



Michael J. Sanderson

Senior manager • IDS, C-17 Systems Installation • Long Beach, Calif.

SERVICE: U.S. MARINE CORPS, 1982 TO 1986 • MARINE CORPS RESERVE, 1987 TO PRESENT

Nearly 28 years in the U.S. Marine Corps and 24 years at McDonnell Douglas and Boeing have brought me tremendous opportunity: the chance to work on and fly aircraft that I love, earn a Federal Aviation Administration Airframes and Power Plants License, gain undergraduate and graduate degrees, and have the honor to serve with my fellow Marines in Iraq. I am currently on the faculty at the University of Phoenix and Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.

Growing up in eastern Iowa, I was intrigued with flying from an early age. In my youth, a friend and I loved to take off from an alfalfa field in a Piper Cub for low passes over the local towns.

By 1982, I knew farming was not my long-term ambition. I joined the U.S. Marine Corps to pursue an aviation career. I trained to maintain and fly the CH-46 Sea Knight, never dreaming I would one day work at the company that builds that tandem-rotor helicopter.

In 1986, I took a job at McDonnell Douglas as a structures mechanic. I was promoted to manager in Production that summer.

I missed Marine Corps style flying, though, and so in 1987 I re-entered the Marine Corps Reserves at El Toro, Calif. In 1991, I was activated to deploy to the first Gulf War. Shortly after returning to McDonnell Douglas, I was promoted to senior

manager on the MD-11 Program.

In 2000, I transferred from the air wing of the Marine Corps to an armored tank unit and was activated as a first sergeant with Force Protection at Camp Fallujah, Iraq, in 2005.

I was promoted to the rank of sergeant major in 2006—one of only 52 senior enlisted Marines of that rank in the Marine Corps Reserve.

Strong camaraderie and leading by example is a way of life in the Marine Corps. In industry, as in the military, leadership means taking care of your people, finding a way to accomplish the mission, setting high standards, and settling for nothing less from yourself.

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