NORMANDY
LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

THE

Critical Lessons for Today’s Leaders

June 6, 1944: By the time Brigadier General Norman Cota came ashore on Omaha Beach, the American attack was faltering. Initial assault waves had suffered hundreds of casualties. Those still alive were seasick from hours in the landing craft, and many had lost their weapons in the churning water.

Cota faced the ultimate test of a combat leader: get terrified men moving to attack an entrenched and determined enemy. How Cota and countless other D-Day leaders accomplished this mission is a story about leadership that holds important lessons for business leaders today.

The Normandy Leadership Experience brings participants to the site of one of the world’s great military operations—the 1944 Allied liberation of France—to learn timeless lessons on leadership. Walking the ground of this famous struggle, participants gain new insights on how to

• build flexible organizations that execute in the midst of chaos and rapid change
• develop leaders who think strategically to prepare for complex and dynamic environments
• earn the trust of subordinates
• build strong coalitions, across cultures and generations, for competition in the global marketplace
• prepare the next generation of leaders

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT ACADEMYLEADERSHIP.COM/NORMANDY OR CALL 610-783-0630

THE NORMANDY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE INCLUDES:

• Four nights accommodations at Château La Chenevière in Normandy, France, which will serve as our home base. The 18th century château, which stands on its own parkland, offers the charms of an old country estate. Exquisite fresh cuisine reflects the changing of the seasons and the distinctive flavors of Normandy, accompanied by an exceptional wine list.

• We provide all meals during the program except alcoholic beverages.

• Ground transportation from Charles de Gaulle Airport to the Château, all battlefield sites and back to Paris at the end of the program. Participants will make their own flight/travel arrangements to and from Paris.

• Expert facilitation from both the historical and business leadership perspective.

• The acclaimed book D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II, by Stephen E. Ambrose

“The Normandy Leadership Experience not only reinforced my belief that leadership is an integral part of the business school curriculum, but that the same leadership issues have been around for thousands of years. Leaders have always had to think about whether there is good communication, whether their troops understand their intent, and whether their troops are empowered to make decisions. Those things transcend time… While the history lessons were amazing, what really made this a great trip were the people… After you graduate from Wharton, you sometimes lose sight of how powerful it can be to get a group of people together to learn and discuss a common topic of interest. To be able to recapture that on this trip was great.”

Roger Crandall, President and CEO of MassMutual

FACILITATORS

Ed Ruggero
Ed, a West Point graduate and former Army officer, has been studying, practicing and teaching leadership for more than twenty-five years, helping organizations develop the kinds of leaders people want to follow. Ed is the author of eleven books, including The First Men In: US Paratroopers and the Fight to Save D-Day, which chronicles the American airborne operation in Normandy. He is also an adjunct faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business, has appeared on The History Channel, CNN, CNBC and Fox and has spoken to audiences around the world on leadership.

Dennis Haley
Dennis is the founder and CEO of Academy Leadership. Dennis graduated from the US Naval Academy and served as a nuclear engineer before leaving the service to join a family business. Dennis founded Academy Leadership based on the methods used by the Naval Academy and West Point leadership development programs. He is the co-author of The Leader’s Compass, 2nd Edition, A Personal Leadership Philosophy Is Your Key to Success which is being used by many Fortune 500 companies and academic institutions across the country. Dennis is also the author of The Core Values Compass: Moving from Cynicism to a Core Values Culture, and is a former adjunct professor at Villanova University in the Leadership Studies Program where he developed the Villanova on-line leadership course, Strategic Organizational Leadership.
Dwight Eisenhower: We’ll discuss the peculiar campaign in the context of World War Two, which was in its fifth year in Europe. The War So Far: We’ll put the invasion and the Normandy invasion in action.

participants reach a deep understanding of leadership in action. The Principles of War: Finally, we will introduce the audience to principles used by military leaders, as a way of understanding their decisions.

How did Ike get his subordinates—particularly the Americans and British—to put aside their hostility long enough to accomplish the mission? Strategic Choices: Why did the Allies choose Normandy? How did their plans for the campaign in France help determine this choice?

Operation Fortitude: This huge ruse, employed to persuade the Germans that an entire Army existed in southeast England, is a brilliant example of the use of technology in counter-intelligence.

The Normandy Leadership Experience will discuss the technical aspects of the assault—what was the plan and why did it fail—as well as the human dimension. We will discuss how one leader—in the right place at the right time—saved what could have been a disastrous beginning.

Although Utah was not as heavily defended as other beaches, the initial assault waves were confused when they came in at the wrong locations. A critical decision by Brigadier General Teddy Roosevelt (son of the late President) got things moving.

We’ll use the Roosevelt story to talk about where leaders need to be, what they need to check, and how they get involved without micro-managing.

Omaha Beach:
It was at Omaha Beach that the Allied landings came closest to failing. Initial assault waves were met by unimaginable violence that slaughtered entire units and left men struggling through the surf. Instead of landing as highly trained, superbly conditioned and well-equipped soldiers, the GI’s who struggled ashore were sea-sick, exhausted, terrified, disoriented and often leaderless. German fire raked the beach from concealed positions.

All of the military might of the United States was powerless to move things along. The battle turned on the individual initiative of a few leaders. Most of them were young and inexperienced, yet they took charge of their tiny little sectors of the war and by personal example—and often at the cost of their lives—got their soldiers moving inland.

We will discuss the technical aspects of the assault—what was the plan and why did it fail—as well as the human dimension.

The Sacrifice:
Here at the western edge of the American sector, we’ll discuss how one leader—in the right place at the right time—saved what could have been a disastrous beginning.

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**DAY 1**
**TRAVEL TO CHÂTEAU LA CHENEVIÈRE, NORMANDY**

Evening overview

The Staff Ride: The Normandy Leadership Experience is modeled on the staff ride, a technique used to train U. S. Army officers in leadership and decision-making. We’ll introduce the learning framework that will help participants reach a deep understanding of leadership in action.

The War So Far: We’ll put the invasion and the Normandy campaign in the context of World War Two, which was in its fifth year in Europe.

Dwight Eisenhower: We’ll discuss the peculiar responsibilities of a Supreme Commander in this vast coalition. How did Ike get his subordinates—particularly the Americans and British—to put aside their hostility long enough to accomplish the mission?

Strategic Choices: Why did the Allies choose Normandy? How did their plans for the campaign in France help determine this choice?

Operation Fortitude: This huge ruse, employed to persuade the Germans that an entire Army existed in southeast England, is a brilliant example of the use of technology in counter-intelligence.

The Principles of War: Finally, we will introduce the audience to principles used by military leaders, as a way of understanding their decisions.

**DAY 2**
**THE BRITISH AND CANADIAN SECTOR**

**PEGASUS BRIDGE**

The extreme left flank of the British landing zone lay along the River Orne and the Caen canal. The British needed control of the bridges near Ranville early on D-Day in order to block German counterattacks against the vulnerable flank. The bridges, located miles inland, had to be captured intact.

A force of glider-borne troops stormed the bridges in the first ground combat action on D-Day. The assault was beyond daring—it could easily be described as foolhardy—but it succeeded because of leadership, exceptional preparation, flexibility in execution and sheer determination on the part of the assault troops.

**ARROMANCHE**

From a vantage point near the middle of the invasion area we’ll see the giant artificial harbors the Allies built in just a few days to handle the massive inflow of materiel needed to sustain the invasion. An amphibious landing is one of the most complex operations in warfare, and there was no precedent for an invasion as large as D-Day.

At Arromanches we’ll examine the challenges of logistics planning and supply chain management.

**LONGUES BATTERY**

At this German coastal battery, we’ll get our first glimpse of what June 6 must have been like for the Germans caught in their fixed positions as they became targets for US and Royal Navy ships, and later, for the advancing Allied infantrymen.

We’ll discuss the challenges faced by German commanders, who were inhibited by an unworkable command structure, shortages of trained troops and supplies.

**DAY 3**
**THE AMERICAN AIRBORNE OPERATION**

**LA FIERE BRIDGE & STE MERE EGLISE**

US paratroopers were to seize the causeways and road networks behind Utah Beach to stop expected German counterattacks and to hold the door open for US forces coming off the beach. Badly scattered on the drop, the troops of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions patched together ad hoc units, located what weapons and equipment (also scattered in the drop) they could, and set out to accomplish their missions.

In fighting around the important crossroads town of Ste Mere Eglise, the paratroopers were creative, flexible and determined. In that, they were a reflection of their leaders and their unique training; and they showed the critical role played by culture in an organization’s performance.

At La Fiere Bridge, the battle turned on the efforts of a few score men who held their ground in the face of devastating losses and multiple attacks by German armor.

**DAY 4**
**THE AMERICAN AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION**

**UTAH BEACH**

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**DAY 5**
**THE SACRIFICE**

**AMERICAN CEMETERY AT COLLEVILLE SUR MER**

We will spend the morning at the American Military Cemetery, where the remains of 9,186 U.S soldiers rest. Return to Paris by evening.
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