

LEAD LIKE CHET & RAY:

**Admiral Chester Nimitz,
Ultimate Turnaround CEO**



**And Admiral Raymond Spruance,
Best Operational Manager**

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*LEAD LIKE IKE:
Ten Business Strategies from the CEO of D-Day***

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Lead Like Chet & Ray at Midway

If you tried to make up a story about a dramatic naval battle, there is no way you could top the true story of Midway. Writing years later, Winston Churchill said, "The annals of war at sea present no more intense, heart-shaking shock than this battle, in which the qualities of the United States Navy . . . shone forth in splendour. The bravery and self-devotion of the American airmen and sailors and the nerve and skill of their leaders was the foundation of all." (Boy, could Churchill write or what? I guess he could, he did win the Nobel Prize for Literature.)

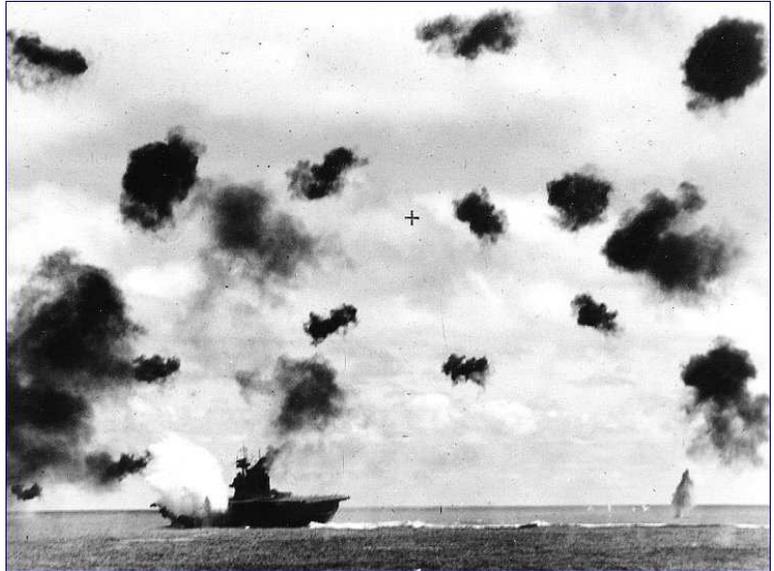
Walter Lord in his book *Midway: The Incredible Victory* said of the Americans: "They had no right to win. Yet they did, and in doing so they changed the course of the war. . . . Even against the greatest odds, there is something in the human spirit – a magic blend of skill, faith, and valour that can lift men from certain defeat to incredible victory."

The Battle of Midway has been compared to the battles of:

Marathon, the Marne, the Somme, Waterloo, and the famous naval battles of:

- Salamis, where a small Greek fleet stopped the massive Persian armada and turned the course of western history, and
- Trafalgar, where Admiral Horatio Nelson saved the British Empire and affirmed that the sun never set on the Union Jack.

Without exaggeration, Midway was the most important naval battle of the entire 20th century.



USS YORKTOWN under attack during battle.

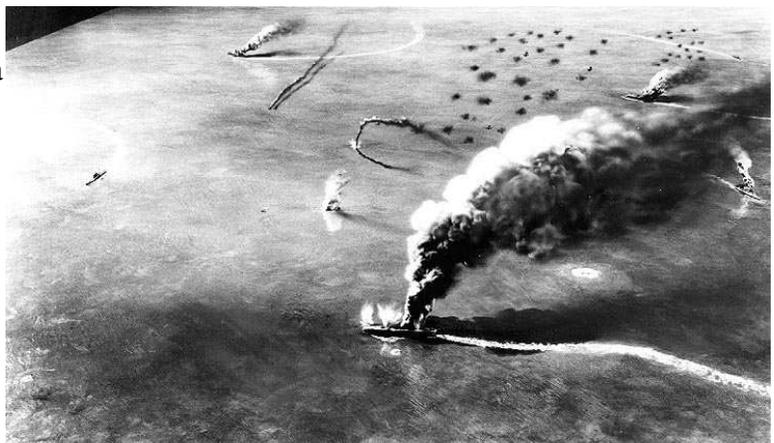


Photo # 80-G-701870 Bel Geddes diorama of Battle of Midway, 4 June 1942

Japanese carriers Soryu, foreground, and Kaga and Agaki, upper left and right, burn.

In addition to its historic and military significance, Midway is the story of one of the greatest **turnarounds** any organization has *ever* accomplished. And it was accomplished with thousands of lives hanging in the balance, and possibly the future of the United States of America. Talk about pressure.

Just how hard is it to turnaround a major organization, anyway? It's really hard. Let's take a look at some recent turnaround efforts:

JCPenney just admitted failure. They fired their savior, Ron Johnson, only 18 months after hiring him from Apple, where he was wildly successful with Apple Stores.



Dive bomber over USS YORTOWN

While Johnson was trying to turn things around, JCPenney's sales fell by about 25%. The stock dropped 50%.



To paraphrase Neil Sedaka: turning around is hard to do.

Let's look at another Turnaround attempt: Best Buy. The electronics retailer announced that it would match Amazon's prices to allow it to compete better, but that policy, while helping sales is battering margins.

As Forbes magazine said: “If you believe making a dowdy retailer into a brand new company will come without a few uncomfortable quarters, if not years, well, you’ve probably been living under a rock.”

Or, to repeat Neil Sedaka: turning around is hard to do.

Another turnaround that's in the news right now: Hewlett Packard (HP). As CEO Meg Whitman wrote in a post on LinkedIn in February: “For any leader looking to drive change across a large organization, my message is the same: There are **no shortcuts**.”

Whitman also said that HP’s moves so far in her tenure are working, but that the company has “much more to do on the



multi-year journey ahead of us.”

In other words: Turning around is hard to do. Why is that?

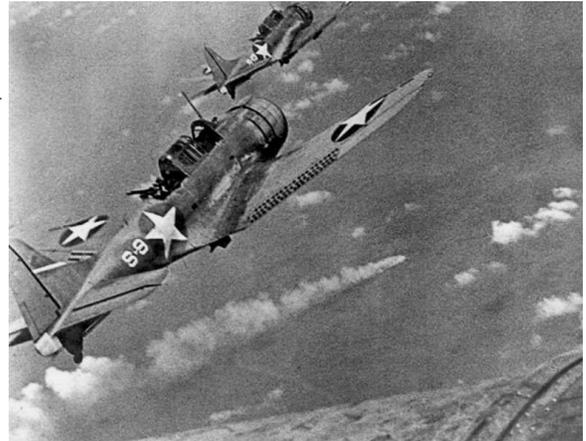
Almost all turnarounds are attempted by new leaders – after all, if you need to turn an organization around, you're not going to rely on the leaders who put you in need of the turnaround, right?

Well, . . . in the past two decades, 30% of Fortune 500 CEOs lasted less than 3 years. According to an article in *Harvard Business Review* in 2010, **40% of new CEOs failed** in their first 18 months on the job.

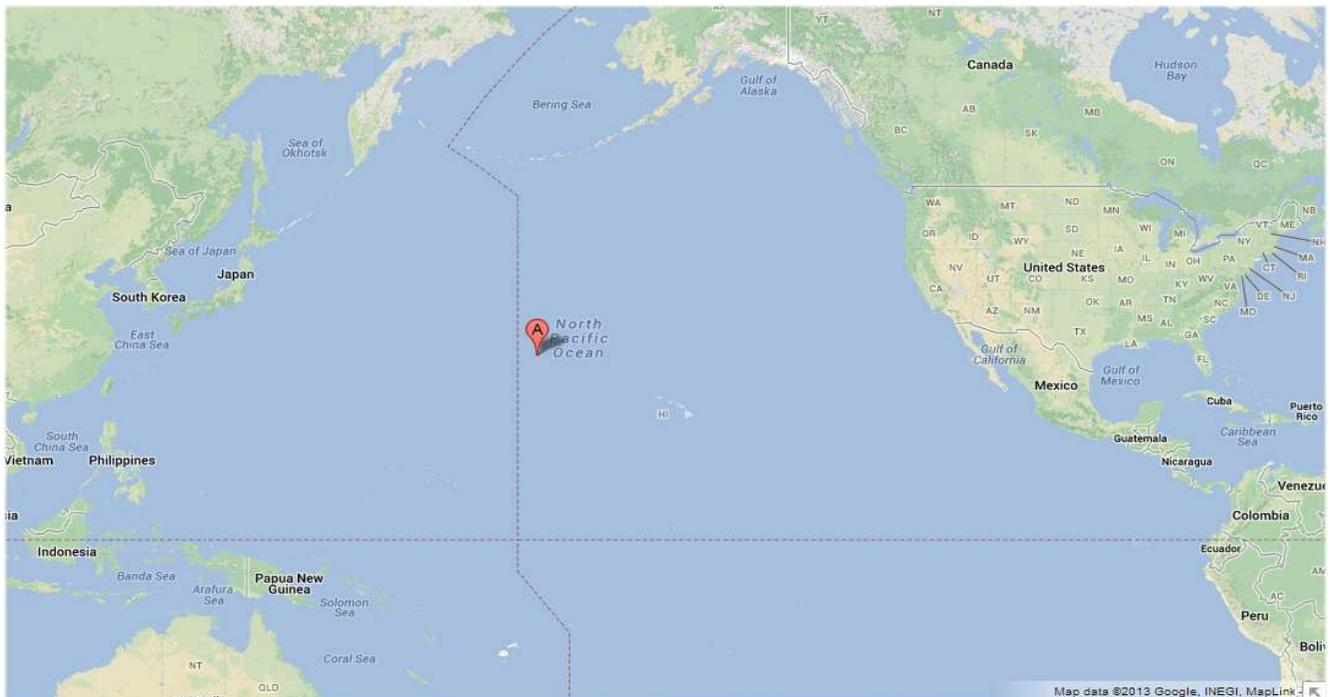
And none of these turnarounds was being attempted by a new leader with the **life-and-death pressures of war** – with the fate of the nation hanging on the outcome.

At the Battle of Midway, only six months after the disaster of Pearl Harbor, the survival of the U.S. Navy and the safety of America's West Coast were up for grabs.

Let's take a look at the strategic situation of the Navy's turnaround:

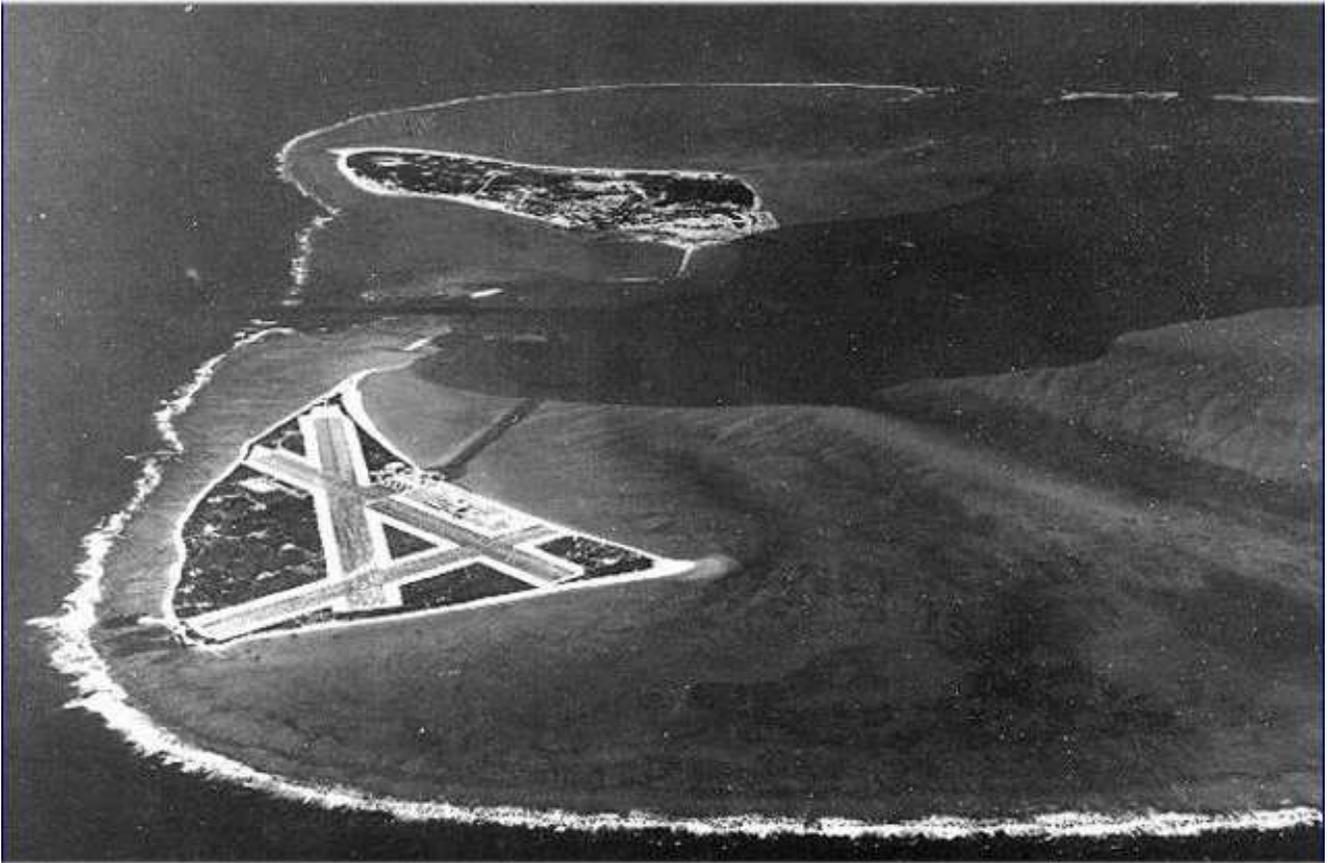


The first thing you have to understand about the Pacific war is the incredible distances involved.



You could drop World War II's **entire** European theater – from France to Moscow, from London to the north rim of Africa – into the Pacific Ocean multiple times.

You know the old saying about retail: location, location, location? Well Midway has location. Midway is almost dead center in the vast Pacific Ocean, hence the name.



Midway (*above*), as you can see is a tiny pair of atolls. Just big enough to host an airfield – and that airfield and its location made Midway a strategic asset beyond compare.

Whoever controlled Midway could use its airfield to bottleneck its enemy's navy.

Whoever controlled Midway could threaten or stop almost all operations of the enemy. In June 1942, the United States possessed Midway but after the Pearl Harbor attack, its Navy was too feeble to exploit the location.

So, geography is the first thing you have to understand. The second thing you have to understand about the Pacific theater is that water makes up about 99.999999 . . . % of the theater. So the Pacific had to be a naval war.

Three items differentiate naval war of World War II from the air or land wars fought in Europe, Africa, and the China/Burma/India theaters:

- Lots and lots of steel – to build ships
- Lots and lots of oil – to fuel ships
- Manufacturing Capability, to build and replace ships – ships, especially aircraft carriers took a long time to build and required tremendous maintenance facilities

You might say, well tanks, jeeps and bombers need all of those things, and yes, they do, but the scale is vastly different: you could build and fuel hundreds of tanks and jeeps out of what an aircraft carrier required.

And . . . Guess what the Japanese didn't have an abundance of? Steel . . . Oil . . . Manufacturing.

Now when I say there wasn't an abundance of manufacturing, I really mean as compared to the United States. During the 1930s, Japan had been a marvel of manufacturing and had built a spectacular navy, but it had stretched itself to the limit to do so – once the war with America started there was no way for Japan to go toe-to-toe with the Americans in manufacturing. In addition to limited manufacturing muscle, Japan had to import all the iron for steel and oil it needed.

All of this because Japan was an island nation with few natural resources. In the 1920s and 30s, Japan looked around the globe and found the perfect model for growth: the British Empire – a small island nation controlling huge populations and natural resources. The empire allowed Britain to compete with gigantic countries like the United States & Russia. Japan wanted the same thing.

So, in the late 30s, they conquered large chunks of China, Southeast Asia (modern day Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia) and a number of islands in the southwest Pacific. But the expansion of the Japanese Empire brought it into direct political conflict with the other great Pacific power: America.

After years of U.S.-Japan negotiations failed, as you all know, the Japanese attacked at Pearl Harbor.





Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, the man who masterminded the Pearl Harbor attack, as well as the raids on Manilla almost immediately after Pearl, wanted to shorten the war by landing knock out punches. His plans were to hurt the United States so badly and so quickly that the Americans would be willing to negotiate for peace. Yamamoto, who had studied in the United States (ironically at the U.S. Naval War College and at Harvard – those of you who hate Harvard have another reason to hate the place), knew that the only way Japan could achieve what it wanted was through a quick war – because a quick war would minimize Japan's deficiencies in steel, oil, and manufacturing.

Because Midway was so important to both sides (location, location, location) Yamamoto planned to attack and capture it. His hopes were to seize control of the islands very quickly and then lie in wait for the Americans to attempt a desperate counter-attack to save Midway. Yamamoto was confident that he could crush the counter-attack and annihilate the U.S. Navy.

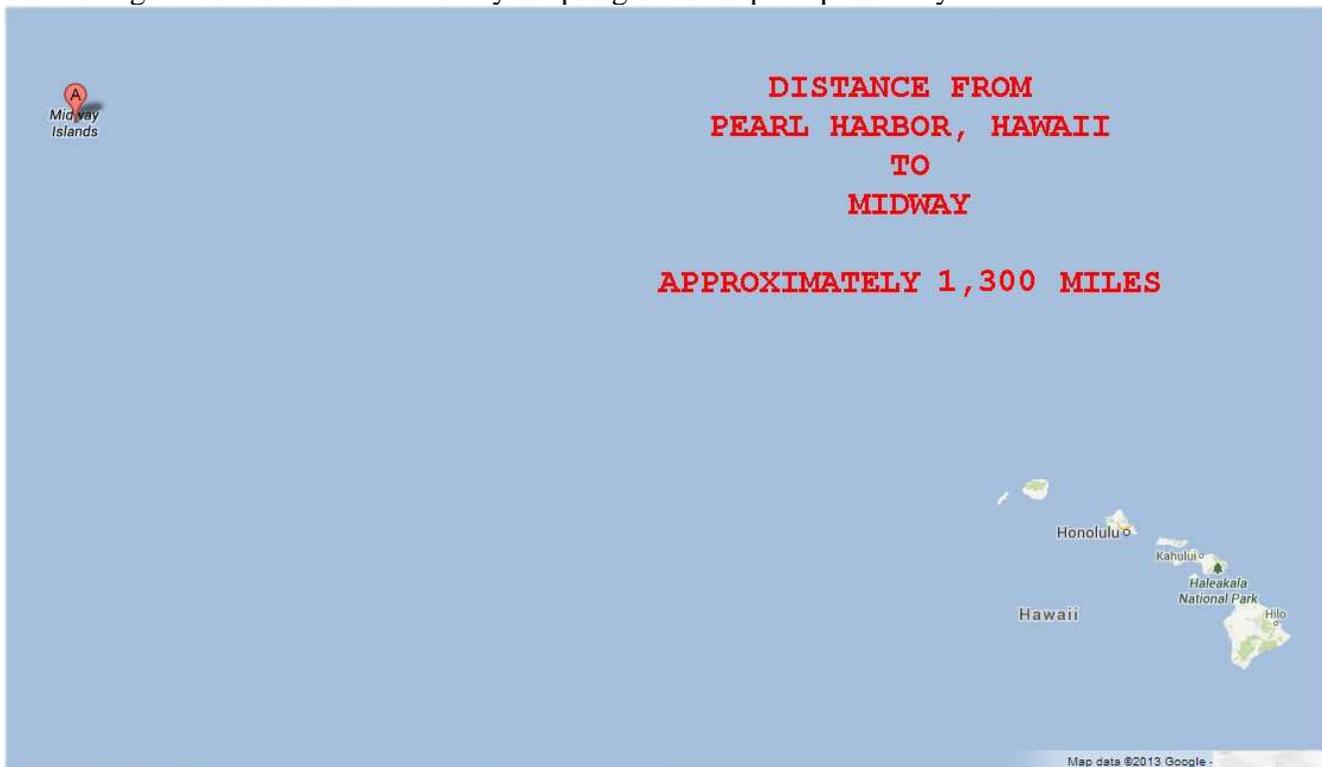


An awful lot of people in the U.S. military thought Yamamoto was absolutely right – he could crush anything the Americans threw at him.

Okay, now you have the the geographic factors and the Japanese strategic needs as of spring 1942. But what about the Americans?

On December 7, the Japanese destroyed a huge chunk of the American Navy and killed almost 2,500 people, most of whom were military personnel. The only good news: None of America's aircraft carriers were in Pearl Harbor. (And believe me, many people still felt that naval war was all about battleships and didn't think aircraft carriers could win the war – for many people the loss of the battleships was the ultimate in devastation.) A few hours after the Pearl Harbor attack, the Japanese devastated Manilla, wiping out airfields and crippling the submarine base. The U.S. Navy was all but dead.

The strategic outlook for the U.S. Navy in spring 1942 shaped up this way:



The Americans **could not allow** the Japanese to seize Midway. If the enemy controlled Midway, the Navy would be forced into a defensive posture, protecting the Hawaiian islands and **doing nothing else**. (If the only thing you can do is protect a single place, I'd recommend Hawaii, but it's not the way you win a war.) The Japanese would have a free hand to do **anything they wanted** in the rest of the Pacific, including attacking Australia and New Zealand, waging unrestricted submarine warfare from Midway – a base much farther east than anything else they had, and seizing every island in the southwest Pacific.

The Americans were **too weak** to allow a **strong enemy** to operate **as close** to them as Midway. The island had to be held.

But Midway wasn't just a desperate, must-hold situation. The U.S. Navy's Pacific commander, **believed** that if he sent his Navy to Midway and got there ahead of the Japanese, he would have the advantage of surprise and a fantastic opportunity to change the balance of power in the Pacific. In other words, here comes the **turnaround** part of this story.

I'd like to introduce you to the master of the turnaround, Admiral Chester W. "Chet" Nimitz.

On December 17, with the ships in Pearl Harbor still sending smoke into the sky and bleeding oil into the water, with crews trying to recover the dead from the sunken hulls, Chester Nimitz showed up for his first day of work as Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, known in Navy terminology as "CinCPac." Less than six months after Nimitz took command, he successfully changed the course of the entire Pacific war. Talk about turnarounds.

Chet Nimitz was born in 1885 in the small town of Fredericksburg, TX. The town is hundreds of miles away from blue water – so of course one of America's great sailors comes from there.

Another irony of Nimitz's life – he wanted to go to West Point, but his local congressman only had an appointment to give at Annapolis. (The same thing happened in reverse to Dwight Eisenhower, who originally wanted to go to the Naval Academy but ended up "settling" for West Point. Maybe if things turned out differently, Ike would have run Midway, and Chet would have commanded at D-Day . . .)

Nimitz's Navy career was the usual: he served aboard ships then rotated to shore duties and then back to sea. He received excellent evaluations and was given a medal for saving the life of a sailor under his command. He was the captain of several large warships before becoming a Rear Admiral (two stars) in June 1938. Two-and-a-half years later in December 1941, he was promoted to Admiral (four stars).

Chester Nimitz took command of the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet 10 days after the attack at Pearl Harbor. No CEO has ever taken over an organization with such dim prospects or such desperate needs and challenges. Less than six months later, in June 1942, Nimitz took the **most dangerous risk** of the Pacific war, **bet everything he had** in his command, and fought the Japanese at the Battle of Midway.

I said Nimitz bet everything he had, but these were **3 highly . . . calculated . . .** educated risks:

Calculated Risk No. 1: Nimitz bet the Battle would be at Midway

The Navy had war-gamed various Pacific scenarios throughout the 1930s, **including** an enemy attack at Midway, because, after all Midway had **location**. After the war, Nimitz would say that nothing happened in the Pacific war that hadn't been war-gamed at the U.S. Naval War College. This meant Chet was as well-prepared strategically and tactically as he could be, short of actually fighting the battles. Because of the war games, Chet **was pretty darn sure** that Midway would be crucial at some point in the war. But when?

Navy Intelligence had cracked a tiny bit of Japanese code, and that **fragment** of broken code **seemed** to indicate a lot of Japanese interest in Midway. Japanese radio signals were filled with what the U.S. Navy believed was the code for Midway in May 1942. Nimitz believed the Japanese attack was coming very soon.



Calculated Risk No. 2: Nimitz went “All In” - No safety margin

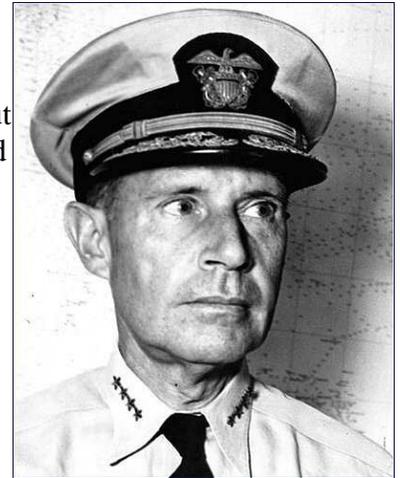
Chet was “**all in**” at Midway. If he was right and the Japanese Navy was coming for Midway, it would be coming with overwhelming force. The Americans only had 3 aircraft carriers at that point, and one of those carriers, the *USS Yorktown*, was limping home from the Battle of the Coral Sea. The Pearl Harbor yard manager told Nimitz that it would take **6 months** to make *Yorktown* battle-ready. Nimitz personally inspected the ship and told the yard manager to do what he could in 72 hours, because in 72 hours, *Yorktown* was putting to sea. If Chet was going to put his forces in harm's way at Midway, he was not going to worry about playing it safe.



Calculated Risk No. 3: Nimitz bet on his choice of the battle commander

Chet's last risk was probably the biggest of all. He needed an admiral to command the battle group formed around the carriers, *Enterprise* and *Hornet*. The obvious man for the job was New Jersey's own William “BULL” Halsey, who had already garnered a reputation for himself as America's fighting admiral.

But the fighting admiral was stuck in sickbay and out of action. Nimitz asked Halsey who should command in Halsey's place, and Bull unhesitatingly replied, “Ray Spruance.” Raymond Spruance was just about **the most junior admiral** in all of Pearl Harbor. He had never commanded a carrier battle group and unlike Halsey, never become a pilot.



But he had commanded Halsey's cruiser screen, protecting the aircraft carriers as they operated all over the southern Pacific. Halsey told Nimitz that Ray Spruance understood carrier operations – and pointed out that if Spruance was named commanding admiral of the carrier task force, he would take Halsey's experienced staff to sea.

Nimitz decided to gamble on the little-known Raymond Spruance to lead the Americans' small, relatively inexperienced battle group out against the **huge, experienced** Japanese fleet. Against the navy that had won at Pearl Harbor, at Manilla, and at Singapore – against a navy **that had never lost**. Against Admiral Chuichi Nagumo, the master of carrier warfare and the victor at Pearl Harbor. Against the pilots who destroyed everything in their sights on December 7th.



It was a gigantic mismatch, and it would only come to pass if Nimitz had learned the right lessons from the war games and from U.S. Naval Intelligence. If *Yorktown* could get into the fight. If Spruance was as good as Halsey said he was.

If Nimitz was wrong about any of these gambles, Hawaii and the entire American West Coast would lie defenseless before the most successful navy the world had ever seen.

Okay, the stage is set – onto the Battle of Midway itself:

Unless you're a history buff, and a **World War II history buff at that**, you probably don't know who Raymond Spruance was. Spruance, like Nimitz, grew up a long way from the ocean, in Indianapolis. He went to the Naval Academy and served a number of tours at sea as well as on land.

71 years ago, as his Task Force Sixteen left Pearl Harbor in late May, Rear Adm. Raymond Spruance was an unknown quantity to most of the men under his command. Halsey's staff, men who had fought in a number of raids and small attacks, assumed that **they** would actually fight the battle at Midway and that Admiral Spruance was just a high-ranking passenger.

Spruance himself was surprised by the assignment, but he calmly accepted it. After all, he was in the Navy, he had his orders, and he had a job to do. His assignment: Rendezvous at "Point Luck," a dot on the Pacific Ocean map, with Task Force Seventeen (which was the **Yorktown** task force) under the command of Rear Adm. Frank Jack Fletcher, lie in wait for the Japanese and then pounce. A quick note about Frank Jack Fletcher: although he had the same rank as Spruance, he was senior and would be in overall command after the rendezvous. (During the Battle of Midway, Fletcher's flag ship, Yorktown, was damaged and he had to change ships. He graciously signaled to Spruance that Spruance was now in charge. As my brother – a Navy vet – said, "Admirals are floating egos. That doesn't mean they're egotists, but you have to have a strong sense of ego to become an admiral. It ain't easy." Fletcher showed no ego. His counterpart, Nagumo, would not give command of the battle to his next-in-command when his flag ship was sinking and that decision was costly to the Japanese.)

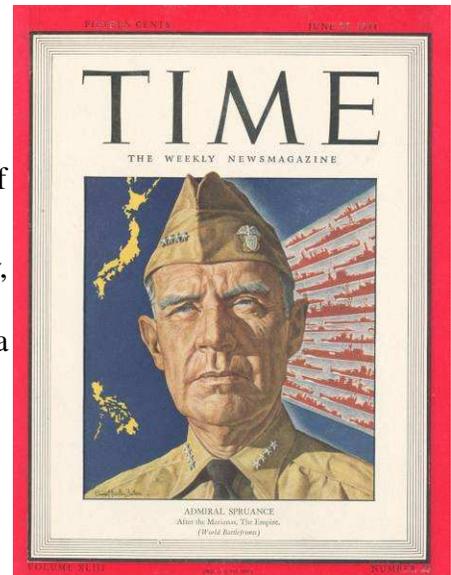
As Herman Wouk wrote in *War and Remembrance*, Spruance's orders could be interpreted as "rock 'em, sock 'em, but don't lose your shirt." Easier said than done.

Remember: the U.S. Navy was operating on the flimsiest of evidence that the Japanese were proceeding toward Midway and, if it turned out to be true, the Japanese would have a fleet more than double the size of the Americans', commanded by the victor at Pearl Harbor and the world leader in naval-aviation warfare.

Having arrived at Point Luck (an imaginary spot in the Pacific northeast of Midway) and rendezvousing with Fletcher and **Yorktown**, the Americans launched scout planes and hoped they would find the Japanese before they were found themselves.

On the morning of June 4, 1942, all hell broke loose. First, Halsey's staff--which had all the aircraft-carrier combat experience that Spruance did not -- ordered the pilots to the ready. Spruance asked if the enemy had been sighted. No, it hadn't. Spruance calmly suggested that as the flight crews were going to be in their planes for a very long time that day and could be scrambled to launch in two minutes, they should be left in their lounges until the enemy had been found.

Shortly thereafter, the enemy was sighted. Spruance ordered the carriers to turn toward the wind (airplanes have to take off into the wind) and prepare to launch. A junior officer pointed out that the range was so long that some of the planes would be unable to return. Spruance quietly thanked him and ordered the launch delayed until the distance could be closed. Halsey's staff asked if they should wait for orders from Fletcher (who was senior to Spruance), and Spruance said, no, the orders would be forthcoming. (They were.)



As soon as *Enterprise* and *Hornet* reached the maximum possible range to their Japanese targets, Spruance ordered the launch.



The launch was a tangled mess instead of a precision exercise. Planes circled over the *Enterprise* and *Hornet* burning valuable fuel and wasting flying time as they formed up. Other commanders would have fumed and shouted (after all admirals are not immune to temper tantrums), but Spruance watched the proceedings silently, knowing that anger wouldn't speed things up.

What happened in the air, like the launch, was out of his control. It's hard to imagine any admiral would have stayed calm knowing what was going on with the American planes as they struggled to find the enemy fleet. The formations separated. Some became lost. Cloud cover made the ocean surface difficult to see. And every minute that passed brought the Japanese closer to finding the American fleet with their own scout planes.

Finally, thanks to sheer dumb luck, the Americans found the Japanese.

But the attack was all wrong: Slow, low-flying torpedo bombers went in first. Torpedo planes make a long, slow run at the ship they are targeting and then release their torpedoes. The long slow run made them easy targets for the Japanese fighter planes.



American fighter planes were supposed to protect the torpedo planes but the fighters had gotten lost, leaving the torpedo planes completely unprotected.

Every torpedo plane pilot made the long slow run at the Japanese ships, every single one of them was shot down, and not a single torpedo hit a Japanese ship.

In the first few moments of the Battle of Midway, a gigantic victory was within the grasp of the Japanese.



And then American dive bombers (*below, right*) broke through the clouds directly over the Japanese fleet. Japan's fighters were still low in the air dealing with the American torpedo planes – the entire Japanese fleet lay unprotected to the dive bombers.

Within five minutes, the battle was over. Three Japanese carriers were sinking. A fourth would be sunk in the Americans' second wave.

In the space of five minutes the Americans had shattered the Japanese Navy. The carriers Japan lost would be almost impossible to replace, but the dozens and dozens of planes and hundreds of trained, experienced men in the flight crews that went down with them were truly irreplaceable. Only six months after the disaster of Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Navy had turned the course of the war around and would never lose again.



Late on June 4 planes were returning to the American carriers after follow-up attacks. It was a dark night, and U.S. naval doctrine called for the carriers to sail without deck lights, making it more difficult for enemy submarines to find them. But it had been a long day, and Spruance was worried about his tired pilots. He ordered the carriers' deck lights be turned on, and all the pilots made it back.

In the midst of a battle for survival, Spruance kept his head, stayed aggressive and seized a gigantic opportunity. Since we're coming out of the Great Recession, we might want to learn some lessons from him:

1) **Stay calm.** Spruance never lost his temper, which allowed him to keep a cool head. He constantly adjusted to the situation, thinking clearly at all times. No matter how ugly things are at your organization, thinking your way through the issues is always the best way to go.

2) **Don't judge information solely by its source.** Spruance allowed



officers who were very junior to him to feed him information and suggest that he change his orders. He wasn't an aviation expert, but he didn't need to be, because the people around him were. Don't blow off front-line workers or managers. They frequently know more than the people above them.

3) Believe in yourself. Spruance wasn't overawed by his responsibilities. He trusted in his own intelligence and his years of naval experience and training. He didn't need to push people around to prove he was in charge. He had faith in his own judgment. If you're in management, trust that you didn't get there by accident.

4) Be aggressive, and take risks. You can't grab big success any other way. Playing it safe may keep you in business, but it will also allow your competition to eat your lunch.

AND what about our turnaround master, Chester Nimitz? It's impossible to imagine that any CEO has ever faced a tougher challenge than he did in the six months after Pearl Harbor. Remember, on Nimitz's first day on the job, the ships in the harbor were still bleeding oil and crews were still trying to recover hundreds of bodies.

In corporate terms, Nimitz's physical plants had been catastrophically damaged and many in his work force were dead or injured. And Nimitz didn't have the option of declaring bankruptcy or breaking up his company and selling off the pieces. He had to compete with the Japanese, no matter what.

With all these factors working against him, what did Nimitz do to lead the Pacific Fleet to recovery?

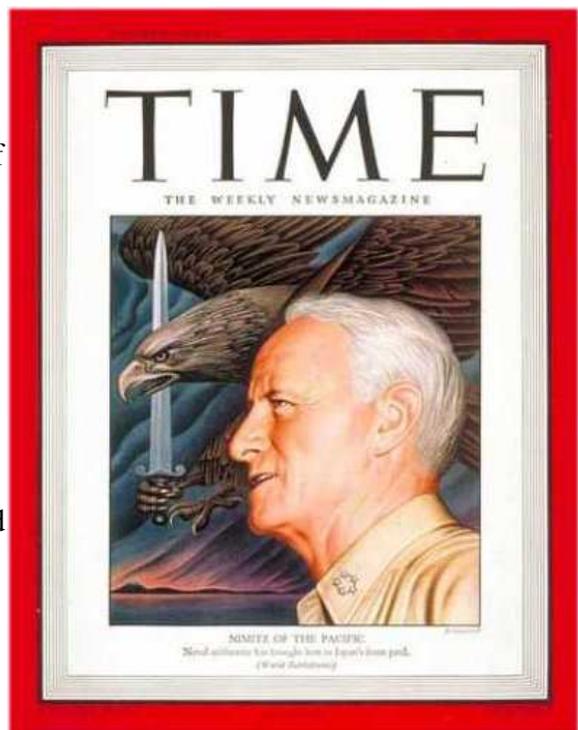
1) He was flexible. Nimitz accepted the reality that post-Pearl Harbor, naval aviation was the **sine qua non** of naval warfare. He didn't waste time looking at the past and wondering how to get his battleships into action. Nimitz had aircraft carriers and he deployed them.

2) He used his head and trusted his instincts. Navy intelligence had cracked a small portion of Japanese code and said that there were a few fragments of information that might, just might, indicate the Japanese were going to attack at Midway. It was the sketchiest of evidence, but Nimitz looked at a map and thought that if he were the Japanese commander, he would attack in that exact location. Nimitz trusted his intuition and decided to meet the Japanese head-on.

3) He took calculated risks. Nimitz didn't have the fleet resources or the experienced manpower to square off against the Japanese. But, if his intelligence team was correct, he would have the advantage of surprise at Midway--and that would give him the opportunity to turn the entire course of the war in the Pacific. Nimitz took the risk.

4) He trusted his people. Nimitz demonstrated this in three significant ways:

1st way) Most of the pilots aboard the American carriers were so young they barely shaved. They had little experience when compared to their Japanese counterparts. But Nimitz believed in those young



pilots and sent them out to do the job at Midway. Many of them died proving him right.

2nd way) The carrier *Yorktown* had limped back to Pearl Harbor after being damaged at the Battle of the Coral Sea. Pearl's yard manager told Nimitz it would take months to refit the carrier. Nimitz gave him 72 hours because he believed the repair crews could do enough in that short period to make *Yorktown* count in the battle. He was right: *Yorktown* sailed on time and provided crucial firepower at Midway.

3rd way) Nimitz trusted Bull Halsey who suggested Ray Spruance as his replacement. Nimitz's biggest leap of faith was to believe in Spruance. It was a fantastic choice: Spruance became the most successful combat admiral in the U.S. Navy's history.

Only six months after the disaster at Pearl Harbor, Nimitz gambled all three carriers that he had, sending them out with their inexperienced crews and their inexperienced admiral. The Americans out-thought and out-fought the Japanese every step of the way at Midway and won the most important naval battle of the war. Japan had never known defeat before, and never recovered, while the U.S. Navy never lost another engagement in the Pacific.

For the rest of the war, Ray Spruance would win one big victory after another, and be promoted to Admiral, as in a 4-star admiral. After the war, he replaced Nimitz as CinCPac and later was named U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines.

Nimitz guided the Navy to victory over Japan and became one of only 9 Americans to be promoted to 5-star rank. He and Douglas MacArthur signed the surrender documents in Tokyo Bay aboard the *USS Missouri* (*below*) to end the war.



Chester Nimitz and Raymond Spruance are buried close to each other in Golden Gate National Cemetery.

Chester Nimitz's leadership of the U.S. Navy from the aftermath of Pearl Harbor to the turnaround of the Midway triumph demonstrates three important things for all managers looking to turnaround their companies:

- **Don't panic,**
- **Take risks,** and
- **Trust your people.** Especially if your people include courageous young pilots and Ray Spruance.

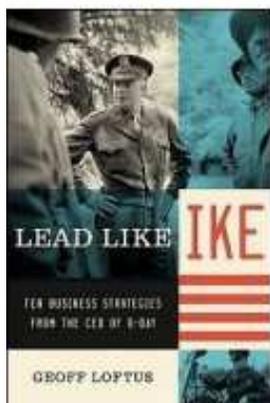
About Geoff Loftus



I'm a lifelong history buff and the author of *LEAD LIKE IKE: Ten Business Strategies from the CEO of D-Day*, published by Thomas Nelson, Inc. (Available on Barnes & Noble and Amazon.)

A regular contributor to Forbes.com, I've been gainfully employed in business journalism and corporate communications for more than a quarter-century. Working both freelance and on-staff, I have worked for Condé Nast, Deloitte Consulting, Fairchild Publications, and News Corp., as well as nonprofit organizations such as The Conference Board and the Society of Corporate Secretaries & Governance Professionals, where I was Vice President, Communications.

In October 2010, I was privileged to be the Keynote Speaker at the Eisenhower Legacy Dinner, which was held at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library.



I get around: I've addressed large audiences from Fortune 500 companies on numerous business topics. And I've been interviewed by ABC News, CNBC, *Fortune*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Investor's Business Daily*, in addition to *Compliance Week*, *Directors & Boards*, and

Corporate Boards. I was Managing Editor of *Across the Board* (now known as *The Conference Board Review*), a monthly business magazine of thought and opinion at The Conference Board, and I was the first director of The Conference Board's website, which won numerous awards upon its launch.

Like many writers, I once dreamed of writing the great American novel but gave that up in an attempt to write the great American screenplay. The closest I came to that lofty achievement was writing *Hero in the Family* with John Drimmer for *The Wonderful World of Disney* on ABC. I've been a member of the Writers Guild of America, East for more than twenty years.

I was lucky enough to go to Purchase College, State University of New York and Fordham Prep— the Jesuit high school in the Bronx. Today, I live in Scarsdale, New York, with my wife Margy, son Gregory, and our wonderful little dog, Heidi.