

Home Depot's leading philosophy

Take two guys who've made it a big part of their "value proposition" to hire military veterans, and you've got the basic leadership philosophy at Home Depot.

Vets are mature, disciplined leaders, says HR chief Dennis Donovan. "We can see that discipline at work in our stores."

Along with a military hiring program that recruited 13,000 veterans in 2004, Home Depot offers a store leadership program for experienced managers and commissioned military officers.

The two-year program provides 250 hours of classes and four job rotations, plus mentoring.

Case in point: Navy Lt. Chris Harkness spent five years on a nuclear submarine, enrolled in the Home Depot leadership program and became a store manager.

Marine Corps Maj. Mike Jernigan is actually stationed at Home Depot's headquarters. He studies the company's strategy, operations and crisis decision-making, and takes what he learns back to the Marines.

"The corporate world and the military are really quite similar," he says. "We just keep score differently."

— Adapted from "Reporting to the Depot," Martin Booe, *Workforce Management*, www.workforce.com.