



Dr. J. Phillip London

EDITORS' NOTE After serving as CACI's President and Chief Executive Officer for 23 years, Dr. Phillip London stepped out of the CEO role to become Executive Chairman in July of 2007. He has written and published *Our Good Name and Character: The Ultimate Success Factor*. Chairman of the Board since 1990, London first joined CACI as a program manager in 1972. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School, where he earned, respectively, a bachelor of science in naval engineering and a master of science in operations research. He holds a doctorate in business administration conferred "with distinction" from The George Washington University. During his 12 years of active duty as a regular officer during the Cold War, he initially served as a naval aviator and carrier pilot with the U.S. Navy. He was with the airborne recovery team for Col. John Glenn's Mercury Program space flight in Friendship 7 in the Caribbean, on February 20, 1962, on the U.S.S. Randolph. Dr. London left active duty in 1971 and joined the U.S. Navy Reserve, retiring as a captain in 1983, having served as commanding officer of aeronautical engineering units with the Naval Air Systems Command, Washington, D.C. In 2014, Dr. London received the Corporate Leadership Award from the TechAmerica Foundation and the Semper Fidelis Award from the U.S. Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation.

COMPANY BRIEF CACI (caci.com) provides information solutions and services in support of national security missions and government transformation for Intelligence, Defense, and Federal Civilian customers. A FORTUNE magazine World's Most Admired Company in the IT Services industry, CACI is a member of the Fortune 1000 Largest Companies, the Russell 2000 Index, and the S&P SmallCap 600 Index. CACI provides dynamic careers for over 16,200 employees in 120 offices worldwide.

How does a company remain entrepreneurial once it has reached a certain size and scale?

I recently gave a talk on the topic of entrepreneurship in America and in preparation I

The Importance of Character

An Interview with Dr. J. Phillip London,
Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board, CACI International Inc

discovered some eye-opening research. I found that while we're very creative in some ways, we fall pretty far short in others.

It's about recognizing entrepreneurship as a priority since it is so closely related to a company's culture and the ability to remain competitive. In order to establish and maintain a truly entrepreneurial focus within an organization, you need to empower creativity and limit bureaucracy, while reinforcing the notion of accountability and self-reliance.

Maintaining a successful culture is an ongoing effort for any organization, and leadership is often faced with the challenge of striking a balance between encouraging innovation and enforcing policies and regulations. Having the right balance can give you a distinct advantage. At CACI, we value the importance of reviewing and re-evaluating things to check policies and procedures, and adjust as needed to maintain that critical balance.

Another factor that can have a big impact on a company's culture and entrepreneurial spirit is how it handles acquisitions. CACI has a long, successful track record of acquiring companies. In fact, we recently celebrated our 60th transaction since 1990. At a price tag of \$820 million, we acquired Six3 Systems, Inc., which enables CACI to play a larger role in providing highly specialized signals intelligence and cyber products and solutions that help our government stay ahead of our adversaries' evolving capabilities and safeguard our nation. Every time we go through the acquisition and transition process, we are reminded of how important it is to have a strong, sound culture in place and to be able to easily communicate that to new team members who we are bringing into our organization.

One of the best things a leadership team can do – and I believe we do this at CACI – is to be very direct and clear about the company's culture, and its standards of performance and ethics. Some may see this as an aggressive move, but without clear expectations it is near impossible to attract and retain the best people for your team. When we bring new people into the company, they're indoctrinated in our onboarding process and right up front, we share our expectations of people's behavior. This fosters a culture of respect, collaboration, and innovation.

In your recent book, *Character: The Ultimate Success Factor*, you discuss the importance of the culture of character. Is this something you can drive through

an organization and does it have to start with the right hires?

It is never too late to make an effort to establish or strengthen a culture of character. However, you get the best results when you establish a foundation of strong values, and build up a team and culture that subscribes to these philosophical perspectives. You'll find that when you have this type of organizational culture in place, it attracts (as well as deters) certain people – those who have the right attitude, and who associate with ethics and integrity. In turn, additional people with these attributes are recruited and the company grows, and its culture is even further enhanced. People tend to want to share their time and work with people who have similar values and viewpoints. So in a way it creates a type of self-correcting, self-fulfilling prophecy.

What was your vision for the book and did you write it more for the next generation of leaders?

Character isn't a trend; it isn't cyclical or generational. It's who you are, how you behave; it's the real-life fulfillment of your notions of integrity and ethics – and, most importantly, it is about doing the right thing, no matter what. This is a concept that should be important to everyone, no matter his or her age or position in life.

Because I view this as such an important topic and a factor that has greatly contributed to my personal and professional life, I wanted to do a short pamphlet on the concept of character and integrity for my employees. However, the more I dug into it, the more I realized there was plenty there for a book. We had a lot of fun researching different anecdotes from history and business and commerce and the arts and science about people who have had very successful careers, and yet were able to achieve success by maintaining integrity and character.

It seems to have struck a chord with a lot of people, both inside our organization as well as throughout industry and government. I've received a number of personal notes of thanks for the effort from some prominent leaders in business, in the military, and in government who share a similar interest in having more people talk about and think about character. It's quite a challenging time for our country relative to this topic and a lot of people seem to agree it's the right time to have these kinds of conversations.

Character speaks volumes. Everybody needs to find the leader that is within themselves and be a role model for others. ●