

Transcript for General Ann Dunwoody | A Higher Standard (Episode 650)

Full show notes found here: <https://theartofcharm.com/650/>

ANN: Good leaders aren't invincible and don't try to be. And trust me, in the military, we want our young men and women to believe they're invincible.

JORDAN: Welcome to The Art of Charm. I'm Jordan Harbinger. I'm here with producer Jason DeFillippo. On this episode, we'll be talking with General Ann Dunwoody. She's the first woman in U.S. military in uniform service history to achieve a four star officer rank in the army.

On this episode, we'll discuss why it's important to never walk by a mistake, we'll discuss why keeping a higher standard is not only the right way to be, but also makes economic sense long term, and we'll have some real world case studies here to show that, and we'll uncover the two types of people at work, namely advocates and attractors and how to leverage both for our benefit and the benefit of others, and we'll explore why diversity of thought isn't just some PC concept but has a real function, especially in a high stakes environments like the military. Now, let's talk to a woman I admire greatly, General Ann Dunwoody. Here we go.

I read the book and really enjoyed it. I think -- there's a lot of military books, there's a lot of leadership books as you know. I'm sure you did your homework before writing that. And I liked the unique perspective given here, not just because, well it's written by a female four star, you know? It's different in that there's a lot of points here that I think coming up in a leadership and a military environment, that you noted that, for whatever reason, other people have skipped.

I don't know if that's because you faced more resistance coming up in a male dominated hierarchy or if you just observe different things in a different way than a lot of people. That, I think, made the book a little bit different. Because especially if you're going to make a leadership book stand out, there's got to

be something else going on, right? There's got to be something else happening in the book.

I just want to start with some of the elephant in the room stuff. For example, you're a female leader that's gotten to the upper echelon of the military and often when women are leaders, they're deemed not competent enough if they're also nice. And they're also deemed not nice enough when they're competent. What do you make of this? What can we do about this?

ANN:

What I discovered, and I think you read in my book, I never wanted to write a book. And everyone kept pressuring me to write a book. "You've got to tell your story." The questions I kept getting was, "How did you fight your way, claw your way to the top in this male dominated world, The United States Army?" and that was not my experience. My experience was more about leadership than gender. I felt like I had to tell my story because people naturally assume that in this male dominated profession, that's how you get ahead.-- fighting, clawing, scratching your way up to the top.

And so, I set out to write about leadership, not a diary, not a memoir, not a biography but about the leadership lessons that I think worked for me in hopes that they would work for others, by sharing them. And it's not prescriptive, it's not, "If you do these 10 things, you're going to be a wonderful leader," it's not a recipe. I don't think there are any recipes for leadership. These were things that worked for me and I wanted to share them. It's certainly not a book about how to become a general, I'm not sure I could even write that. But, it came back to, for me, being fair, being professional -- you don't have to lose your feminism to be a good leader, but you also don't have to use your feminism to be a good leader, you need to be fair and professional.

And when I joined, I naturally assumed -- back in 1975 -- that I would have to exceed the standards in order to be accepted into the ranks. And I strove to do just that. But what I learned, Jordan, was that all the good leaders that I worked for, the

leaders that I respected -- and I never worked for a woman, I only worked for male leaders. The ones I respected held themselves to a higher standard and encouraged their subordinates to do the same.

JORDAN: You mentioned you thought you'd have to exceed the higher standard, is that because you're female? You thought, "Okay, I just have to work harder than everyone else because them's the breaks coming in with the," -- and I'm using air quotes here, for those who can't see, -- "disadvantage of being female in a male organization, especially in the '70s in the army."

ANN: Yeah, I assumed that. And I think women in many professions who have climbed up through the ranks, probably felt the same way, that you had to prove yourself in order to be accepted. What I found is all the good leaders that I worked for, all the ones I respected, held themselves to a higher standard and encouraged their subordinates, like myself, to do the same. So, it really wasn't a gender thing although I assumed that's what I would have to do. But, I also believe that good leaders do that -- male, female, you name it. They set the standard, they walk the talk, and encourage their subordinates to exceed the standards.

JORDAN: Speaking of standards and setting them, in the book [*A Higher Standard*](#), you mention that leadership begins in the home but does not end there and you learned a ton from your mother while your dad was away fighting. What did you learn from your mom when your dad was away fighting that you're applying to being a flag officer in the military? That seems kind of strange -- at least a little counterintuitive -- that, essentially, I would imagine a housewife is teaching you things that you're now applying in the armed services at the highest levels.

ANN: Yeah, you know, I come from a family of four generations of West Pointers. My brother, my dad, my grandfather, and my great grandfather are all West Pointers. And it never occurred to me growing up to even think about joining the army and so, you know, all my life I was going to be a coach and a physical education teacher and that's what I wanted to do from the time

I was five years old, I'm sure. And my father, he was the role model. He was the war hero, medals, you know, smart, Purple Hearts, Distinguished Service cross, great father, and my mother who was the most devout I think I've ever known, the most selfless person, she would encourage us -- she was the optimist. The glass is always half full, never rain on our parade, you can do anything you want to do with hard work and commitment. So there's no glass ceilings. I never heard of that word in my house.

But what I learned, and it was later when I was growing up, the traits that my mother had, the selflessness, the empathy, the care, the compassion, the optimism, you can do anything -- that if I can be more like her, I would probably be a better person and a better soldier and a better officer. Not that I didn't want to emulate my dad, I just learned another side. You know, it seems easy to be the mom at home but it's not easy to be the mom at home when you're raising five kids when your husband is off fighting wars.

JORDAN: Sure, I can imagine. It seems like the leadership principles that -- some of which you've outlined in [A Higher Standard](#), could be things that you did learn from her. I'd noticed the first one that really caught my eye was, "Never walk by a mistake or you just set a new lower standard." Can you explain that? Can you tell us what that's about?

ANN: Yeah, that was actually a first lesson I really learned from my brand new platoon sergeant. I was a brand new second lieutenant at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. And this was right after the Vietnam War. And we were kind of a broken hollow army, if you'll remember. Funding went down, that was a hard war on our armed forces, so we started shrinking, we lost funds, we weren't doing training -- but there was nothing broken about this platoon sergeant that I had, Sergeant First Class Wendell Bowen.

And he had again, set the highest standard and he taught me how to be a great lieutenant, to know what the standard is, to

know what right looks like, and what he said was, if you walk by a mistake, if you see something wrong and you don't correct it, then you just set a new lower standard. And it could be something as simple as seeing a soldier walking down the street in uniform with his hands in his pockets or not wearing his headgear and you make an on the spot correction. If you ignore it and he sees you, that becomes okay. That behavior is okay. But it could be something more serious like not maintaining your combat equipment to standard. So, you don't maintain your weapon to standard in training, it could result in a malfunction, in war, it could lead to a fatality. So it's a slippery slope. When you don't enforce the standards, it leads to poor performance, people getting hurt, or worse, people dying.

If you just think about offices. If people are spending more time on Facebook and tweeting and messaging and not doing their work, the production goes down. If no one calls them on it. "We really need you to be spending time on work." If you look at General Motors, if they had identified the ignition switch problem instead of trying to cover it up, how many billions of dollars could have been saved, or lives, because everyone turned the other way and it was not their problem and it became a huge problem where they spent money on lawsuits and damage control and people died as a result of that.

And I could go on and on with Volkswagen or the Veterans' Affair out in Arizona. If they had identified the problem instead of trying to cover up the long delays and the care for veterans, how many veterans they could have helped instead of delaying their healthcare. So, it's in the principle that applies across the board.

JORDAN: Can you outline what those incidents were? Because I think for some of us, we're not really sure what the ignition switch failure was or what the Veterans' Affairs -- the VA issue was. So, for context, would you mind outlining those really quickly?

ANN: Certainly. When General Motors had an ignition switch failure and they started having incidents and people were killed in car

crashes, and instead of saying and identifying that, "We had this problem," they continued to cover it up. And there were more accidents, there's more fatalities, and when they came to light that they were aware that it was the ignition switch that was causing this to have all these recalls, then they had a lot of lawsuits, damage control, and spent millions of dollars in fixing the problems that they had caused for so many Americans when they had to recall that.

The Veterans' Affairs out in Arizona -- the delays in healthcare for our veterans. They used phony metrics to make it look like they were very timely. The reality was that these veterans are waiting to get their appointments and the results weren't being taken care of. And it was intentional cover up. People know that these things have happened but they choose not to do anything about it. They choose to say, "That's not my problem, that's someone else's problem," and look the other way.

And this whole principle is that you have to do things not for the good of yourself but for the good of the organization and the mission of the organization. If they identified that they really had a long lead time for taking care of our veterans and tried to help them instead of figuring out to use phony metrics to cover up the problems, they would have helped solve the problem instead of continue to contribute to the challenge.

JORDAN:

So it seems like the setting of a higher standard can actually be kind of an interesting paradox because, on the one hand, it looks like, well, you know, if we set higher standards, military standards for example -- much higher than civilian standards. You can have an affair in the military, it can ruin your whole career. It can be over. We've seen that happen in the past. Those standards seem high and it seems like well we can't import these into the civilian world because it's too costly but the examples that you're giving here, seem to illustrate that actually, when you walk by mistakes, when you accept that new lower standard, it's actually much more costly in the end. It's just that since the cost is pushed later on down the line or down the chain, it seems like it might be less costly. But really, that's

only in that particular moment, is it actually less costly. But overall, you're going to end up with bigger problems down the line that end up costing much more by accepting lower standards across the board.

ANN:

Absolutely and it doesn't have to be when you see something wrong that it has to be chewing out of somebody, it could be educational. "Hey did you know that you're not supposed to walk with your hands in your pocket?" "Hey did you know?" And so you're educating. Because sometimes, young -- especially young soldiers or young employees -- don't know what the standard is and so they're just doing what they think is the right thing unless someone educates them.

But there's a difference between making a mistake going the right direction and breaking the law and I think that's one of the challenges. When I talk about a higher standard [in the book](#), and I talk about organizations, even our officer evaluations of people, you have: always exceeds the standards, meets the standards, or doesn't achieve this. I would submit that if you try to encourage people to exceed the standards and you have a team that always strives to do that, that you're going to have a high performing organization and if you have a team where just meeting the standard is okay, that you're probably going to have an average team.

And if you have those that don't meet the standard, obviously you're going to have a pretty poor organization. So in my mind, it's a leadership philosophy that you want to encourage your subordinates to be the best they can be and do better. And you know what? What I also believe is that when people reward good performance for people that exceed the standards or take corrective action on the folks that don't meet the standards or barely show up for work every day, that the people in the middle that really want to do a good job, they're going to tend to want to be a high performer because they're going to see they're appreciated, they're recognized, and the ones that don't perform are dealt with.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: You're touching on another concept here that your subordinate's performance is essentially your own responsibility, which sounds a lot like the concept of Extreme Ownership. I don't know if you know that book by Jocko Willink, who's also been on the show here, that if you accept those standards as your own and you own them, you also accept the standards of those around you or the performance of those underneath you as your own responsibility. Standards tend to be raised which of course raises the performance of the entire organization. Which is kind of an interesting phenomenon because it seems like, again, in the civilian world, it's really commonplace for people to slough responsibility off as much as possible in order to dodge bullets wherever possible and that, again, ends up lowering the standards and creating problems later on down the line.

ANN: I've found that's my experience as well.

JORDAN: Your sergeant earlier in your career told you he'd make you the best platoon leader in the entire army. What do you think that he saw in you at that point?

ANN: You know, I was the only female at the time in that company. And he didn't say, "I'm going to make you the best female lieutenant in the army -- I'm going to make you the best lieutenant in the army." That's what noncommissioned officers do. Their responsibility is to train that brand new second lieutenants to be the best lieutenants. That's their responsibility and I was blessed that the company commander put me with the very best noncommissioned officer in that company to do just that. So, it was win-win for me. He was able to train me and he later became a first sergeant in one of the companies but he was that talented and that gracious of a leader.

JORDAN: So do you think that some people are born leaders? Like, do you think he saw that you were a born leader and decided to maximize your potential in that way?

ANN: I think he would have done with whoever was in that billet. What our responsibility, as a new lieutenant, is to listen to our noncommissioned officers and take their leadership lessons to heart and apply them in day to day situations. And I was blessed because he was so good. Not all of them are a Sergeant Bowen, you know? And some of them probably don't care to take that responsibility to train that new lieutenant as seriously as he did. So, I was very fortunate. I think he would have done it no matter who stepped in that billet and it was up to that lieutenant to, you know, take the opportunity and advantage of all that information and leadership that he was imparting on me.

JORDAN: So how did that affect you? Somebody telling you -- sounds like a lot of pressure. "I'm going to make you the best platoon leader in the entire army." I don't know if I would want to hear that on my first few months at work.

ANN: It was kind of a joke. A few months after he told me that, he said, "Lieutenant Dunwoody, you're really going to make me work at this, aren't ya? My job is to train you and you're going to make mistakes just like every butterbar or second lieutenant does." So it was a little humor in the book. But, I didn't take it that way as anything other than a professional trying to do the right thing and what we do in our military is train and develop leaders.

JORDAN: Now, looking at concepts such as: Never walk by a mistake, so accountability, knowing what right looks like, being true to yourself and meeting or exceeding standards, that we've already discussed -- what else can we add to this? Of course the concept of never reward bad behavior, that seems really obvious. And yet, it seems like a lot of organizations do that, even in the military.

ANN: It is a concept and so the application of that, you learn from all kinds of leaders, and fortunately I had mostly very, very good leaders throughout my career and you learn from the good, the bad, and the ugly. And one of my bosses was not the kind of leader I'd want to emulate, although I learned a lot from him. He was a yeller and a screamer and I'm sure it doesn't matter what profession you're in, there's people out there like that, throwing books at the subordinates, driving good young officers and NCOs out of the army instead of encouraging them to stay in. And what you find -- what I've found is an intermediary between my boss -- that kind of boss -- and my subordinates was to try and protect them from that kind of behavior. And when I say that it's if I saw something wrong happen or the yelling and the screaming, that I would go say, "Hey, if they made a mistake," got it, and you'd talk to them about it. But no one deserves to be disrespected, denigrated, especially in a public forum. Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect and you can take corrective action without making someone feel like they're the scum of the earth.

JORDAN: So it seems to me that if we're really rocking that high standard, we're constantly raising the bar, it would be tempting to pretend to be invincible, and it seems like that could be a big problem after a short time. What do we do about that? Where do you stand on that?

ANN: Yeah, it's basically good leaders aren't invincible and don't try to be. And trust me, in the military, we want our young men and women to believe they're invincible, take that hill, jump out of the airplane, do this, run that mile, take that rucksack, and it's a confidence thing. But, at the end of the day, we're also all human beings and my experience, and I was a master blaster paratrooper in the 82nd and I thought I could do it all and that I was invincible. I believed that myself. And when troops had challenges or they fell out of the runs, you'd tell them sot suck it up and get on with it. We just didn't have a whole lot of time for whining in our business.

But, I was a young captain and I went to -- going to Europe -- Germany -- with my husband. I ended up having to go in my secondary MOS which was personnel, which I didn't enjoy. My marriage was falling apart and the house that my husband had rented was so small the bathroom looked like one you'd find on an airplane. So, my life had turned upside down from having this wonderful -- being a company commander at Fort Sill and being in charge and responsible and having a wonderful, high performing organization. My job was basically being a Walmart greeter for new people in Frankfurt. Well, I started getting sick and I finally went to the doctor and he asked me if I was under any stress and I told him, "Stress? I've got the easiest job in the whole Germany. I'm the Walmart greeter for newcomers that come oversees." And then it hit me that my marriage was falling apart, I didn't like my job, and I didn't like where I lived. And I hadn't talked to anybody because I thought I could suck it up, I thought I could handle it all, and the doctor told me I was getting a bleeding ulcer and that I better take care of myself.

JORDAN: Geez.

ANN: And so I flew home to see my parents and I was scared to death, thinking that my mom was going to think I was a failure for not being able to survive my marriage. And when I went home, they were so supportive. It was like the world was lifted off my shoulders. And I went back and I interviewed and I got another company command with the Airborne Rigor Detachment and my dog and I moved into a new house and Ann Dunwoody was back. But, it happens to all of us, you know? Hair falling out, rashes -- when things happen in the cumulative, and it could be a death in the family, it could be a relationship, it could be financial, when they add up, your body just absorbs so much.

And so as leaders, you've kind of got to be on the lookout for it. When you see people that are normally gung-ho and happy one day and then next day they're kind of down and glum, to find out what's going on in their life and it could be something like cancer or a lot of things. And again, it's our culture not to want to share those things but to suck it up and think we are

invincible. But the reality is, we're just human beings and things start happening. If we could pay attention, we could probably help a lot of folks.

JORDAN: I think that's probably likely true. There's always, again, looking at trying to be invincible on the outside, putting on that veneer, it can be really, really tough. And I think we are also, in many ways, we're only seeing what we're trained to see. You go into this in the book as well, in a different way. Something you call mirror-mirror syndrome. I'd love it if you would explain what that is, what causes it, and what we might be able to do about that.

ANN: I think what I discovered when I got into the military, because it was very much all white male profession and understandably so, and we started the integration, what I found is there's leaders promote, recognize, and reward in their own image. The Mirror, mirror chapter is about the power of diversity. When you only recognize and promote and reward those that are like you -- like minded, like schooled, West Point, look like you, act like you -- then it's a very undiverse organization.

What I found is that diversity is not about numbers, and many people still think it is, that diversity means add one of these, one of those, and one of those to your team and then all of a sudden, you're now diverse. But diversity, the power of diversity comes from the power of diversity of thought and to me, that means getting the best and brightest from all walks of life.

And if I was sitting at a table and I looked around the table and they all looked like me, act like me, you know if I threw an idea out there, that they'll go, "Yeah, Ma'am. That's a great idea. We all agree with that." But if you're surrounded with people that come with different perspectives from different walks of life, best and brightest, you're going to get perspectives that you'd never dreamed of, you'd never thought about, and that's going to help you make a better decision to these very complex problems we have these days.

JORDAN: So, diversity isn't just political correctness or affirmative action or something like that, it actually has a very real function outside of that?

ANN: Absolutely. So there was a time when we had goals and we had numbers and then those went away but I still believe there are many that think that diversity is still about numbers instead of recognizing the power of the diversity of thought.

JORDAN: Jason asked if we have any juicy war stories and I was like, "Well, I didn't see any in the book but I'll throw it out there."

ANN: War stories, you know -- war is a dangerous thing. I think probably one of my frustrations when I got to the 82nd, I was the only female field-grade in the 82nd when I got there and I didn't know that at the time. And they had no idea what to do with me. I had come out of Leavenworth, which is a high performing school, I had two company commands, I had a master's degree, so very competitive with my male counterparts. They couldn't see that. My male counterparts got the high-performing jobs like executive officers or operations officer and I got this [0:27:09] officer job. In the army, they want the best athletes on their team. And I think in civilian, it should be the same and hopefully it is.

But, I had run a marathon. I could outrun most of the people in the 82nd. They don't call you sissy when you can do those things. They want you on their team because it is a dangerous profession. I got to move up the chain really quick from that. I wasn't in that menial job very long. I got into operations and eventually took over what used to be a male coded position in the division, the parachute officer job which is probably the cream of the crop job in the 82nd Airborne division and I finally, you know, was selected to have that assignment.

Well then Desert Shield/ Desert Storm happened, occurred. We started deployment of forces and in my whole career, I loved jumping out of airplanes, I didn't want to be a ranger, I didn't want to be infantry, but I did want to do my job as a logistician

in peace and war. And when the war broke out and I was a division parachute officer, I should have gone over early to help with the planning but I was pushed back to take care of the rear deployment and a male, who should have been doing the rear operations, ended up going early and forward.

It all worked out but it was this attitude -- it's not juicy, so -- attitude that it's okay as long as there's peace but when war, we want the guys doing it. If you're a professional, you do your job in peace and war. I ended up going over there, ended up being on a super secret committee with the division commander doing parachute operations. It all worked out but there was an attitude there, a culture that, you know, that, "We want the gung-ho guys when we're going to war."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: Speaking of advocates and detractors inside organizations, you do separate these two types of people in the book. Can you take us through these types, advocates and detractors, what they do and how we can, I guess leverage them, for lack of a better term, inside an organization, civilian or otherwise?

ANN: Sure. I didn't want to throw people under the bus in my book so I tried to categorize the kind of leaders that I ended up working for. And actually, there's the advocates which I had the majority of and those are people who believe in you and people who do things for you throughout your career. You may not even know they're doing it. I call it the Man Behind the Curtain. Things happen, my assignments change, I'm going, "Wow, wonder how that happened?" and someone who saw the potential in me influenced my assignments. So I was fortunate to have many advocates in my career that looked out for Ann Dunwoody when the system may not have done that. Then I call Janus-Facers, these are probably the hardest one or patronizers, and these are folks that'll say, "Hey, what a great guy, you know, he's really super fantastic," and then behind your back, they're going, "You know he really can't carry his weight or doesn't do that." So they're a little dangerous because

you don't know. Then the detractors are the third category and they're people that just -- they don't like you for whatever reason. "This is a man's world. Women don't belong here." Fill in the blank. Just, people don't like you for whatever reason, and very few of those. The leadership lesson in all this for me, was it doesn't matter who you're working for. The leadership lesson is to stay on the moral high ground, don't lower your standards, and you can make believers out of nonbelievers. And that worked for me. Now, you're not going to convert everybody but when people see that you're professional, that you can exceed the standards, and that you're doing the right thing for the right reason, they want you on your team.

JORDAN:

So looking at, say, detractors -- people who are always kind of, maybe sabotage is a strong word but bring you down a peg or two. What can we do about that? Because I feel like in my case, putting myself in the shoes of somebody who would be dealing with somebody like that, it's real easy to blame ourselves, or myself for not being able to turn them around, you know? "How do I get them to like me or see my potential or stop doing that?" It must be something that I can control or maybe I did something wrong. I can see the temptation to do that. What do you suggest if we're dealing with the detractor inside our organization?

ANN:

It's easy to reduce yourself, lower your standards, and resort to name calling or innuendos because, "He called me this, I'm going to call him that," and, "I don't like him and he doesn't like me," instead of, again -- it sounds easy. It's not easy to stay on the moral high ground. Don't lower your standards to whatever they've decided to do or say to you. When you exceed the standards, and many times you can -- even over the detractors -- you're better at this, a better strategic thinker, a better runner, a better action person. I've converted many detractors just because they had blinders on. They had blind spots but they couldn't see because of their culture. It's hard to imagine, even the detractors -- unless they see you as competition, I think that's a different category. When you're competition, it's much harder to convert. You might get the job they wanted or you

might get the promotion they thought they should get. So, someone who sees themselves competing with you, I think is much more difficult. But at the same time, it doesn't change my leadership principle that what will be will be is kind of how I see it. And as long as you're doing the right thing for the right reason and you can look yourself in the mirror every morning and say, "You know, I don't care if I get the promotion if I had to do something that I didn't believe in."

JORDAN

I think that's an important concept to realize and to work with because we can focus on what we're doing wrong all day and it doesn't really help change the situation or make it any better, especially if a detractor -- I would say in a lot of these situations, detractors are doing this for themselves, right? It has almost nothing to do with you. It's a reflective of their mindset or their perceived insecurities or something like that. If we sit there and worry about them, we can sabotage ourselves, which is exactly what those people want us to do in the first place.

ANN:

Absolutely. That's their way of looking at life and people and I have a different one and I'm going to focus on the things I can change, the things I can make a difference -- and also, again, the subordinates who see that behavior, you want to discourage them from wanting to be that way.

JORDAN:

As for advocates, help your career behind the scenes. It's obviously important to have these people inside an organization for reasons that probably don't need to be stated. But you go further in [A Higher Standard](#) and you say, "It's important to be an advocate for others." Why is that the case? Why do we not only need to have these people, advocates inside an organization, why do we need to be an advocate for other people?

ANN:

Yeah I think when there's a point, coaching and mentoring too. As you're coming into the military, you're being coached and mentored along by your superiors. Then, there's a point in your life where now you've got to look back at that landscape and you have to be the one that does the coaching and the mentoring and be sure that you're casting the widest net -- goes

back to diversity -- that you're not just looking at those that are in your image but the potential that's out there. So many people -- and I know you know -- won't get an opportunity to compete because they look different and so no one will give them the opportunity to have that job that makes them competitive. So our job is to be that advocate. As you look out there that you see that potential and you give those people the opportunity to demonstrate that they're capable.

JORDAN: I want to wrap with this. This was a concept I really liked in the book. You call these people door kickers. They are people who push forward despite cultural norms and other stopping blocks, I guess you would say. So, let's define door kickers in your own words. These people seem to have, in many ways, paved the road for you. You're a door kicker for other folks. It's sort of like advocate except for maybe there's not a direct and personal connection with that other person. It's more of a cultural shift that you're creating.

ANN: Yeah that's -- it really is an important one because when I came in I joined the Women's Army Corps, so that was a separate kind of piece of the army where women didn't have the opportunities that they had once we disestablished that, and that was only two years after I joined the army. I probably wouldn't have stayed in had they not done that. When they disestablished that and started the integration of women into the regular army, that excited me because for the first time, women were going to have the same opportunities as their male counterparts in the MOS -- the Military Occupation Specialties -- that were opened to women at the time. That was exciting. The door kicking part, as we started -- and it was not just Dunwoody, it was that whole cohort of women that came in during that time -- was to fight off the tendency for people to want to make you the clerk, that want to make you the cook, that want to put you in the female traditional jobs instead of giving you the opportunity to push through this integration and have the opportunities that your male counterparts had. So that was a constant battle because it was new and change doesn't happen overnight. It happens over time. But if we had allowed

people just to continue to treat us in those female roles, that we would never have made the progression that we have now. I look back now. My career was one where the doors continued to open. I mean, they were hard but the doors continued to open. I have a niece who graduated from air force academy in 2000 and she's an A-10 pilot. I mean, you can't even imagine back then that they would be doing these kind of things. So I've seen women in all walks of life but particularly in the military, how the doors have continued to open and given continuous opportunities and now we have combat. The thing that can happen, as we open the doors, especially for combat, and these door kickers -- is lower the standards. It's a dangerous profession. The standard is the standard. It can't be political and we need women in these so they can represent. They have to be women that are capable of meeting the standard.

JORDAN: And that seems like a perfectly fair way to enforce the standards while also opening up opportunities for other folks. I guess the natural question that would be where's the line? Is it anyone physically and mentally qualified? So, women of course, LGBT, what about -- and this is hypothetical obviously -- but in the future, say someone with no legs and one arm, can just as easily control a drone in Nevada, is that also fair? Do you foresee something like that eventually coming to the military?

ANN: Oh, my gosh, I have met some of these men and women that are quadriplegics or two, and they are running marathons, jumping out of airplanes, skydiving -- I mean, talk about never quit. And so, I think every person has something to contribute and I don't think gender alone can be the reason why they're not allowed to do something. They might not be fit, they might not be capable, but it can't just be gender, it can't be their preferences -- I watched the integration of blacks, I watched integration of women, I watched the integration of gays into the military, and now it's women into combat. None of them were easy, they're transformation, they take time, education, but I think the military has done it as good, if not better, than most organizations.

JORDAN: General Dunwoody, thank you so much for your time. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you want to make sure that you deliver to the AoC family here?

ANN: Oh, no I thank you. Thanks for your time and it's obvious you've read a lot about leadership and it's my favorite subject. I say good leaders never stop learning and I put myself in that category. I'm still learning.

JORDAN: General, thank you so much.

ANN: Thank you, Jordan. I enjoyed it.

JORDAN: Great big thank you to General Ann Dunwoody. The book title is [A Higher Standard](#). Of course that will be linked up in the show notes for this episode. And if you enjoyed this one, don't forget to thank General Ann Dunwoody on Twitter. We'll have that linked in the show notes as well. And tweet at me your number one takeaway from the general. I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter. And remember, if you're looking for the show notes, tap your phone screen. They should pop up, otherwise just head on over to theartofcharm.com/podcast and you'll find those there. I also want to encourage you to join us in the AoC challenge at theartofcharm.com/challenge or you can text the word 'charmed,' C-H-A-R-M-E-D to 33444.

The challenge is about improving your networking skills, your connection skills, your leadership skills, and inspiring those around you to develop a personal and professional relationship with you. It's free, it's unisex, and a lot of people seem to really be digging it. The group has over 10,000 people there on Facebook as well. It's a fun way to start the ball rolling and get some forward momentum and we'll help you out there. The whole AoC team is in there.

We'll also email you our fundamentals Toolbox that I mentioned earlier on the show. That includes some great practical stuff, ready to apply, right out of the box on reading body language, the science of attraction, nonverbal communication,

negotiation techniques, persuasion tactics, networking and influence strategies, and everything else that we teach here at The Art of Charm. This will make you a better networker, a better connector, and a better thinker. That's at theartofcharm.com/challenge or text 'charmed,' C-H-A-R-M-E-D to 33444.

For full show notes for this and all previous episodes, head on over to theartofcharm.com/podcast. This episode of AoC was produced by Jason DeFillippo. Jason Sanderson is our audio engineer and editor. Show notes on the website are by Robert Fogarty, theme music by Little People, transcription by TranscriptionOutsourcing.net -- I'm your host Jordan Harbinger. Go ahead, tell your friends because the greatest compliment you can give us is a referral to someone else, either in person or shared on the Web. Word of mouth is everything so share the show with friends and enemies, stay charming, and leave everything and everyone better than you found them.

