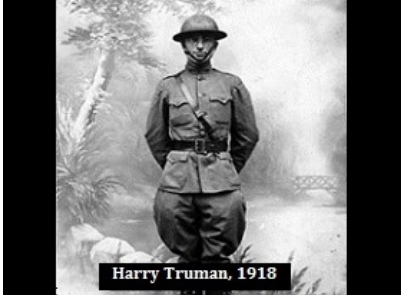


# Harry Truman's crucible moment



Growing up, no one considered Harry Truman a leader. He was a kid with thick glasses who mostly stayed home, working the farm or reading.

But the course of his life changed when he entered the Army during World War I. Shipped to France, he was made the head of an artillery battery. And one rainy night, he faced a moment of true terror.

The Germans dropped an artillery barrage close by, causing Truman's troops to panic and flee. In the chaos, Truman's horse fell on him, nearly crushing him. Instead of panicking, the chain of events released courage in Truman. He shouted for his men to come back and finish the job.

This was Truman's crucible moment.

His troops froze, then returned to act under Truman's leadership. Through the rest of their lives, the men were loyal to Harry Truman, who had shown plain courage in the face of his own fear.

What if he'd never had an opportunity to find that courage within himself? The U.S. Marines understand how powerful a crucible moment can be.

It's why they push trainees through 54 hours of live-fire exercises, long marches and sleep deprivation at the end of basic training. Trainees can't run from the challenge. And afterward, Marines know what they're capable of.

What opportunities for crucible moments are you giving young leaders?

— Adapted from "[Your Crucible](#)," Tim Elmore, Growing Leaders.