatly. If every Ensign completed initial submarine training and finished a submarine sea duty rotation prior to continuing on to a follow-on community, all could potentially develop the qualities of becoming a system expert and developing a Nimitz-like work ethic. This change in Naval career progression could eliminate the recruiting efforts that combat a shortage of submarine division officers, produce more well-rounded leaders for other communities, and create a common ground for all Naval officers, forming a bond among the various communities within the U.S. Navy.

## **Introduction:**

Admiral Nimitz is widely recognized by military historians as one of the key leaders during the American campaigns of World War II; however, his leadership is more than just something to be acknowledged, it can serve as a model for today's young leaders. Admiral Nimitz did not come from an affluent family, he did not have a special seat reserved for him at the United States Naval Academy, nor did he find a secret code by which to live. Instead, it was Admiral Nimitz's hard work, perseverance, and tremendous interpersonal skills that enabled him to be successful. It is in this model that future Naval leaders may find a path to achievement and accomplishment as a Naval Officer.

## **Early Life:**

As a boy from the small town of Fredericksburg, Texas, Admiral Nimitz's childhood was comparable to most any other during the turn of the twentieth century. He occasionally played with the neighboring children but was primarily assigned chores at home like any other young boy. Unfortunately, little Chester Nimitz did not have the luxury of being raised by both his mother and father for his father died during Anna Nimitz's pregnancy. However, his paternal grandfather, the well-known owner of a ship-shaped hotel and grandiose storyteller, Charles H. Nimitz, took a liking to young Chester and raised him as one of his own. Chester Nimitz looked up to his grandfather for wisdom and advice, "[so] impressed was Chester with his grandfather's wisdom that he did not venture to protest when the old man handed him a small derby hat to wear on his first day at school, though he was barefooted and wearing only a pair of jeans and a shirt."<sup>1</sup> Never mind the odd nature of such a hat, with common clothes, but the combination led Chester through an ordeal of fighting throughout the day to keep the hat only to return home to

the Nimitz family hotel with torn clothes, black eyes, and a destroyed derby.<sup>2</sup> Chester never did understand why his grandfather set him up for such torment but it shows the faith he had in the elder Nimitz's guidance, even when it was ill suited.

As Chester grew up, he did eventually gain a stepfather in his Uncle William Nimitz, known as Uncle Willie, and moved to the neighboring town of Kerrville, Texas; throughout his younger years, he had a normal childhood, making friends in both towns. He would continue to frequent the Nimitz hotel during the holidays. Chester loved swimming, running, fishing, hunting, and enjoyed family camping trips. However, life was not always fun and games; beginning at the age of eight, Chester worked as a delivery boy for the local meat market and worked at the family hotel throughout most of his young life. Chester did not necessarily enjoy these tasks but due to a relatively meager and humble family prospect, he did not expect to go on to college because of the expense, something his family could not afford.

### **Academic Pursuit:**

Even though Chester was fortunate to meet and experience travelers from all over the country, it was in the summer of 1900 that he had found an opportunity to broaden his outlook. During this summer, two young Army Second Lieutenants who recently graduated from West Point stopped at the family hotel in Kerrville while enroute to join their unit. It was not the fact that the two were Army officers since he had encountered numbers of them before while growing up. It was that he could relate to these two young officers. What fascinated Chester "was that, with all their fine bearing and polish and their impending responsibilities in the Army, they were only a little older than himself. They had been plucked but recently from humdrum

situations like his own and had been educated and launched on a career of travel and high adventure, all at no cost to their families.”<sup>3</sup>

Knowing that gaining an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point required hard work and would encounter stiff competition, young Nimitz embraced the challenge as, at last, a window of opportunity had finally opened for him. Excited and eager with anticipation, he applied to his congressman, Mr. James Slaydon, to take the West Point entrance examination. Unfortunately, Congressman Slaydon denied young Nimitz’s application as all of his available nominations had been filled. Furthermore, Mr. Slaydon did not expect to have any available in the future for Chester, “with numerous forts in his district, army families were waiting in line to get their sons into West Point.”<sup>4</sup> Deflated that his newfound dream for a greater opportunity was being denied, young Nimitz was given an alternative, for Congressman Slaydon had an opening to the United States Naval Academy. Despite his disappointment, Chester swallowed his pride and accepted the position, determined to seize any opportunity for an education.

Given his newfound path to a life outside of small towns in central Texas, young Nimitz adjusted his daily routine to account for the additional time required to study. “To prepare for the entrance examinations, [Chester] advanced his rising time to 3:00 a.m. and studied until 5:30. At that hour began his first daily stint as the hotel’s janitor and general handyman – lighting fires, attending stoves, and calling early risers. After a quick breakfast, off he went to school.”<sup>5</sup> Chester’s stepfather, Uncle Willie, knowing the younger Nimitz would miss his final year of high school, took great pains to fill the gap in Chester’s education as he prepared for his exam. Chester’s tutelage did not stop with the family, “[as] young Nimitz’s hopes and expectations became known in Kerrville, helping him to achieve them became something of a community

project. A devoted teacher, Susan Moore, tutored Chester in algebra, geometry, history, geography, and grammar. John Graves Toland, principal of Tivy High School, found time to coach him in mathematics.”<sup>6</sup> Not surprisingly, Chester performed extremely well, winning out over all competitors who attended the local Naval Academy entrance exam and subsequently did quite well in the national entrance exams two months later. On 7 September 1901, Chester W. Nimitz had uprooted himself from the limitations of central Texas, renewed his allegiance to the United States of America, and was sworn in as a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy, launching himself into what would become an honorable career of national recognition.

Midshipman Nimitz’s time at the Naval Academy was once again like any other. Chester was always dedicated to make the most of this opportunity and continued his usual regimen of rising early to study prior to starting the normal day, followed by exercise and studying in the evenings. Chester’s roommate, Albert Church, also adopted his habit and early in their term at the Naval Academy, they both were at the academic forefront of the class. Nearing the end of this first semester, classmates of Nimitz and Church devised a plan to put their routine to the added value of the class, “[s]ome of their classmates, possibly on the advice of the faculty, then came forward with the requests that Nimitz and Church separate and take as roommates [midshipmen] who were ‘less academically efficient.’ Somewhat reluctantly they agreed, Chester selecting John Sumpter, of Kentucky. Nimitz and Church goaded their new ‘roomies’ into adopting their own early-morning study habits and thus succeeded in pulling them over the passing line for the rest of the academic year.”<sup>7</sup> Never shy of hard work, Nimitz continued his academic rigor throughout his time at the academy. While occasionally getting into minor amounts of trouble for typical young adult misdeeds, he learned quickly that discretion was an

important virtue, one that he carried with him throughout his career. Of the 114 who graduated in the Naval Academy class of 1905, Chester finished at number seven.<sup>8</sup>

### **Naval Career:**

Upon graduation, Nimitz reported to the *USS Ohio (BB-12)*, a battleship operating out of the Far East, for duty and was quickly identified for his exceptional work ethic. However, it was not until he became complacent in his duties that he gained any amount of formal recognition. As an Ensign in command of the destroyer *USS Decatur (DD-5)* for a little over a year in the Philippines, Nimitz failed to take note of the tidal shifts on one day in particular. Furthermore, on this same day, while pulling into the harbor, he estimated his position rather than taking bearings, as he should. Consequently, he ran his ship aground. Later the next day, after being pulled from the mud bank on which his ship rested, Ensign Nimitz was subsequently relieved of his command. Following the court martial for grounding, Ensign Nimitz was found guilty of neglect of duty, given a public reprimand, issued a letter for the offense that was placed into his record, and returned to the United States for assignment in submarines.<sup>9</sup> While some may speculate that Nimitz was exiled to serve in submarines as a result of his transgressions in the Philippines, the answer is not clear; however, it was a sentence he quickly embraced and a grounding he overcame with hard work over time.

The shift to the submarine service was not the career blessing that Nimitz had hoped for; however, he accepted the change and once again committed himself to his work. “Nimitz swallowed his disappointment and threw himself wholeheartedly into his new assignment, thereby learning the important lesson that most projects, however unprepossessing, repay devotion and hard work with interesting and instructive experiences.”<sup>10</sup> After successfully

commanding three submarines, *USS Plunger (SS-2)*, *USS Snapper (SS-16)*, and *USS Narwhal (SS-17)*, Lieutenant Nimitz became an advocate for changes in submarine construction and design as he began to campaign for a shift from gasoline engines to those of diesel due to the noxious fumes and propensity for gasoline engines to explode. In the pursuit of his case to Navy leadership and naval architects, he became the recognized authority on diesels. As a result of his lobbying, the Navy sought to determine if the prospect was viable and decided to send Chester to Hamburg, Germany for the summer of 1913 to study diesel engines, particularly the working drawings, at the Blohm and Voss Shipbuilding Company. Upon his return to the States, “Lieutenant Nimitz was given a desk in a small office [...] in the Machinery Division of the New York Navy Yard in Brooklyn. His task here was to supervise the construction and installation of two 2,600-horsepower diesel engines in the new oiler [*USS Maumee (AO-2)*].”<sup>11</sup> The project was a tremendous success and Chester became universally recognized by the Navy, American diesel engine builders, and diesel engine dealers as the Navy’s most skilled diesel expert. It was not simply the fact that Nimitz knew a lot about diesel engines. It was his work ethic and his ability to communicate their design, manufacture, assembly, operation, and uses which set him apart and put him in high demand.

The recognition that young Lieutenant Nimitz earned commanding submarines and developing diesel engines followed him through his various other commands and throughout his career. Chester Nimitz is remembered as a hard worker and a thorough planner; known for his ability to relate to every individual under his charge and to support the Navy’s mission, he was sought after to oversee command of various ships, projects, and processes; the grounding of *USS Decatur* long forgotten. Admiral Nimitz was specifically chosen to run the Navy’s Bureau of Navigation (now known as the Bureau of Naval Personnel) so he could reorganize and

streamline the Navy's training programs in order to reduce costs and adjust for the growing two-ocean Navy. As the Navy expanded, Admiral Nimitz founded the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program, oversaw the Naval Academy, and improved Officer Candidate Schools and boot camps. He was in charge of all Naval training facilities, a key component for a growing Navy. It was from this assignment that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt first asked for Nimitz to take charge of the Pacific fleet, "Nimitz, despite his lack of seniority, had some qualifications that made him a suitable relief for [Admiral James O. Richardson]. He had shown himself a gifted administrator and was noted for making do with next to nothing."<sup>12</sup> Admiral Nimitz initially declined an earlier appointment by President Roosevelt as he believed there were plenty of qualified senior officers available for the assignment. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Admiral Nimitz could not decline a second selection by President Roosevelt.

### **Leadership Background:**

Admiral Nimitz is most recognized for his strategic leadership as Commander of the Pacific Ocean Areas and of the Pacific Fleet during World War II. During this period, Admiral Nimitz was equivalent to a modern day Geographic Combatant Commander with almost an equally short chain of command above him. Admiral Nimitz worked directly for Commander, U.S. Fleet, Admiral Ernest J. King (who was dual hatted as Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and as the U.S. Atlantic Fleet commander); next in line was the Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William D. Leahy; and finally, President Franklin D. Roosevelt. However, a man working at this level did not wake up one morning in 1906, the year Nimitz took his first command, and suddenly become a great leader. His leadership developed over a career of experience.

Admiral Nimitz's first command was of the gunboat, *USS Panay*, a small vessel purchased from the Spanish in 1899, which he used to patrol the waters around Mindanao, Philippines, pulling into several small ports to show the flag. Following his tour on *Panay*, and at twenty-two years old, he was given command of the destroyer *USS Decatur (DD-5)*. This was the first experience that was significant in the development of Ensign Nimitz's leadership abilities. "Twenty-two-year-old ensigns are not now and were not then normally given command of destroyers, even in times of grave emergency. Among Nimitz's contemporaries destined for the highest ranks, Spruance had his first destroyer command at the age of 26; Halsey, at the age of 30; King, at 36."<sup>13</sup> While Ensign Nimitz ultimately ran the *Decatur* aground, a career ending move by today's standard, his potential was recognized as he would later go on to command three submarines, become the recognized expert on diesel engines, and be the Navy's foremost undersea warfare tactician. Furthermore, in addition to several Executive Officer and senior Department Head assignments, Admiral Nimitz would go on to command the cruiser *USS Chicago (CL-14)* (while simultaneously in command of Submarine Division 14), Submarine Division 20, the destroyer tender *USS Rigel (AD-13)*, the cruiser *USS Augusta (CL-31)* where he deployed to the Far East. *USS Augusta* later became the flagship for the Asiatic fleet in 1933. Later, Nimitz had command of Battle Ship Division 1, his final seagoing command.

Throughout his career, Admiral Nimitz excelled in command at the operational level, demonstrating all the leadership capabilities required to operate there; but, he was more than just a leader, he was an innovator and tactical practitioner. For example, while he was the Chief Engineer and Executive Officer aboard the oil tanker he previously oversaw construction of, *USS Maumee (AO-2)*, in 1917, Admiral Nimitz co-invented and introduced the concept of underway

refueling, saving considerable time for ships in-transit across the Atlantic Ocean during World War I; a concept still used today that is known as Underway Replenishment (UNREP). Admiral Nimitz would later say what his thoughts were on the effectiveness of a replenishment at sea, ““This was the area where *Maumee* began the fueling-at-sea operations that gave our Navy the experience that was to prove invaluable in supplying mobile logistic support to our great fleets that crossed the Pacific in World War II and utterly destroyed the Japanese Navy.””<sup>14</sup>

Admiral Nimitz’s ability to keep an open mind and vision for the future enabled him to find opportunities to introduce other great ideas he learned from colleagues. For example, Admiral Nimitz is credited with implementing the circular formation for underway battle flotillas, an idea that came from Naval War College classmate Commander Roscoe C. MacFall; and, the implementation of the aircraft carrier as the Navy’s capital ship, replacing the dreadnaught battleship, an idea professed by Naval War College President Rear Admiral William S. Sims. While these concepts were not solely Nimitz’s innovations, he had the energy, perception, and determination both to recognize opportunities and convince any opposition to at least give them a chance. As can be seen, Admiral Nimitz did not randomly stumble into his job as Commander of the Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas; he earned it through a career of unparalleled excellence; his leadership was developed over a lifetime of education, experience, and action. So recognized was he that, after the 7 December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, HI by the Japanese Navy, President Roosevelt told Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, ““Tell Nimitz to get the hell out to Pearl and stay there till the war is won.””<sup>15</sup> This was an order that Admiral Nimitz executed to the letter. So key was Nimitz’s appointment as the Commander in the Pacific that historian Rear Admiral Samuel Eliot Morison in his writing of the fifteen-volume history of naval operations in World War II had the following to say about Admiral Nimitz’s selection,

No more fortunate appointment to this vital command could have been made. He restored confidence to the defeated fleet. He had the patience to wait through the lean period of the war, the capacity to organize both a fleet and a vast theater, the tact to deal with sister services and Allied commands, the leadership to weld his own subordinates into a great fighting team, the courage to take necessary risks, and the wisdom to select, from a welter of intelligence and opinion, the strategy that defeated Japan.<sup>16</sup>

## **Leadership in World War II:**

It was in command of the Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas that Admiral Nimitz brought all of his greatness to bear on the task at hand, defeating the Japanese and winning the war. However, he was somewhat unconventional in his style; this may be in part due to his remarkable interpersonal skills or possibly his ability to recognize greatness in individuals. For example, during planning sessions, Nimitz wanted to hear the opinions of all those around him, subordinates and peers equally; everyone was expected to be called upon and provide his or her view,

At the planning sessions, Admiral Nimitz acted like a chairman of the board, guiding and being guided by others. This does not mean that the war was being run like a town meeting. Nimitz made the final decisions, sometimes despite contrary advice, but first he heard the advice and weighed it carefully. He knew that World War II was far too complex for any one man in any theater of operations to do all the high-level thinking, keeping his own counsel and at last handing down Napoleonic decisions.<sup>17</sup>

Admiral Nimitz would later say, “Some of the best advice I’ve had, comes from junior officers and enlisted men.”<sup>18</sup>

An example of the outcome of one of these meetings comes from the period when Admiral Nimitz and his staff were planning the invasion of the Marshall Islands; Admiral Nimitz assigned Kwajalein Island as the objective. However, Admirals Raymond Spruance, Richmond K. Turner, and General Holland Smith all recommended attacking the islands of Wotje and

Maleolap first. Spruance and Turner were particularly adamant and determined, staying after the meeting to plead their case. While Nimitz listened to his men, he finally said:

Sitting behind desks in the United States are able officers who would give their right arms to be out here fighting the war. If you gentlemen can't bring yourselves to carry out my orders, I can arrange an exchange of duty with the stateside officers who can. Make up your minds. You have five minutes. Do you want to do it or not?<sup>19</sup>

Needless to say, both men went on to fight in the very successful Marshall Islands campaign without question.

Nevertheless, perhaps the most recognized example of the effectiveness of Admiral Nimitz's planning system comes from the lead-up to the Battle of Midway. Following the Battle of the Coral Sea, Admiral King and General Douglas MacArthur both thought that the Japanese would attack somewhere in the New Guinea – Solomon Islands area. However, Admiral Nimitz disagreed, relying on his instincts and reading the valuable intelligence while listening to his staff. In order to convince King and MacArthur, Nimitz's staff had an idea: "The clincher grew out of a casual conversation among [Hawaii Intelligence] staffers. The subject was Midway, and one code-breaker mentioned that Midway once had some seawater desalinization problems. Another staffer half-joked that if they had a problem with their equipment and sent a radio message to Pearl, you can bet a Japanese radio intercept station would be telling their world."<sup>20</sup> The Japanese not only detected the false message about Midway's supposedly failed desalinization plant, they transmitted a message to their fleet regarding the issue. Combined with the stack of previously decrypted Japanese messages, this confirmed that Midway would be next, and, with the evidence in his hand, Nimitz convinced Admiral King and General MacArthur of Japan's intentions and was able to adequately prepare for the Battle of Midway, getting much needed supplies to the island.<sup>21</sup>

The Battle of Midway was a crucial turning point in the War in the Pacific. Admiral Yamamoto's forces greatly outnumbered the American fleet in all ship types, especially battleships and aircraft carriers. Furthermore, given the record of Japanese successes, Admiral Yamamoto expected little or no opposition from the Americans. However, Admiral Nimitz, despite being outnumbered, had possession of three things which leveled the playing field. First, he had an air base on Midway. Next, he had RADAR capabilities. Finally, he knew the Japanese objectives. Knowing Japanese intentions was very important. Responding effectively, even decisively to them, was something else again. As commander of an Area of Responsibility (AOR) of sixty-five million square miles, responsibility for three fleets (3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup>) consisting of thousands of ships, and command of forces from all three services (Army, Navy, and Marines), Admiral Nimitz was an expert at organization and problem solving. With all he had to manage, Admiral Nimitz had to delegate much to his subordinates; he did this by empowering them to make key decisions. However, he did expect results for what he entrusted them to do. Admiral Nimitz would provide very explicit orders to his battle force commanders after meticulously planning an operation. He told his commanders what he expected and why; however, once the ships and commanders were underway for a mission, he refused to coach, he left the fight to his commanders without his interference or intervention. To support his leaders, Admiral Nimitz would often add instructions to allow, and help define, the commanders' use of tactical opportunities and risk management. At the Battle of Midway, Admiral Nimitz gave his two dynamically different fleet commanders, Admirals Raymond Spruance and William "Bull" Halsey, the following operational instructions, "to inflict maximum damage on the enemy by employing strong attrition tactics."<sup>22</sup>

Admirals Halsey and Spruance were vastly different in their tactics. Nimitz recognized this, so he used each in ways that capitalized on their strong points during the Battle of Midway. Admiral Halsey was bold, brash, and aggressive in battle; therefore, he was told to concentrate on attacking the Japanese Navy and their air power. Admiral Spruance was calm, calculated, and methodical in battle; therefore, he was given responsibility for taking and holding territory, and providing protection from incursions of the Japanese fleet.<sup>23</sup> In addition to other guidance, Nimitz gave both commanders the following direction for Midway: “In carrying out the task assigned...you will be governed by the principle of calculated risk, which you shall interpret to mean the avoidance of exposure of your forces to attack by superior enemy forces without good prospect on inflicting, as a result of such exposure, greater damage to the enemy.”<sup>24</sup> The combination of specific direction for the mission at hand with considerable latitude in maneuver enabled both commanders to exercise their units to the maximum extent, as they saw fit, to win. Admiral Nimitz leveraged everything he could muster to bring to Midway to defeat the Japanese; however, it wasn't just beating the Japanese that was important. “The victory when it came was not only one of inferior forces over superior but a stunning reversal in the tides of fortune, one of those passages at arms that turn the world around and send history off in a new direction.”<sup>25</sup>

The Battle of Midway was of great strategic importance to ultimate victory in World War II; however, it was not the high point of Nimitz's leadership as he was instrumental in winning the war in the Pacific. Director of Naval History in 1970, Admiral E.M. Eller wrote of Nimitz: “A single man emerges . . . Admiral Chester W. Nimitz as history will record him – the wise, calm tower of strength in adversity and success, the principal architect of the victory in the Pacific in World War II.”<sup>26</sup> Japan is an island nation, heavily dependent on her sea-lines of communication for survival; and, therefore, highly reliant on her Navy. Japan knew this and she

pushed the U.S. into World War II by attempting to eliminate the Navy's Pacific Fleet as a means to ensure Japan's survival. However, Nimitz also understood this, and since the early days of his Naval career planned for war with the Japanese. For example, at the Naval War College, during war games and exercises, Japan was always the adversary and the Pacific was the area of dispute. Nimitz would later go on to say, "the enemy of our games was always – Japan – and the courses were so thorough that after the start of WW II – nothing that happened in the Pacific was strange or unexpected."<sup>27</sup> Admiral Nimitz studied and prepared for a war with Japan for decades prior to his appointment to Commander of the Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas. Nimitz fully understood that a victory over Japan would first require the defeat of the Japanese Navy.<sup>28</sup> Nimitz's strategy in the Pacific was to strike at Japan's sea lines of communication, her bases, and wherever possible, the annihilation of her Navy; thereby, enabling the U.S. Navy to gain command of the sea. Nimitz's strategy, a very Mahanian approach, could only be accomplished by going on the offensive, the overarching principle behind all of Nimitz's plans, directions, orders, and actions during the course of World War II.<sup>29</sup>

Admiral Nimitz also understood that taking and maintaining the offensive required ships to be underway; and ships at sea required supplies. Where other fleets would spend a few weeks at a time at sea, Nimitz required his commanders to be deployed for several months at a time. In order to ensure his commanders could execute his orders, he utilized the technique of underway replenishment he helped pioneer during World War I and stationed two mobile service squadrons into the vast Central Pacific.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, as the war progressed and with it the need to account for the growing complexity and expanse of the Pacific theater, Nimitz sought a resolution to improve shortfalls in his current supply system. Taking a look at the Army's method, Nimitz found a solution to his problem as the Army had a "constant infusion of supply,

and a planning and delivery network as complex as the fighting system itself.”<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, to sustain both planning and fighting the Japanese, Admiral Nimitz directed the combining of two of his fleets into one massive striking force, which would alternate between command from Admiral Halsey and Admiral Spruance. While one was attacking, the other would plan the follow-on campaign.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to his striking force centering on aircraft carriers, Admiral Nimitz sustained the battle against Japan’s sea lines of communication through the employment of submarines. The Pacific Fleet’s submarines sank 1,314 Japanese ships for a total of 5.3 million tons of shipping. The submarine force only accounted for approximately two percent of the Pacific Fleet ships; however, the attacks against the Japanese by submarines accounted for roughly fifty-five percent of Japan’s maritime losses.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to having to battle the Japanese, Admiral Nimitz also had to leverage his tremendous interpersonal skills to balance between two other heavyweights of World War II, Admiral King and General MacArthur, both men of near legendary toughness and difficulty. Yet, Admiral Nimitz managed to effectively work with Admiral King and share an AOR with General MacArthur without major incident. While the three men did not always agree on the course of action or the plan, Nimitz was a highly effective negotiator and consensus builder; “King could not have achieved what Nimitz did and there were virtues in Nimitz that fell outside King’s range of comprehension: humility, diplomacy, accessibility.”<sup>34</sup> When it came to MacArthur, Nimitz was all about trying to compromise; for example, during the planning for the final invasion of Japan, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) determined that MacArthur would command all Army ground and air forces in the Pacific, and Nimitz would command all Naval forces while also maintaining the old command structure. However, this was not agreeable with

MacArthur, who a few days later, proposed directly to Nimitz that he command Army forces immediately to include all island garrisons in the Pacific Ocean Area.<sup>35</sup> While Nimitz had a JCS directive supporting him, he corresponded repeatedly with MacArthur to try and resolve the dispute; however, MacArthur was unyielding in his demand. In the end, MacArthur did not get command of the additional troops that he desired. The point is that this is but one example where Nimitz was always willing to negotiate a compromise, even with difficult individuals or if he had little to gain.

Simultaneously, Admiral Nimitz also knew when not to compromise. He once said, ““We are out to win a war, not please individuals.””<sup>36</sup> During the attack on Okinawa, the Naval forces providing gunfire support were being subject to heavy Japanese attack, including kamikaze assaults. With the Army not moving fast enough to release the ships from their perilous condition, Admiral Nimitz said to the Army commander, General Simon Bolivar Buckner, who was not willing to listen to input regarding ground operations from a Naval officer: ““Yes, but ground though it may be, I’m losing a ship and a half a day. So if this line isn’t moving within five days, we’ll get someone here to move it, so we can all get out from under these stupid air attacks.””<sup>37</sup> General Buckner quickly transferred two Marine divisions to the front line to advance the fight. Furthermore, to prevent future inter-service rivalry from damaging the remainder of the campaign, Admiral Nimitz quickly acted diplomatically by holding a press conference shortly after the disagreement. During this conference, Admiral Nimitz praised the Army and its operations on Okinawa, ending the dispute.<sup>38</sup>

Admiral Nimitz brought nearly every aspect to being a great leader together in one individual. He was technically proficient and tactically sound. He was as skillful and adept at strategic planning as he was to relating to different personalities. Historian Charles E. Pfannes

describes the whole of leadership that Admiral Nimitz embodied eloquently in this one paragraph,

This modest quiet compassionate man was by far one of America's greatest military leaders. His personality bred confidence, which caused America's leadership to turn to him in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor. He promptly picked up the pieces and brought his nation through to victory. Nimitz successfully conducted a war in the world's largest theater as he moved ships of fantastic might and handled subordinates who were frequently difficult to handle. Chester W. Nimitz, the blond-headed boy from Texas, served his country well and left America with a legacy of which it is proud.<sup>39</sup>


Combined with his unbelievable work ethic, Admiral Nimitz serves as a valuable role-model for any present or future Naval leader.

### **Present Day:**


In the present day, the Navy is focusing more on downsizing than on leader development due to times of fiscal austerity. Therefore, it is increasingly necessary to obtain quality over quantity, which is especially true within its officer corps. Furthermore, finding quality junior officers to volunteer for submarine service is a challenge requiring significant work on the part of hundreds of individuals during the officer accession process. Many great junior officers are often dissuaded by its secrecy; they fear the submarine program for its unknowns and rigorous training programs. Fleet Admiral Nimitz is well recognized for his leadership abilities and his interpersonal skills that can serve as a role model for Naval Officers today and in the future. Admiral Nimitz spent a considerable amount of his career in command of submarines and by the outbreak of World War II he was a recognized authority on the subject. With submarine wardroom manning an issue in the present day Navy and with strong leadership found among favorites like Nimitz, is it possible to emulate the qualities embodied by the Admiral? Might it not be beneficial to require all newly commissioned unrestricted-line Ensigns to serve a tour on-

board a submarine prior to shifting to a follow-on community, somewhat emulating the path of Admiral Nimitz. Might that not enable the Navy to develop officers of Admiral Nimitz’s qualities? This change in Naval career progression could eliminate the shortage of submarine division officers, produce more well-rounded leaders for other communities, and create a common ground for all Naval officers, forming a bond among the various communities with the U.S. Navy.

The submarine career path of today’s Navy is radically different from what it was in the early twentieth century when Admiral Nimitz served in the submarine force. Submarine officers today can serve an entire career in the program, rotating between sea and shore duty their entire career; the image below shows a typical career outline with its various milestones (Figure 1):



## SUBMARINE OFFICER CAREER PATH & MILESTONES



Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioning Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Tour	Cumm	Milestone	Goal	Actual
<b>Division Officer</b> (32-36 mo, 12 mo after PNEO)	1.5 YCS	Reporting Date		
		Promotion to O-2 (Comm Date +2 yrs)		
		Promotion to O-3 (Comm Date +4 yrs, 1 <sup>st</sup> day of next month)		
		First COPAY Bonus Opportunity: Minimum Service Obligation minus 1 year		
Professional Development Milestones: <input type="checkbox"/> Submarine Qualified <input type="checkbox"/> Engineer Qualified				
<b>Post JO Shore</b> (24 mo)	4-5 YCS	1 <sup>st</sup> DH Screen at 5 YCS (Year Group + 5)		
		2 <sup>nd</sup> DH Screen at 6 YCS (Year Group + 6)		
Professional Development Milestones: <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Degree				
<b>SOAC</b> (6 mo)	6-7 YCS	SOAC Goal: Jul 7 YCS		
		SOAC Promotion Gate: Jul 7 YCS (Ensure DH FITREP before In Zone for O-4)		
		O-4 Promotion Board ~9 YCS		
		1 <sup>st</sup> XO Screen (30%) at 9 YCS		
<b>Department Head (DH)</b> (32 mo)		Promotion to O-4 (YCS + 10 ±1)		
		2 <sup>nd</sup> XO Screen (50%) at 10 YCS		
		Professional Development Milestones: <input type="checkbox"/> Command Qualification		
<b>Post DH Shore</b> (24 mo)	9-10 YCS	3 <sup>rd</sup> XO Screen (20%) at 11 YCS		
		4 <sup>th</sup> XO Screen for XOSS at 12 YCS		
Professional Development Milestones: <input type="checkbox"/> JPME Phase I (Required to serve in Command)				
<b>Executive Officer (XO)</b> (20 mo)	12 YCS	PXO School Goal: Aug of 12 YCS		
		PXO Promotion Gate: Aug 13 YCS (Ensure XO FITREP before In Zone for O-5)		
		Complete JPME I prior to CO Screening - NAVADMIN 93/5.		
		1 <sup>st</sup> CO Screen (30%) at 14 YCS		
		2 <sup>nd</sup> CO Screen (50%) at 15 YCS		
<b>Post XO Shore</b> (24 mo)	14 YCS	O-5 Promotion Board ~15 YCS		
		3 <sup>rd</sup> CO Screen (20%) at 16 YCS		
		Promotion to O-5 (YCS + 16 ±1)		
Professional Development Milestones: <input type="checkbox"/> JPME Phase II				
<b>PCO School</b> (9 mo)	16 YCS	PCO School Goal: Sep of 16 YCS		
<b>CO</b>		PCO Promotion Gate: Sep 17 YCS (Ensure 2 CO FITREPS before In Zone for O-6)		
<b>Post CO Shore</b>	19 YCS	Last COPAY Contract: Comm. Date + 25 years (5 yr)		
		O-6 Promotion Board ~21 YCS		
		Promotion to O-6 (YCS + 22 ±1)		
		Last COPAY Contract: Comm. Date + 26 years (4 yr)		
Last COPAY Contract: Comm. Date + 27 years (3 yr)				
Professional Development Milestones: <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Duty Assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Specialty Officer				
<b>Major Command</b> (24 mo)	22 YCS	Major Command Goal: 22-23 YCS		
		Last COPAY Bonus Payment: Comm. Date + 29 years		
<b>Notes</b>				
(1) Promotion boards estimated. Best resource is "Officer 5 Yr Promotion Plan", specific eligibility for each year is identified in a December NAVADMIN. CO/XO/DH boards in May, MC boards in November each year.				
(2) Professional Development Milestones: JPME PH I is only "requirement" from Joint/Grad Ed perspective but completion of these milestones will afford individual more detailing options.				

### Figure 1: Submarine Officer Career Tactical Decision Aid (TACAID)<sup>40</sup>

As one can see, there are no opportunities for command until roughly sixteen years of commissioned service. Admiral Nimitz took command of his first surface ship roughly two years following his graduation from the Naval Academy and subsequently took command of his first submarine, *USS Plunger (SS-2)*, four years after graduation.<sup>41</sup> Even though he was given command so early in his career, the shift from the surface fleet to submarines was not what Nimitz had wanted. “Chester was disappointed to be assigned to submarines, which at that time were considered hardship duty without extra pay. ‘In those days,’ said Nimitz ‘they were a cross between a Jules Verne fantasy and a humpbacked whale.’”<sup>42</sup> Today, there is no opportunity to command a submarine as early in one’s career as Nimitz had done. The earliest command opportunities are for Surface Warfare Officers who have the option to apply for the command of a Patrol Coastal (PC) ship or Mine Countermeasures (MCM) ship at about nine years of commissioned service (in lieu of their second department head tour). In contrast, providing a young lieutenant the command of a U.S. Navy nuclear submarine may not be the most favorable prospect for U.S.-foreign relations or the future of the program; there are too many expectations to be met and the standards for error are extremely low. The experience of a more senior officer is required.

While there are limited opportunities for today’s Naval Officers to command early in their careers, an experience that Admiral Nimitz benefited greatly from, he was also known for his exceptionally work ethic, which is something that can be developed in the present day. The Navy’s submarine program is largely recognized by military personnel for the rigor that is required to become a qualified submarine officer; the most identifiable aspect of this path is the first step, Nuclear Power School,

The naval nuclear program is widely acknowledged as having the most demanding academic program in the U.S. military. Academics proceed at a rapid pace with high academic standards enforced in all subjects. Students typically spend 40-45 hours per week in the classroom with an additional 10 to 35 hours per week of [independent] study outside of lecture hours. Topics include: Mathematics, Nuclear physics, Health physics, Reactor principles, Material science and metallurgy, Electrical power theory and generating equipment, Thermodynamics, Chemistry, and Nuclear reactor technology.<sup>43</sup>

Regardless of one's academic background, the information taught can be overwhelming, especially considering it is all tested within a six-month period. This pace permeates throughout the submarine program, not just within the walls of training commands. It is found on the ships and submarines of the Nuclear Navy. The culture is built on this training and intensity; Nuclear Power School is perhaps the easiest aspect of the entire process.

### **Conclusion:**

Every year the Navy spends a great many man-hours recruiting for those willing to volunteer for the submarine force. Many fear the submarine program for its demanding training pipeline and the secrecy in which it is shrouded. The Navy knows how many new volunteers it must find each year in order to account for attrition, manning, career progression, and submarine production. However, if all newly commissioned Ensigns were required to serve at least one tour aboard a submarine prior to proceeding to another community, the focus of recruitment would be significantly reduced. Furthermore, the same qualities of becoming system experts could be developed in all those who complete their tour, even if they choose not to continue in the program. Admiral Nimitz embodied all these same qualities, namely, hard work, expertise, and leadership even when submarine service was not his desire; something the world benefited from greatly during the Second World War.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> Potter, E. B., *Nimitz*, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1976), 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 1, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 1, 29.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 1, 30.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 1, 30.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 1, 30.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 1, 50.

<sup>8</sup> Harris, Brayton, *Admiral Nimitz: The Commander of the Pacific Ocean Theater*, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 8.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 1, 61-62; *ibid*, 8, 19-21.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 1, 62.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 1, 122-124.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 1, 4.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 1, 59.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 1, 129.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 1, 9.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II, Vol. 3: The Rising Sun in the Pacific*, (Boston, MA: Brown and Company, 1955), 256-257.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 1, 225.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 1, 223.

<sup>19</sup> Eric Larrabee, *Commander in Chief: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants & Their War*, (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1987), 389.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 8, 90.

---

<sup>21</sup> Charles E. Pfannes and Victor A. Salamone, *The Great Admirals of World War II, Volume I: The Americans*, (New York, NY: Kensington Publishing Co., 1983), 113-114.

<sup>22</sup> John Keegan, *The Price of Admiralty*, (New York, NY: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1989), 189.

<sup>23</sup> Edwin P. Hoyt, *How They Won the War in the Pacific: Nimitz and His Admirals*, (New York, NY: Weybright and Talley, 1970), 429.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 22, 189.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 19, 359.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 23, viii.

<sup>27</sup> Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1977), 265.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 27, 245.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 27, 286.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 27, 284.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 23, 284.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 27, 300.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 19, 397.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 19, 356.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 1, 378.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 23, 189.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 1, 375.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 21, 165.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 21, 169.

<sup>40</sup> Bureau of Naval Personnel, *Sub Officer Career TACAID*, (Accessed January 30, 2015).  
<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/submarinenuclear/Documents/Sub%20Officer%20Career%20TACAID.pdf>

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 1, 55-62.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 1, 62.

<sup>43</sup> Nuclear Power School, *Naval Nuclear Power Training Command (NNPTC)* (Accessed February 12, 2015). <http://www.netc.navy.mil/nnptc/>

## Bibliography

- Baker, Leonard. *Roosevelt and Pearl Harbor*. New York, NY: Macmillan Co., 1970.
- Borneman, Walter R. *The Admirals*. New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company, 2012.
- Buell, Thomas B. *Master of Sea Power*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1980.
- Bureau of Naval Personnel. *Sub Officer Career TACAID*. Accessed January 30, 2015.  
<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/officer/Detailing/submarinenuclear/Documents/Sub%20Officer%20Career%20TACAID.pdf>
- Harris, Brayton. *Admiral Nimitz: The Commander of the Pacific Ocean Theater*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Hoyt, Edwin P. *How They Won the War in the Pacific: Nimitz and His Admirals*. New York, NY: Weybright and Talley, 1970.
- James, D. Clayton. *A Time for Giants: The Politics of the American High Command in World War II*. New York, NY: Franklin Watts, 1987.
- James, D. Clayton. "American and Japanese Strategies in the Pacific War." In *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*. Edited by Peter Paret, 703-734. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Jerabek, David J. *Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's Strategic Leadership During World War II*. Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999.
- Keegan, John. *The Price of Admiralty*. New York, NY: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1989.
- Larrabee, Eric. *Commander in Chief: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants & Their War*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1987.
- Marolda, Edward J., Ed. *FDR and the U.S. Navy*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1998
- Morison, Samuel Eliot. *History of the United States Naval Operations in World War II*. 15 Vols. Boston, MA: Brown and Company, 1947-1962.
- Nimitz, Chester W. *The Nimitz Graybook*. Accessed September 23, 2014.  
<https://usnwc.edu/Academics/Library/Naval-Historical-Collection.aspx#items/show/849>
- Nuclear Power School. *Naval Nuclear Power Training Command (NNPTC)*. (Accessed February 12, 2015). <http://www.netc.navy.mil/nnptc/>

- Pfannes, Charles E. and Victor A. Salamone. *The Great Admirals of World War II, Volume I: The Americans*. New York, NY: Kensington Publishing Co., 1983.
- Potter, E. B. *Nimitz*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1976.
- Reynolds, Clark G. *Command of the Sea*. New York, NY: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1974.
- Tertius de Kay, James. *Roosevelt's Navy: The Education of a Warrior President, 1882-1920*. New York, NY: Pegasus Books LLC, 2012.
- Thomas, Joseph J., Editor. *Leadership Embodied: The Secrets to Success of the Most Effective Navy and Marine Corps Leaders*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005
- Thompson, Robert Smith. *A Time for War: Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Path to Pearl Harbor*. New York, NY: Prentice Hall Press, 1991.
- Warner, Oliver. *Command at Sea: Great Fighting Admirals from Hawke to Nimitz*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1976.
- Weigley, Russell F. *The American Way of War*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1977.