

# HOW TO THINK LIKE A

A full-page background image featuring a portrait of General George S. Patton. He is depicted from the waist up, wearing a dark military uniform with numerous medals and ribbons on his left chest. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right. The background of the portrait is a dramatic, cloudy sky. In the top left corner, there is a small, rectangular inset image of a handwritten note or letter, tied with a red ribbon. The word "General" is written in a large, elegant, white cursive script across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the general's uniform.

*General*

PASTOR KEITH JOEL WALKER

*George S. Patton B. 1888*

# HOW TO THINK LIKE A GENERAL

*Written by*  
Pastor Keith Joel Walker

# The Mind of a General:

## *Understanding the Makeup and Mindset of a General Scientifically*

Overview: This book explores the psychological and strategic frameworks that define great military leaders throughout history. It delves into their childhood experiences, formative moments, and the principles of leadership that guided their rise to power. Additionally, it examines the scientific study of the psychological processes that inform a general's strategic thinking in planning for war.

### The Greatest Generals in History

#### 1. Alexander the Great (356–323 BC)

- **Childhood:** Born in Pella, Macedonia, son of King Philip II. Educated by Aristotle, fostering a love for philosophy, science, and literature.
- **Rise to Power:** Became king at age 20 and quickly expanded his empire through innovative tactics and charismatic leadership.
- **Key Lessons:** The importance of education and mentorship in shaping a leader.

#### 2. Hannibal Barca (247–183 BC)

- **Childhood:** Born in Carthage, raised in a military family. Swore an oath of enmity against Rome at a young age.

- Rise to Power: Gained fame for his strategic genius during the Second Punic War, particularly for his daring crossing of the Alps.
- Key Lessons: The power of unconventional tactics and psychological warfare.

### 3. Genghis Khan (c. 1162–1227)

- Childhood: Born as Temujin, faced early hardships including the abduction of his wife and the murder of his father. Developed resilience and leadership skills from a young age.
- Rise to Power: United the Mongol tribes and established the Mongol Empire, known for innovative military tactics and psychological warfare.
- Key Lessons: The significance of adaptability and unity in leadership.

### 4. Julius Caesar (100–44 BC)

- Childhood: Born into a patrician family in Rome. Influenced by political turmoil and military service in his youth.
- Rise to Power: Rose through the ranks of military and political life, known for his campaigns in Gaul and crossing the Rubicon, leading to civil war.
- Key Lessons: The importance of bold decision-making and strategic alliances.

### 5. Saladin (1137–1193)

- Childhood: Born in Tikrit, Iraq, into a Kurdish

family. His early military career began in the service of the Zengid dynasty.

- **Rise to Power:** United Muslim factions and became the Sultan of Egypt and Syria, known for his leadership during the Crusades.
- **Key Lessons:** The value of diplomacy and respect for adversaries.

## 6. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821)

- **Childhood:** Born in Corsica, sent to mainland France for military education. His early experiences shaped his ambitions.
- **Rise to Power:** Rose through the ranks during the French Revolution, eventually becoming Emperor and implementing significant military reforms.
- **Key Lessons:** The impact of organizational reforms and the role of charisma in leadership.

## 7. Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969)

- **Childhood:** Born in Texas, grew up in a large family. Developed leadership skills in scouting and sports.
- **Rise to Power:** Served in various military roles during World War I and II, ultimately becoming the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe.
- **Key Lessons:** The importance of coalition building and effective communication.

## 8. Georgy Zhukov (1896–1974)

- **Childhood:** Born into a peasant family in Russia,

faced hardships that shaped his resilience and determination.

- **Rise to Power:** Became a key leader in the Red Army during World War II, known for his role in major battles like Stalingrad and Berlin.
- **Key Lessons:** The significance of perseverance and tactical innovation.

#### 9. Erwin Rommel (1891–1944)

- **Childhood:** Born in Germany, showed early promise in military training and leadership.
- **Rise to Power:** Gained fame as a field marshal during World War II, particularly in North Africa, known as the “Desert Fox.”
- **Key Lessons:** The value of adaptability and respect for the enemy.

#### 10. Vo Nguyen Giap (1911–2013)

- **Childhood:** Born in Vietnam, influenced by colonial struggles and nationalist movements.
- **Rise to Power:** Became a key military leader in the First Indochina War and the Vietnam War, known for guerrilla tactics and protracted warfare.
- **Key Lessons:** The effectiveness of unconventional warfare and the importance of popular support.

#### 11. George Patton (1885–1945)

- **Childhood:** Born in the Los Angeles suburb of San Gabriel, California. He grew up on a large ranch near

Los Angeles.

- **Rise to Power:** Primarily occurred during World War II, where he quickly gained recognition for his aggressive leadership style and expertise in armored warfare.
- **Key Lessons:** The importance of leading from the front and using aggressive offensive tactics.

The newspapers,” Patton said, “call me ‘Old Blood and Guts.’ That’s all right; it serves its purpose. It makes good reading. But it takes more than blood and guts to win battles. It takes brains and guts. Remember that, brains and guts. No military leader or force ever won a battle through brains alone, or through guts alone. Each is essential for successful military operations, but not just alone.”

(Additional generals can be included as previously outlined.)

## Leadership Principles and Skills in Generals

1. **Vision and Strategic Thinking:** Ability to foresee and articulate a clear vision for future operations and long-term goals.
2. **Decisiveness:** Making timely and effective decisions, especially under pressure.
3. **Adaptability:** Flexibility to adjust strategies based

on real-time information and changing battlefield conditions.

4. Communication Skills: Clearly conveying orders and strategies to ensure understanding and execution.

5. Emotional Intelligence: Understanding and managing one's own emotions and the emotions of others to foster morale and cohesion.

6. Team Building: Fostering collaboration and trust among diverse teams and units.

7. Crisis Management: Effectively handling emergencies and unexpected challenges with composure.

8. Logistical Planning: Understanding and managing the complexities of supply chains and resource allocation.

9. Cultural Sensitivity: Recognizing and respecting the cultural contexts of operations and interactions.

10. Mentorship: Guiding and developing future leaders within the ranks.

11. Ethical Conduct: Upholding high ethical standards and integrity in all actions and decisions.

12. Resilience: Demonstrating the ability to recover from setbacks and maintain focus on objectives.

13. Risk Assessment: Evaluating potential risks and



rewards to make informed decisions.

14. Historical Awareness: Learning from past battles and military strategies to inform current actions.

15. Innovative Problem-Solving: Encouraging creativity in tactics and strategies to overcome obstacles.

16. Focus on Morale: Recognizing the importance of troop morale and implementing strategies to maintain high spirits.

17. Negotiation Skills: Effectively mediating conflicts and reaching agreements with allies and adversaries.

18. Holistic Resource Management: Optimizing the use of all available resources for maximum effectiveness.

19. Commitment to Continuous Learning: Staying open to new ideas, experiences, and feedback to improve leadership skills.

20. Strategic Alliances: Building and maintaining relationships with allies to strengthen military objectives.

## The Psychological Framework of a General's Strategic Thinking

1. Cognitive Biases: Understanding how cognitive biases can affect decision-making and strategy

formulation in high-pressure environments.

2. Situational Awareness: The ability to perceive and comprehend the battlefield environment, including enemy movements and troop morale.

3. Emotional Regulation: Techniques for managing stress and emotions to maintain clarity and focus during critical moments.

4. Scenario Planning: Utilizing psychological modeling to envision various outcomes and prepare for multiple contingencies.

5. Influence and Persuasion: Strategies for motivating troops and allies through effective communication and leadership presence.

6. Psychological Warfare: Understanding how to use psychological tactics to demoralize the enemy and create advantages in combat.

## Additional Sections

### Case Studies of Military Campaigns

- Analysis of Key Battles: In-depth examination of pivotal battles led by the generals discussed, focusing on strategies, outcomes, and lessons learned.
- Comparative Analysis: Comparing the strategies of different generals in similar contexts to highlight

diverse approaches to leadership and tactics.

## Practical Applications of Leadership Principles

- **Workshops and Exercises:** Suggestions for practical exercises that readers can engage in to develop their leadership skills, inspired by military training.
- **Real-Life Applications:** How the principles of military leadership can be applied in business, politics, and personal development.

## The Role of Technology in Modern Warfare

- **Technological Advancements:** Discussion on how great generals adapted to technological changes in warfare and how modern leaders can do the same.
- **Future of Warfare:** Insights into how emerging technologies (e.g., AI, cyber warfare) might shape future military strategies and leadership.

## Ethical Considerations in Leadership

- **Moral Dilemmas:** Exploration of ethical challenges faced by military leaders and how they navigated these dilemmas.
- **Legacy and Accountability:** Discussing the importance of a leader's legacy and the accountability that comes with military decisions.

## Conclusion

In “How to Think Like a General,” Keith Joel Walker explores the intricate makeup of military leaders, emphasizing their childhood experiences, rise to power, and the leadership principles that define their success. By understanding the mindsets and qualities of history’s greatest generals, readers can gain insights into effective leadership and strategic thinking applicable in various contexts, not just in military settings. The book aims to inspire a new generation of leaders to think critically, adaptively, and ethically in their pursuits.

### Mindsets and Qualities of Great Generals

1. Visionary Thinking: Ability to foresee long-term goals and outcomes.
2. Analytical Mind: Skill in dissecting complex problems into manageable parts.
3. Decisiveness: Capability to make quick and effective decisions under pressure.
4. Adaptability: Flexibility to adjust strategies based on changing circumstances.
5. Innovative Tactics: Willingness to experiment with new ideas and methods.
6. Historical Awareness: Knowledge of past battles and military strategies.

7. Psychological Insight: Understanding the mental state of troops and enemies.
8. Resourcefulness: Ability to make the most of available resources.
9. Logistical Acumen: Expertise in planning and coordinating supply chains.
10. Team Leadership: Skill in fostering collaboration among diverse units.
11. Courage: Willingness to take risks and face danger.
12. Empathy: Understanding and considering the perspectives of soldiers and civilians.
13. Moral Integrity: Commitment to ethical conduct and principles.
14. Communication Skills: Ability to convey orders and strategies clearly.
15. Strategic Foresight: Anticipating future developments and outcomes.
16. Crisis Management: Skill in handling emergencies and unexpected challenges.
17. Confidence: Self-assurance that inspires trust in troops.
18. Patience: Understanding that success may require time and careful planning.
19. Focus on Morale: Recognizing the importance of troop morale and cohesion.

20. Willingness to Learn: Openness to new ideas and feedback from others.
21. Cultural Awareness: Understanding the cultural context of the battlefield.
22. Technological Savvy: Embracing and utilizing new technologies.
23. Networking: Building relationships with allies and other military leaders.
24. Critical Thinking: Evaluating information and arguments logically.
25. Resilience: Ability to recover from setbacks and failures.
26. Situational Awareness: Constantly assessing the battlefield environment.
27. Diplomatic Skills: Negotiating effectively with allies and enemies.
28. Intuition: Trusting gut feelings based on experience and insight.
29. Planning and Organization: Creating detailed plans for operations.
30. Empowerment: Delegating authority to capable subordinates.
31. Self-Discipline: Maintaining focus and control over actions and emotions.
32. Vision for Change: Desire to implement reforms and improvements.

33. Realism: Acknowledging limitations and constraints.
34. Strategic Patience: Knowing when to wait for the right moment to act.
35. Holistic Thinking: Considering the broader implications of military actions.
36. Risk Assessment: Evaluating potential risks and rewards before acting.
37. Field Experience: Gaining insights from hands-on experience in combat.
38. Humility: Acknowledging one's limitations and the contributions of others.
39. Focus on Objectives: Keeping the end goals in mind throughout planning and execution.
40. Crisis Adaptation: Adjusting plans quickly in response to changing situations.
41. Use of Deception: Employing misinformation to confuse the enemy.
42. Inspiration: Motivating troops through words and actions.
43. Long-Term Commitment: Dedication to achieving sustained objectives.
44. Interdisciplinary Knowledge: Integrating insights from various fields (e.g., logistics, psychology).
45. Attention to Detail: Noticing small yet critical elements that can impact outcomes.

46. Humor: Using humor to relieve stress and build camaraderie.
47. Patriotism: Deep commitment to one's country and its values.
48. Civic Responsibility: Understanding the impact of military actions on society.
49. Negotiation Skills: Effectively mediating conflicts and reaching agreements.
50. Focus on Innovation: Encouraging creativity in tactics and strategies.
51. Emotional Intelligence: Recognizing and managing one's own emotions and those of others.
52. Mentorship: Guiding and developing future leaders within the ranks.
53. Crisis Preparedness: Planning for potential emergencies and contingencies.
54. Visionary Leadership: Inspiring a shared vision among troops and commanders.
55. Cultural Sensitivity: Respecting and understanding different cultures during campaigns.
56. Strategic Alliances: Building and maintaining alliances with other powers.
57. Persistence: Demonstrating determination in the face of obstacles.
58. Holistic Resource Management: Optimizing the use of all available resources.



59. Awareness of Public Sentiment: Understanding how public opinion affects military actions.
60. Focus on Training: Prioritizing the training and development of troops.
61. Ability to Delegate: Trusting subordinates with responsibilities and authority.
62. Critical Reflection: Learning from experiences and mistakes.
63. Strategic Use of Terrain: Understanding and leveraging the battlefield environment.
64. Focus on Logistics: Recognizing the importance of supply lines and support.
65. Crisis Communication: Effectively communicating during emergencies.
66. Conflict Resolution: Addressing disputes within the ranks effectively.
67. Holistic Risk Management: Weighing risks in a comprehensive manner.
68. Understanding of Warfare Evolution: Keeping abreast of changes in military doctrine and technology.
69. Focus on Sustainability: Considering the long-term effects of military actions.
70. Interpersonal Skills: Building rapport with various stakeholders.
71. Crisis Resilience: Maintaining composure during high-stress situations.

72. Commitment to Duty: Upholding responsibilities to their troops and country.
73. Focus on Intelligence: Valuing accurate and timely intelligence.
74. Emphasis on Ethics: Upholding ethical standards in warfare.
75. Crisis Adaptation: Adjusting strategies in response to real-time developments.
76. Focus on Innovation: Encouraging creativity in tactics and strategies.
77. Ability to Inspire Loyalty: Cultivating a sense of loyalty among troops.
78. Focus on Historical Context: Understanding the history that shapes current conflicts.
79. Crisis Management: Effectively handling crises as they arise.
80. Commitment to Justice: Pursuing fairness and justice in military actions.
81. Focus on Communication: Emphasizing clear and effective communication.
82. Ability to Analyze Intelligence: Skill in interpreting intelligence reports.
83. Focus on Training and Development: Prioritizing the growth of military personnel.
84. Understanding of Asymmetrical Warfare: Adapting to unconventional tactics.

85. Commitment to Collaboration: Fostering teamwork among different units.
86. Awareness of Political Dynamics: Understanding the political context of military actions.
87. Focus on Public Relations: Managing the relationship between the military and the public.
88. Ability to Maintain Morale: Keeping spirits high among troops during difficult times.
89. Focus on Strategic Objectives: Aligning actions with broader military goals.
90. Understanding of Counterinsurgency: Adapting tactics to address insurgent threats.
91. Commitment to Continuous Learning: Staying open to new ideas and experiences.
92. Crisis Preparedness: Planning for potential emergencies and contingencies.
93. Focus on Tactical Flexibility: Adapting tactics in response to battlefield dynamics.
94. Understanding of International Relations: Navigating complex geopolitical landscapes.
95. Focus on Ethical Conduct: Upholding high ethical standards in military operations.
96. Ability to Foster Trust: Building trust among subordinates and allies.
97. Focus on Cultural Competence: Understanding the cultural contexts of military operations.

- 98. Commitment to Transparency: Being open and honest in communication.
- 99. Focus on Sustainable Practices: Considering the environmental impact of military actions.
- 100. Understanding of Humanitarian Aspects: Recognizing the humanitarian implications of warfare.

These mindsets and qualities illustrate the multifaceted nature of great generals. They excel not only in military strategy and tactics but also in leadership, ethical considerations, and an understanding of the broader implications of their actions. This holistic approach contributes to their effectiveness as military leaders and their lasting impact on history.