



JIM HARSHAW JR.

Revealing Failure as the Path to Success

Success Through Failure Podcast

Action Plan Episode #199

Eric Kapitulik

Born and raised in CT, Eric Kapitulik attended at the US Naval Academy, where he was a four-year varsity letter winner on the lacrosse team.

Graduating in 1995, Eric went on to serve in the Marine Corps as both an Infantry Officer and Special Operations Officer. As a Platoon Commander, he led a team of 20 covert operations specialists on numerous Special Forces-related missions, including long-range recon patrols, hostage rescues, high-altitude jump exercises, ship takeovers, and gas-oil platform takedowns.

In 1999, Eric and his platoon were in a helicopter crash that resulted in the death of seven Marines. In response to this tragedy, Eric created the Force Reconnaissance Scholarship Fund to benefit the children of his fallen men. In order to raise money for the fund, he has participated in eight Ironmans, The Canadian Death Race, The Eco-Challenge, and The American Birkebeiner Ski Marathon. Eric has also summited five of the Seven Summits including Mount Everest.

Since leaving active duty, Eric has received his MBA and founded his company, The Program, with the goal of providing both athletic and corporate teams with the best leadership development and team building services in the country.

His upcoming book is titled *The Program, Lessons from Elite Military Units for Creating and Sustaining High-Performance Leaders and Teams*.

Quotes

"My commanding officer gave me advice that I will remember all of my days, which is, 'Don't ever forget, your guys don't need another friend. They need a platoon

commander.' In times of adversity, they have enough friends. They still need a leader."

"Goals are performance-based, it's what we want to achieve. Standards are behavior-based, they reinforce our core values."

"The worst thing you can do as a leader is ask your Marines, your children, and your coworkers to do something you're not willing to do yourself."

About Seeking Out Adventure 12:51 - 13:44

"I don't know why or how it's occurred but it feels like adventure for the sake of adventure has somehow lost its allure, that every time you go climb a mountain, there has to be some scientific reason for it or social reason, or raise money for some cause. I appreciate it. I was able to raise a lot of money doing those things and help out the children of my Marines and their families. But boy, I would suggest to anybody in your audience, even if you don't have a cause, adventure for adventure's sake, that's life-changing."

About Being Great Teammates, Not Just Leaders 16:46 - 17:30

"I appreciate that when people hear of things like that (the crash), they will immediately think about leadership. Jim, I think in the country - and I think it started in families - that somehow, being a great teammate, it's almost looked down upon, that everybody has to be a great leader. The people at The Program don't feel that way. My teammates and I at The Program, our mission is to develop better leaders. We're the first people to tell you that if our children are known as the greatest teammates on every team that they're ever on, oh my God will I be proud of my children."

About New Guys in a Team 18:53 -19:53

"For some reason, the freshman's job is to pick up the balls at the end of the practice. It's the new guy's job to clean the bus when everybody else gets off the bus. That makes no sense to me or to us at The Program. That's the leader's job to do that. The last thing we need to do with new guys is to go out of the way to make them feel like new guys. In our unit, going to the Persian Gulf, if you've got new guys and the old guys, you've got two different teams. And then somebody is going to die. That's true on any team, figuratively or literally. Instead, we need to be one team with one heartbeat. The way we do that is for the new guys that are joining the team, to do everything they possibly can to integrate themselves into that unit. And for the

team members that are already there, do everything possible that you can do to make sure the new guys do not feel like new guys."

About Taking Care Of The Team 36:48 - 37:42

"As leaders, how are we doing things? In my force recon platoon, I had some of the greatest friendships ever with some of the guys. But I was still the platoon commander though, and they knew I was going to make every, single decision I ever made with the best interest of our team first. That might be harsh on some level, but it also allowed us to have a great level of trust. They could trust how I was going to decide. As leaders, they're held to two standards; accomplish the mission and take care of your teammates. How do you take care of your teammates? By making every decision you ever make, thinking about what's in the best interest of the team. Do those two things, I don't care what battlefield it is, you'll be successful."

About Four Attributes of Great Teammates and Team Leaders 41:12 -42:28

1. Being physically and mentally tough.
2. Not making excuses and not letting other people make excuses for us.
3. Working hard. We define hard work at The Program. Our trademark saying is, "One more."
4. We discuss what it means to be an effective communicator. We discuss the fallacy of the term leading by example. That term has been watered down to mean nothing in American society. We discuss the importance of communication. Effective communication. Being an effective communicator in our organization, having the ability to effectively communicate up, down, and sideways in our organization is key to success.

Website and Social

Website: <http://www.theprogram.org/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/erickapitulik6>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/eric-kapitulik-6996a048>

Book:

<https://www.amazon.com/Program-Military-Operations-Sustaining-Performing/dp/1119574307>