



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE  
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027

ATZL-SWI

20 January 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL MERRITT

SUBJECT: Ghosts

1. The purpose of this memo is to follow up on our conversation regarding a ghost for you. As you know I favor this. I have spoken with a couple of "former ghosts" and this memo reflects their thoughts on the subject as well. That is why it is choppy.

2. What He Is:

--Maj/LTC (not a Colonel), CGSC Grad, Adv degree in liberal arts (History, Pol Sci, English, Philosophy, Journalism, etc.). Not a technocrat--screw the quantoids, full speed ahead.

--Literate man who appreciates the fact that words are important.

--Self confident--good self image.

--Possesses an inquiring mind--good world view.

--Speaks a foreign language. He cannot be ethnocentric.

--Sense of humor, tactful, and sensitive. If he doesn't genuinely like people it will show and he'll be a drag.

--Very small ego--he is your alter and can't have one of his own.

--Secure--mature. Not an old grouch, but clearly satisfied with his lot in life and generally with his army.

--Hard worker--intense, but not tense. If he can't relax, kill him.

--Has intellectual courage--occasionally the Nay Sayer if he's worth a damn. He must know how to be constructively critical.

--One who anticipates well (S.L.A. Marshall, "Success in Command is 90% anticipation and 10% luck").

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--Knows the basics of joint and combined arms war.

--He should probably be an artilleryman. (I can't believe I said that.)

3. What He Does:

--Works directly for you (Special Assistant). Not an aide--ever. The first time someone on the staff gives him something to do, kick that guy in the groin--the word will get out.

--Has no routine admin functions (none--period).

--Makes your mind (thoughts) an object of his daily study.

--Tracks down ideas.

--Tells you what he thinks as opposed to what he thinks you think.

--Serves only 2 constituents: you and the US Army--hopefully never having to choose between them.

--Has free reign to roam the command, attend meetings, ask questions, get information.

--Cultivates expertise (seeks out the real subject matter pros) across the command.

--Picks and chooses things of the moment to do for you--ultimately the key to the empty (would you believe half-empty?) in-box.

--All his work goes directly to you without intermediate comment or delay--no forms, decision papers, etc., he has "privileged" admin procedures with you.

--In this paper him means him and not him, her, she, or it.

4. Caution:

--Short term requirements will always drive out long term thought and research unless you are ruthless in protecting the ghost from dull, unimaginative crap. Let the staff do that.

--There will be days when nothing comes out of his pencil--reading, thinking, listening time--probably lots of days.

--Tenure is important. It will take a while for you two (perhaps months) to really work things out, even if you've known him before. Be patient, give him time to grow. That's tough.

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--It must be OK (neat) to find him occasionally sitting in his chair with his feet up on the desk reading.

--There must be a deliberate and consistent sharing of ideas, views, focus, etc., between you.

5. Why Would He Do It?

--He likes that kind of work so he'll get higher levels of personal satisfaction--way up there on old "What's his Name's" hierarchy of needs.

--Power comes with access--to you, to good ideas, to other senior officers and important leaders. He will have it because of you.

--He contributes to the Army directly in ways that are not routine for an officer of his grade--sees results.

--He travels (should have blanket travel orders); he should get plenty of chances to go to important places with you and for you.

--He gets good reports from you and is occasionally mentioned in dispatches.

6. Be glad to discuss this anytime.



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CF: General Saint