

Ava McLaughlin

CYSE200T

April 4, 2025

### **Lieutenant Colonel Clarrisa Blair**

BLUF: Lieutenant Colonel Clarrisa Blair shared several valuable insights from her experiences working in the Marines. She emphasized the importance of staying true to yourself, stressed that strong communication skills are important for success, and shared that having passion for your career is the key to finding happiness.

### **Authenticity**

LTC Clarissa Blair originally studied Bio-Medical science but strived for further excellence; she decided to join the U.S. Marines, despite being told repeatedly that she couldn't do it or doesn't belong. She never let these remarks disrupt her passion, which I find very admirable. Becoming a LTC is no easy feat, which meant her methods were successful. She attributed her success to "always being your true self," which I struggle with sometimes because I am not the most outgoing person. She also mentioned false motivation, which is when you force yourself to push through something despite feeling unmotivated, and imposter syndrome, which is which is when you doubt your achievements despite being successful. I've learned from LTC Clarissa Blair that everyone struggles with internal doubts or struggles, and that it's completely okay and a part of life; sometimes you just have to "fake it 'till you make it."

## **Communication**

LTC Clarissa Blair also stressed the importance of strong communication skills and networking. Knowing how to communicate effectively and respectfully is essential because we as humans are meant to be around other people and will always face situations where we must compromise or work together. It's also important to always contribute and fulfill your responsibilities; this helps others build trust in you and see you as reliable. Strong communication skills are the fastest path to leadership and play a crucial role in building influence, trust, and effective collaboration.

## **Passion**

LTC Clarissa Blair has chosen to remain in the Marines despite having earned all her benefits, which shows her commitment and passion for her career. Loving what you do is incredibly important because you can neither be authentic or, in most cases, contribute in a meaningful way. When you lack passion, those around you can sense it, making them less likely to seek your help or want to be around you. Work can start to feel like a burden, leading to a reluctance to contribute, which may impact the quality of your output and increase feelings of anxiety. Having genuine passion for what you do is an effective way to overcome false motivation, as it can make work feel more like a hobby or an enjoyable activity. Overall, LTC Clarissa Blair's perspectives on becoming successful, such as being authentic, having strong communication skills, and having passion for your work, will resonate with me as I pursue my career in Cybersecurity.